



EPISODE 81: PRIORITIZING PLEASURE WITH AMBER TAYLOR

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/81](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/81)

Maggie

Hello, everyone, welcome. Today we have such a treat for you. We are going to talk about pleasure in a way that you probably have never thought about it before.

And before I introduce you to our special guest today, I want you to know that back when I was a recruiter in HR, I was super proud of myself for having an eye for talent. It's one of the things that made me successful as a recruiter and I was that person that could see someone early in their career and just know that they were up to big things in their life and in their career.

And it would happen to me sometimes -- the singers and bands, sometimes. I remember this Latin pop artist, I got his like, obscure cassette from Spain that nobody else had in Miami. And then a few years later, he was like, everywhere. He was on the side of buses and all these things I was like, "I knew from the first song. I knew."

And today is one of those days that I'm so proud to introduce you to an up and coming Coach. She is a rising star who is up to very big things. And I am so delighted that I get to be the person that introduces you to her. So our guest today is Amber Taylor. Welcome, Amber.

Amber Taylor

I'm so happy to be here. That was a wonderful introduction.

Maggie

Okay, listen. It's the introduction that keeps on giving because there's more. So Amber was a classmate in Advanced Certification in Feminist Coaching. And we were study buddies for part of the time that we worked together. So I got to know her in a deeper way as part of that.





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And as her final project in our class, she focused on pleasure, as liberatory and healing. And of course, if you listen to the podcast, you know, one of the things that I teach all the time is that we can solve almost any problem in a relationship when we look for the deficits in either perspective, or partnership or pleasure.

It's like having low vitamin P. Once we get our dosage right, we can thrive, but if it's too low, we can't. So before we dive in, I want to share Amber's official bio with you. And then we're gonna just talk about pleasure and we're going to have pleasure while talking about pleasure, which is the best.

So Amber is a double Certified Life Coach. She is a number one Amazon international best selling author. She took the leap from corporate America to entrepreneurship in order to dedicate her time to creating space, to empower other black women to level up their lives without over reliance on the trope of strength and resiliency.

She specializes in teaching women how to be comfortable with their most authentic selves in every space they enter into, through the revolutionary act of prioritizing their own pleasure. Welcome, Amber.

Amber Taylor

Thank you. So happy to be here, Maggie.

Maggie

Okay, so before we dive into pleasure, a couple of questions. What is the name of your book so





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everyone who's curious can go get it?

Amber Taylor

Yeah, it's called Women Living on Purpose. And I actually have a link to it on my website.

Maggie

Perfect. And we'll link to that in the show notes as well. And then I love how you talk about pleasure as a revolutionary act. So what inspired you to focus on pleasure as something to really dig so much deeper into in your Coaching practice and to use as one of your key tools? And tell us first why you were inspired to pursue it? And then I'd love to hear how you see it as revolutionary as well.

Amber Taylor

Yeah, so maybe a little bit of a long story, we'll see.

Maggie

Yeah. Bring it.

Amber Taylor

So I was actually contacted by a friend of my brother who is doing a dissertation like an actual PhD on a black woman's literacy and pleasure. And through her, I was invited to multiple focus groups and just talk sessions about pleasure and what we do and how we see it, and how we grew up around it.

And I was hearing my story repeated so much. And I was, of course, not my whole story. Other





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people had different takes and different experiences, but it kind of felt a real core part of it was through each and every one of us. And this was going on at the same time as we were going through the advanced certification.

And when we were given the assignment, I was just like, well, yeah, I want to explore pleasure more, because as I was learning about it for myself, and using the tools on myself, going through Coaching and like, you know how intensive the certification was. Very self reflective.

And I was looking at how I approach pleasure and kind of the cheese hinges in my journey since I started looking at it different. And that's how I kind of decided or found that it was so revolutionary because when I shifted my focus to my own pleasure, everything else kind of just fell to the wayside.

Like my desire to like, be a perfectionist (not gonna say that it's all gone), but to really just please other people and meet other people's standards and fit into some box that wasn't designed for me, like when I was looking at what I really wanted, and what made me happy, and actually going for that, like, everything else became irrelevant.

