



EPISODE 87: IMPROVING YOUR MARRIAGE INSIDE THE MARRIAGE MBA WITH DEISE CLEMENTS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/87](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/87)

Maggie Reyes:

Hello everyone, welcome to another episode of The Marriage Life Coach Podcast. Today, I am delighted to introduce you to Deise Clements. She is in The Marriage MBA, she's one of my students in that program. She's going to share a little bit about her experience. And, she's going to tell us what she learned, what she's practicing, how it's impacted her. She's also a certified life coach from the same school where I proudly studied, The Life Coach School. She helps moms feel better in any part of their life in which they feel challenged. So, Deise, tell us a little bit first, before we dive in, about what you do and who you help? And then, I'm so excited to dive into your experiences in the program.

Deise Clements:

Thank you so much, Maggie. I'm so excited to be here. So, just what you're saying, I help moms with everything, whatever is coming up for them. Whatever it is week to week, it might be a parenting thing, or a marriage thing, or a sex thing, or just emotions thing, or something with work. Just whatever's coming up in their life, helping with that. They may feel like they're just checking all these boxes but something is still missing, and I help them really figure out what that is and how to create the life they love.

Maggie Reyes:

I love it, so good, awesome. I know you do a lot of your own personal development work, you're that person that, like me, I'm reading the books, I'm going to the workshops, I'm doing the things. Tell me, why did you decide to join The Marriage MBA?

Deise Clements:





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There were actually several reasons that I want to touch on.

Maggie Reyes:

Awesome.

Deise Clements:

So, the first thing, I really, really was just feeling a pull to be a part of a community of women who were committed to improving their marriages, who had that at the forefront of their minds, and wanted that to be an active priority. And then, the other thing is, I really wanted to learn from you and experience your coaching. A few months before that I'd actually finished coaching with Danielle Savory, one of our mutual friends, who's amazing. And, she was all the time just raving about how you're the best marriage coach in the world, and she just couldn't say enough good things about you. So, I was hearing awesome things about you all the time. And, Danielle, at that time, wasn't offering any more one-to-one coaching, and I'd already gone through her group. I really wanted to keep working on my relationship in different ways.

Maggie Reyes:

The momentum, yeah.

Deise Clements:

Some other things were happening at the same time. I had some money triggers come up in my marriage, and I was listening to one of your podcasts and heard that The Marriage MBA was open. I was like, "You know what? Now's the time. I'm going to see if it's still open and this is perfect." And then, when I think about hesitations, initially I was just really grounded in my desire





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like, “I want to do this.” And then, I booked the consult, I was really excited about it. And then, I talked to my husband about how I wanted to do this, and he was not as excited as I was.

Maggie Reyes:
Surprise.

Deise Clements:

From his perspective, we’ve up-leveled our marriage in so many ways over the last year. Even the year before, we’d hit some really low lows, especially when COVID first hit, and I was so glad I had a coach. I don’t know how people made it through that without that. Having Danielle to help me work through some of those things was amazing. I really had felt that year like our marriage got to on average four-star, sometimes five-star. I’ll circle back to that in a minute, because this came up on the consult and it was really important.

Deise Clements:

Then, some things changed, in circumstances and stuff. I just really wanted it to still be this priority. But, I started because he felt like, “Our marriage is in a pretty good place, why do we need to spend 1000s more dollars on coaching? Don’t you want to spend that money on something else more? Our marriage is fine.” So then, I had all this drama, and all this doubt, and all this, “Oh my gosh, I should have been more sure first, why did I book this? Should I be spending this money?” My mind was just spinning out. I even considered canceling the consult, because I usually don’t get on consults unless I’m 99% sure I’m going to be a yes, and at that point I was no longer 99% sure that I was going to be a yes. But, it was too late to cancel it online and I recognized that I did really want to do it and I was like, “I’m still going to show up for this,





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THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/87](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/87)

even if I'm a complete hot mess for it."

Deise Clements:

I know you probably remember, but when I got on the consult I was just really a hot mess, in the best possible way. And, just tears, and just like, "I want this gone, I don't even know if I really want to be on here, and I'm having all of this stuff come up." And, it was the most magical experience, it almost brings me to tears because... I might cry, which I didn't anticipate. But, just the way that you held me with so much love and so much presence, and honoring myself to you for even sharing all of that vulnerability, so that I could have that experience. I know this as a coach, that just because you get on a consult doesn't mean you have to be, "Yes." But, that doesn't mean I know that for everyone else's consults, right?

Maggie Reyes:

Yes.

Deise Clements:

And so, even just hearing you say, "Listen, just because you're on this consult doesn't mean you have to be a yes at the end. It's really important to me that this is a yes for you, and a yes for me, and that's what we're here to discover." That just helped me really relax into the conversation and let go of any expectation. It's like I needed to know if I was a yes or not before I got on the consult. Which, kind of sounds ridiculous saying out loud, but that is where I was.

Maggie Reyes:

It's so interesting. Let's pause there for a second, because I know that... Deise is a very thoughtful





EPISODE 87: IMPROVING YOUR MARRIAGE INSIDE THE MARRIAGE MBA WITH DEISE CLEMENTS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/87](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/87)

person, and I think everything that she shares today is going to be so useful for any decision you're making in your life or for anything that you're doing. We're talking about The Marriage MBA specifically, but I really invite everyone to just listen about decisions that you're making in your life and that rollercoaster of feeling up and down. First of all, that's a normal part of being human, and there's absolutely zero wrong with that, so let's just say that out loud explicitly.

Deise Clements:

100%.

Maggie Reyes:

I want to pause there, because there's just so many things that I just want to be there for a moment first. One is, exploration is part of growth, "Is this a good fit for me? Is this a