Maggie

I love that when we focus on pleasure, so many things dissipate, right? It's almost like if we imagine like water, it's like it evaporates. And for someone listening to us right now, who maybe hasn't focused on pleasure, or hasn't thought about pleasure this way before, I have found it the same.

When we start focusing on what pleases us internally, what pleases our values, what pleases our





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wisest inner self, it's the most deep experience of pleasure. It's not only sexual pleasure, although it includes sexual pleasure.

And I like to think about it as the prism of pleasure, like there's all these different kinds of pleasures, and sometimes we sort of paint pleasure with a very narrow stroke. Pleasure is only this or that, right? Whereas, for example, you and I talking, for me personally, brings me an immense pleasure, right? And much enjoyment, right?

Amber Taylor

Yes. Me too.

Maggie

Yeah. How do you define pleasure? What is one way that you like to describe it or sort of anchor it for people?

Amber Taylor

Yeah, it's really anything that brings you that feeling of happiness or enjoyment. And like you said, that can be sexual or non sexual, it could be, you know, orgasming, or walking your dog to the park. It's everything in between, and it's super personal.

Maggie

Yes. And what I find is, when we start looking at more easily accessible pieces of pleasure, like walking the dog in the park, or, I don't know, eating something delicious --but really slowing down enough to really taste it and savor it.





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Or enjoying, you know, if the sun is shining or if the rain is falling, you know, the different moments of pleasure that we can find that are the tiniest moments. When we feel frustrated in our bigger pleasures, whether we feel frustrated sexually, or we feel frustrated at work, or it was something where we were not feeling a lot of pleasure in that area.

It's like the easiest way to access it is: let's find the smallest key that you can open the tiny door, and then the bigger doors will sort of start opening. What do you think of that in terms of like, I think people sometimes think, "Oh, I'm missing pleasure over here. So I have to fix this over here." And maybe that feels a little too big. Let's start with the simplest pleasure you can find. What do you think?

Amber Taylor

Yeah, I think like, what you're describing is part of that perfectionist fantasy, like I have to do this a right way. But there really is no right way. Like, if you're enjoying it, and you're having a good time doing it, then that's where you start. That's where you begin.

And like, for me, kind of, it's a little bit already of a stressful week. I am preparing to go out of town and be around my whole family for family vacation, and like prepping all the Coaching stuff. And I found myself like getting stressed before this call.

And I just turned on some music and had like a little mini dance party. Whole mood changer. And it was just -- it wasn't like I was sitting writing music or writing down things or, you know, getting in a quick one or like, you know whatever. It was just like, "Oh, man, I haven't heard this song and forever, like, yeahhh."





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Maggie

Yeah, there's an element of pleasure in the way you describe it in one piece of the project. It's like this mindfulness connection, where you're like, in the present moment. I think what you said was something like, "It allows you to enjoy just existing as is."

And music is such a great key to open that door. Like you can just be lost in the beats, whatever, they are slow, fast, you know, whatever it may be. And it's like, that idea that we can have these little moments of pleasure and build on them. It doesn't have to be this big mountain of pleasure that we have to climb.

Amber Taylor

Right, right. Because like, yeah, pleasure is that state of being. You're not worrying about the past or focused on the future, or whatever is going to happen next. It's really just staying right here right now.

Maggie

Now, one of the things we're going to talk about in a moment is you have like these five steps to help us cultivate more pleasure in our lives and to really think about in a very concrete way.

But before we dive into those sort of like step by step, how to have more of it -- I find that even myself, I teach this stuff for a living and I have experienced I have resistance sometimes to pleasure. And I find that I see that with my clients a lot as well. There's a resistance to "Oh, like, pleasure has to be later. We can't schedule it. We don't prioritize it." Or, "Oh, if I get to it maybe."

Like, there's this element of resistance that I think is interesting for you and I to explore. And





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then I think that's somehow related to how revolutionary it is. So you always describe it as this revolutionary practice. So tell us a little bit about: what is revolutionary about any woman prioritizing her pleasure, and especially about a black woman prioritizing her pleasure, because I know you're really an expert in that?

Amber Taylor

Yeah. So what's revolutionary about it is that we get to really define it for ourselves. Like, so often, especially as women we're told, you know, what to be, how to be, what to look like. You know, if you look at the magazines, like this is what you're supposed to, you know, gravitate towards, or shoot for.

And when we really focus on our own pleasure, like we make that definition for ourselves. So even breaking from the mold that anybody else has created -- whether it be society, family, friends, partner -- it's absent of all that -- it's you.

And, yeah, why I think it's so revolutionary for a black woman is just like, as a black woman myself, I have been inundated in the culture and like, seen how we're overlooked and undervalued. But at the same time, we are used for our bodies, for our creativity, for our minds, for what we offer the world, but then kind of shamed for it as well.

And even, you know, hairstyles, dance trends, fashion trends, literally like anything, we usually don't get the credit for it or, and we start to shrink ourselves. But when we step into that, and we stop trying to be like everybody else, or adhere to somebody else's standards, we allow ourselves to step into our own purpose.





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And like, that's another reason why I think it's so revolutionary, because I'm a firm believer that everybody is here for a reason. And if you're trying to play by somebody else's rules, you're not, you know, following your own path. But when you start focusing on yourself and focusing inward, then you're able to execute on your purpose.

Maggie

And I think one of the things that really hit home for me of what you're telling us, sharing with us, and what you shared in your project is: prioritizing our internal pleasure is like an act of rebellion, right? Because what we're socialized to do in so many different contexts is prioritize other people's convenience, other people's pleasure, other people's desires, other people's different things, right in different contexts.

And it's like, if we take a stand and say, "I'm going to prioritize this," it is me owning my power. As a woman saying, "This is important, this matters to me." And I'll just give you kind of a funny story. I am not a morning person. And my last job in HR, I worked in an office and the office hours were 8:30 to 5:30.

And you know, we always had those wacky people who would schedule a meeting at like, 8:30. And why would anybody schedule a meeting at 8:30? And I just came to this point where I was like, I will not attend. You want me at a meeting? 9:00, 9:30, 10:00, even better. Like, it was just not pleasurable for me to be rushing to the office, to be in a meeting at 8:30.

And, of course, it was a complete, like, act of privilege that I was in a senior role that I could say I couldn't attend, and maybe wouldn't have done that at the beginning of my career, right? And in fact, I didn't do that at the beginning of my career, right?





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If the meeting was at 7 am, I pushed through and made it happen. So just to say like something as simple as that, right? Everybody's just like, everybody just expects, oh, no, of course, everyone will come at 8:30. It doesn't matter whether it makes sense or not, or, or is this conducive, even to our best work?

Sometimes, we remove pleasure from the equation, right? And you think about pleasure, if we think about fun or enjoyment, right, all these different aspects of pleasure. We remove that. Are we really gonna do our best work?

Amber Taylor

Yeah. And like you were saying, it was just, you focused on what Maggie wanted. Like, it wasn't like, "I'm an HR person and a senior role. I'm a wife. I'm a mother. I'm X, Y, and Z." It's just like, "I'm Maggie. And I'm not attending this meeting at 8:30 in the morning."

And just moving from that and really living in that. So I think I forgot the question you just asked, but I remembered a different one. I think we have a hard time accepting that or we even resist pleasure because it's on the spectrum of life. Like we've heard it all before, like, life is 50/50. It's going to be good. And it's going to be bad.

But as we've learned, the way you do one thing is the way you do a lot of things. So if you're -- if you have trouble accepting your emotions, like whether it be positive or negative, like, you probably have a hard time accepting the spectrum of emotions.

So if you have a hard time being angry, you probably also have a hard time like feeling joy. So





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that's how like, I think that we can be resistant to pleasure. But the biggest part of it is accepting yourself and accepting, like, all of these things are just like sensations in our body. All of these things are passing.

And embracing it in the moment, especially like with pleasure, it's just, it's such a way to just be in the moment. And I think that's why a lot of -- another reason why people have a struggle with it or resist it, is because they're worrying about the past or worrying about the future. And just being in the moment of now, is also revolutionary.

Maggie

Yeah, that's where all the pleasure really is, is in the moment, right now. What's really interesting about that, when you said about the past, and the future is also anticipation can be a beautiful form of pleasure.

So there's all kinds of interesting research around vacations. Where when you set a vacation, and you know, you're going to go whatever, in six months, or going on this epic vacation, that the enjoyment you get from looking forward to it is sometimes equal or more than the enjoyment you have when you're on it.

And that, to me is just a reminder, that pleasure happens in the present moment. In the present moment, right now, I can be super excited about that thing. And I can enjoy that pleasure like multiple times over because of that, right? Because I can rejoice in it already now.

And I think that idea that we resist both the intense -- we'll call it negative emotion and positive emotion, for lack of a better word -- I kind of think that all emotions are equal. So I don't like to





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think of them through the negative positive lens.

But I know when I say that people will know exactly what I'm talking about. So we'll just use those words. But when we find that we resist pleasure, we're also often resisting the negative emotion too. What has helped you move out of resistance?

Amber Taylor

I'd say practice and curiosity. So more of like, why am I not letting myself enjoy this moment? Or feel happy right now? Why am I questioning if I deserve it? And even like, and that was a whole thing for me that that I dug into, like, do I deserve to feel pleasure right now? Do I deserve to be happy?

Well, you know, the house is a mess. There's dishes in the sink, I still got emails to answer and blah, blah, blah. I shouldn't be doing this right now. But no, I should. Because I deserve it no matter what, because it's a feeling. It's an emotion. It's an experience. And being right now in it can help me do so much more in the future.

Maggie

That's so good to think about: do I deserve it? If I have other issues, whatever they may be -- the dishes in the sink, the emotional dishes and the emotional sink -- whatever those issues may be, it's like, when you take it to, "Do I deserve it," we're probably going to go down a rabbit hole of frustration, somewhere, somehow.

But when we think we are wired for pleasure, it is how we were constructed by whatever made us and it's like, the most innate thing that we are absolutely capable of, is to experience





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pleasure, because this is how we were made into this world.

Then it's kind of like "Oh, pleasure is just like any other thing." Like, "Do I deserve to breathe?" We don't pause and ask ourselves, "Do I deserve this next breath?" We just breathe it. So imagine if we thought about pleasure, like breath like, it is part of what gives us life. Right?

Amber Taylor

Yeah. And like, and that's so true. Just to get into like the science part of it. It's like, pleasure is like a biological, right? Like it helps with so much. And when we experience pleasure, we release like, feel good hormones, like dopamine and serotonin and experiencing pleasure helps with overall mood. It helps with sleeping, eating, digestion.

Literally your cells communicating at like a cellular level. Memory, pro-social behaviors, and things like trust and empathy, like in any kind of partnership. Pleasure is what fuels those things. And when we experience pleasure, we also lower our tolerance for cortisol, which is the stress hormone. So when we experience pleasure and continue like a healthy practice of pleasure in our lives, we can actually lower our stress levels.

Maggie

Yes, pleasure is a self soothing activity, right? Like, it is part of bringing ourselves back to center. So from center, of course -- I always use this example of: imagine if something goes wrong, and you're freaking the freak out already, you're gonna freak out even bigger.

But if something goes wrong, and you're at center, you kind of roll with it, you figure it out, you keep going. Right? Okay, so now we know why pleasures are important, why it's revolutionary,





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how it affects our physiology, how important it is. Tell us the five steps to more pleasure.

Amber Taylor

Yeah. So the way that I broke this down is one, recognizing and detaching from the shame associated with how we view our own pleasure. And, again, this has to do with the conditioning, the “Do I deserve it,” or the “Well, I didn’t do this, or I didn’t hit this goal, or I’m not like, whatever.”

It’s just like, again, pleasure is a biological right. You don’t need to deserve it. And you don’t need to be shamed or ashamed about experiencing it.

Maggie

About experiencing it, about prioritizing it, about enjoying it when you have it, right? I think all of those things are so many cultural narratives around all of these different things, whether it’s sexual pleasure, or just taking time for yourself. Whether it’s a nap, whatever brings you joy.

I was watching an interview with Mindy Kaling. I am obsessed with this show called Never Have I Ever. Have you seen Never Have I Ever?

Amber Taylor

I’ve heard great things about it, but I haven’t seen it yet.

Maggie

Okay, everyone watch it. It’s on Netflix. Never Have I Ever -- everyone must watch it. Mindy Kaling is the executive producer of the show. And they asked her a question about her guilty pleasures.

And she says, “I don’t use the word guilty pleasures.” Because when you ask a man (we love





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men), but when you ask a man, you know, did you watch football this weekend? He never says, “Oh, yeah, football. It’s my guilty pleasure.”

Like that never happens, right? But if I read a romance novel this weekend or something, oh, that’s my guilty pleasure. So she made this explanation. I’m like, yes, Mindy Kaling. There are no guilty pleasures for Mindy Kaling. And I propose to everyone listening: if there’s something you’re considering right now, as your guilty pleasure -- just remove the guilty and keep the pleasure. What do you think, Amber?

Amber Taylor

Definitely, like if it’s fun, if it brings you joy, if you can enjoy yourself doing it, then go for it.

Maggie

Yeah, love it. So the first step: recognize and detach from whatever shame or guilt that you feel. And this is one way to think about it is like, why would we add guilty to the pleasure. We can just remove the guilty part, right?

Amber Taylor

Yeah. Remove the guilt.

Maggie

And of course, if you need help with that, we’re both Life Coaches. You can find us and we can help you. No problem.

Amber Taylor





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That's our jam.

Maggie

That's our jam. Okay, the second step you said is experimenting. So tell us about experimenting?

Amber Taylor

Yeah, this is just really trying things out, seeing what you like and what you don't like. And don't be afraid, like, don't shame yourself, if you don't like something that's commonly liked or whatever. It's really just finding ways to find those small pleasures, those big pleasures, the medium sized ones, and incorporating them into your daily routine.

Maggie

And also, I find that with experimenting, you really have to find the place in your heart where you are willing to try new things and let it be okay when you don't like them. So my husband and I, for example, we like board games that, like -- it's two of us, so we like things that only two people can play.

And we try new games every now and then. And sometimes, they are epic fails. Like sometimes there's too many rules to follow and then I get frustrated. Like, it has to be simple or I'm gonna play it, you know?

And, but we're willing to have those sort of epic fails and have a night where we just try a game and we're just like, "No, this is not for us," in order to then come across the game that we're like, "Oh my gosh, we can play this, you know, forever," right? And so that willingness to say, you know what, when I experiment, it might not always go amazing, but that's okay. That's part of the





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process.

Amber Taylor

Yeah, yeah. And especially like, there's so many sources out or resources, telling you what to do and telling you how to find pleasure, how to find gratitude, or how to live your best life, and all of those things and like, it's not a one size fits all.

It's you have to try and do things. Like some people may love going to the park and doing yoga and blah, blah, blah. Like for me, I can't stand bugs -- like that does not bring me joy. And it's just like allowing that to be okay. Like trying it, "Oh, okay, it works for some people. It doesn't work for me. Let me continue to find what I like." I like yoga indoors on some days. But yeah.

Maggie

Finding what works for us and letting it be what it is. It's like, it doesn't have to work for anyone else. It just has to work for us. That's part of that sort of revolutionary idea that there isn't just one way. There's more than one way to any place we want to arrive that and that really is a sort of patriarchal smashing activity.

So think about this: when you're traveling, or walking the dog, or doing whatever, this is the way we dismantle our internal patriarchy is by finding our own connection with pleasure. Which it sounds like, "Really, that's how we do it?"

It's one of the ways. It's not the only way. So important. Yeah. Okay, then you tell us doing the work to figure out who you are and what you want. So to tell us about: what is the work? I mean, we talk about this on every episode, but in this context, what is the work?





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Amber Taylor

Yeah, the work again, we're Life Coaches. But the work is really like asking yourself questions, understanding your belief systems, and why you believe those things. And if you want to continue to believe them, like really knowing who you are at your core.

Like you said, you're not a morning person. I totally vibe with that. I am not a morning person either. But even the simple task of saying like, "I don't do morning meetings, like that's not for me," and not judging yourself for it, but actually creating a schedule around where you don't have to do morning meetings, and you don't have to force yourself to do them or feel bad about it.

Maggie

And here's the thing first, like Amber and I run our own businesses, we can create our own schedules, that is a very special and unique thing that we have. I worked for many years in HR, where I didn't have the luxury of being able to do that. And I just had to make that work.

But what I did do, even then, was I tried to find the pleasure even in the smallest moments. So if we did have the meeting, I was the one who would bring like the scratch and sniff stickers that smelled like grape and be like, "Oh, that was a great contribution. Have a sticker." And everybody would like crack up and whatever.

So it's like we would find the little things that would bring us pleasure, even in the thing that is challenging. And I do want to just speak to that. That it's -- some of the things we talk about, we have sort of paved the way to be able to do that. Now running your own business is very





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difficult. Sometimes, we can take the morning off, but we're working until 1am to get a project in and stuff like that.

So there's always the plus and minus of it all. But the idea that you can look for the tiniest pleasure, wherever you are right now, whatever circumstances you have today: what is your version of a scratch and sniff sticker? I was always, like, fascinated. Those things -- you buy, they're like five sheets or something. And they were like \$2. So much joy for \$2, right?

Amber Taylor

Yeah, yeah. And that's such an important point that you bring up. Because when you are figuring out who you are and finding yourself, and once you start piecing together that picture, that version of yourself, that becomes your North Star. You are on the path there, but you may not always be there.

But knowing where you're going, helps you make decisions. Like if you can't make your schedule, and you have to go through the morning meeting -- we're just gonna stay with this example -- but like finding those things. Like Maggie is a ball of light, like a ball of joy all the time. Of course, she brings sniffy stickers, but finding that thing that works for you.

Instead of -- she definitely could have taken the approach of, "Oh, well, since I don't want to be here, I'm just going to act like I don't want to be here. And I'm not going to talk to anybody. And I'm going to sit here with a frown on my face and blah, blah." That's not aligned with Maggie's North Star. So she wouldn't make the decision to go down that road. And that's what prioritizing your own pleasure does. It helps you navigate.





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Maggie

Yes, it helps you navigate and also for example, I'm now transported to this place where we're both in an office and we both work together. We're both at this meeting (Amber and I) and I can just imagine Amber maybe turning on the radio right before the meeting and like hyping herself up and being all like "Woo Hoo!" right?

And then going to the meeting, but from that energy and from that energetic like exuberance of having enjoyed you know music stuff like that. I used to, when I would write offer letters, I would put Diana Krall jazz music -- classics. And I would have this soft music. And it was something that was very sort of cumbersome. It was, you know, I had to be very precise as I'm writing people's salaries and benefits and all these things.

And that's another way -- like the simplest way that I added pleasure to something that was very real, it's very routine. But also, it was very meticulous. I had to pay really close attention to what I was offering someone. I remember I had a typo once when I offered somebody a job like five years in the future. They're like, "I'd really like to start the job sooner than like 2025. Is that okay?" It's kinda funny.

But I would just put this special music that every time I was doing that activity, I would like, look forward to listening to that soft music, and it would put me in the mindset of just concentration. So that was like the tiniest bit of pleasure that I could bring to something that inherently didn't really have a lot of natural pleasure in it, so to speak.

So those are the little moments that when we talk about pleasure, I think, as a society we look a lot for those big sort of Oscar night moments, those big epic pleasure moments. In sex, it's like





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the orgasm, right? As opposed to the tiny moments that lead up to everything where we can have so much joy. What do you think of that?

Amber Taylor

Definitely, it's like when you just used the sex example. It's the foreplay. It's the lighting the candles. It's setting the music. It's the having a nice dinner beforehand, or whatever. It's the -- it's, as we talked about before, the anticipation. Like that end goal is like cool we'll get there eventually, but we can enjoy the route on the way.

Maggie

And when we're enjoying the route on the way -- whether we get there or not starts to matter less, which paradoxically creates the conditions where you're more likely to get wherever it is you want to go.

Whether it's an orgasm, or whatever the other goal or bigger pleasure goal may be, right? Okay, so then you say it's really important to grow our confidence. That's step four. So, and the idea that we will have our own back, so tell us a little bit about that.

Amber Taylor

Yeah, this goes back to kind of the idea of failure. And I don't even really like to call it failure. Because if you learn something, to me, it's not a fail. But being willing for it to not go right or well. Being willing for it to be messy. Being willing for it to be wrong.

And no matter what happens, having your own back the whole time. And what I mean by that is: don't be a jerk to yourself. Like don't, "Oh, man, I should have done this." Or, "If I just did it like this,





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then I'd be here." Like whatever. Like no. You are where you are. And you don't have to be mean.

You can just allow yourself to be, without being a jerk to yourself, without shaming yourself, without judging yourself. And as you like, move without kind of that baggage, you build that muscle, you build that confidence.

So when people are "Hey, do you want to do this?" "No, I don't think I..." Or, "Do you want to do this?" "I would actually like to do it like this." Or like all of that. Or, "Yes. 100%! Hell yes. Sign me up." You find what you're aligned with by finding what you're not.

Maggie

100% and listening to you, I was thinking that, that inner critic, that harsh voice we have inside, it is internalized. It is our voice. So there's the micro and the macro. So the micro: it is our internalized inner critic. But there's so much of that internalization, that really is the patriarchal culture that we live in.

This, "No, no, there's no time for pleasure, we're on a clock, we got to do things, we got to move, we got to go on to the next thing. Whatever the external, big achievement is, we haven't done that yet. We better do that next." That sort of running narrative.

And especially, and I think you and I work with a very similar clientele, where high achieving women who have strived a lot in their life to get to where they are -- in some ways, that narrative has helped, right? Because it has helped us achieve a lot of things.

And then we get to this point where we have achieved all the things, but that voice is, "What's





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next? What's next? What's next?" Right? And it's just noticing that part of it is internalized. And part of it is the cultural narrative that tells us, "Oh, no, we should be striving for the next thing. Bigger, better, faster, bolder."

You know, all of those things and I just think it dissipates a little when we notice that it's not just us. It's also the cultural narrative that we've grown up in. What are your thoughts about that Amber?

Amber Taylor

Yeah. No, I agree. And kind of as you were talking, I was thinking when I was in my corporate job, I actually found myself telling myself, I couldn't take a lunch. Like I had to keep going. And I had to keep -- like, there's also that narrative that like, you can never stop like, you can never race.

Like if -- the thing that comes to me is -- and I'm pretty sure I was told this as a kid, I don't think it was all me. But like, don't take your foot off the gas. If you do, then they'll catch up. You'll lose your spot, blah, blah. All of that. And I definitely internalized it. And when I -- actually, one day, I just sat back and I was like, "Wait, I can't eat. Like, why? Why am I doing this?"

Like if I continue this, like, it's not sustainable. Like, it's just, it's just not sustainable to keep doing this, and putting ourselves through this and making ourselves adhere to these impossible standards, just to try to get to the next thing. And then once we get there, we gotta get to the next thing. It's never enough.

Maggie

Yeah. So if anyone here is skipping lunch -- I think we've all done it at some point, right? We





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need to pause and ask ourselves, why? What's going on? What's happening? We just want to check in, right? Occasionally, you skip one lunch in a blue moon, that's fine.

But if we're just like, I have to power through every single day. And I know, on the one hand, it's kind of like we've gotten a lot done by powering through, right? There's a part of our brain, that's gonna say, but that's how we get things done. Ask me how I know everyone. This is not foreign to me, right?

So it's like, to really take a moment and say, "Do I want this?" And we're using this work example. But obviously, it's the Marriage Life Coach Podcast. And it's like, in our marriages, in our relationships. It's like: where am I powering through? Where am I sacrificing my pleasure?

These are the things that when we catch them, when we ask these questions, you can just turn the whole relationship around. Just one -- living into the answer of that one question. For everyone listening, if we're just like, "Where am I powering through? And where am I sacrificing my pleasure?"

You just take that and answer that. If you get stuck, you call us. We help you, right? But really living into that as we get to such a complete, profound shift in your life, just from that one question. Okay. And that brings us to the last step, which is really the forever step, which is rinse and repeat. So tell us about rinsing and repeating.

Amber Taylor

Yeah, it's a process. You're not going to get it right on the first time. And it's going to be iterations because as you grow, as you change, as you learn, and experience life, you may not experience





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pleasure in the same ways, or relate to it in the same ways.

There may be things you add, there may be things you drop. So just continuing to go through the process and break down those things. Like step one, which was recognizing and detaching from the shame. Constant work.

You'll find things and be like, "Oh, I did this work." And then something will happen and be like, "Oh, wow. I'm back here again." It is that process.

Maggie

And I would say, I used to work in the cruise industry, which is very much a 24/7 industry and I used to sort of get emails at all hours, and I'm not really proud of this, but it's the truth. I used to respond at all hours too, you know, and it has taken me years to really condition myself to say, "It's safe to rest. It's safe to relax. It's safe to enjoy," right?

And I have a saying now in my Coaching business: there are no emergencies in Coaching. There are other professions where there are genuine emergencies where life and death is happening. But not in Coaching, right? And so that helps me take the lunch. It helps me do the pause. Right?

So I think that rinse and repeat and knowing that it's a process is absolutely okay, right? The overachiever in us is like, "Well, how do I get it done? And when will I be done?" You will achieve milestones. You will feel better. And then it'll come with a different name and a different face and a deeper or a different way. And we just want to allow for that too.





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Amber Taylor

Right? Right. And I think what you said is so important. It's safe to be wherever I'm at right now. It's safe to rest. It's safe to take a nap. It's safe to take a lunch break. It's safe for me to not respond to these emails. All of that is so important because our brain is like, "Oh my god, you're gonna die. Oh my god, you ahhhh..." Just the five sound alarm or whatever the saying is.

Maggie

Yes. Yes.

Amber Taylor

And it's a big deal. And it's like just partnering with yourself, partnering with your brain, and like actually taking a survey of what's going on, like, "Am I in danger? Is this a threat to my life?" No. Okay. It's safe for me to proceed in whatever I wanted.

Maggie

I love that so much. When we're assessing danger -- I'll tell you something that I share with my private clients. When things happen, and we're kind of trying to figure out what to do about them, I like to think about scope. I like to think about frequency and intensity. And it's like, how often is something happening? How intense is it when it occurs?

And sometimes you don't have a real measurement. And maybe we're arguing a lot with a partner, or maybe something's going on that's not quite right. But we're not totally sure. Am I in danger? I could be. I'm not sure. I don't know. It's like, oh, let's check the frequency. Let's check the intensity. This is a great little place to go and see what we find. Help us get more clear about what's next.





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I think that's so important. I absolutely love your perspective on pleasure. I think this has been such an amazing conversation. I love that you did this for your final project. It's so, so powerful and so useful. I think that women owning their pleasure is really revolutionary. And any little drops in that ocean that we can pour into that ocean is just so important for us to do. So first of all, thank you for coming on to share this with everyone.

Amber Taylor

Yeah, thank you so much for having me. I've loved talking with you.

Maggie

Oh yay. Okay, so one of the things I always do at the end of an interview is to ask a question from The Questions for Couples Journal. So here's the one for Amber. Are you ready? Okay, what is one feeling that you'd love to experience every day?

Amber Taylor

Yeah, so, I don't know the exact name for it, but it's just like those butterflies that you get when you're like, really excited or really like anticipating something and it's just like, "Oh, I can just flutter away." I love that one.

Maggie

Yes, like the butterfly flutters. I think that's like a really beautiful feeling. Right? It's a mix of excitement and anticipation and a little more, right? There's a little special zest. It's like a dash of lemon in there.

Amber Taylor





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Yes. It's a little extra flavor.

Maggie

A little extra. I love it so much. Okay, what is the best way to follow you, to hear more about everything you're teaching and Coaching on?

Amber Taylor

Yeah, so you can find me on @ambertaylorcoaching on all platforms. Instagram is a great way to keep up and I'm also on Facebook at Amber Taylor Coaching, as well as my website, www.ambertaylorcoaching.com.

Maggie

Ambertaylorcoaching.com. Everyone go follow Amber. This is revolutionary. And this is like one of the -- I mean, in our class, right? This is the first iteration of this, this pleasure of teaching that Amber is giving, and look at how deep and profound it is. And I just can't wait to see it evolve over time. It's just going to be so amazing.

So thank you for being here. Thank you for saying yes. Thank you everyone for listening. We hope you had as much fun and pleasure as we did talking about pleasure.

Amber Taylor

Definitely. Thank you so much.

Maggie

Bye, everyone.

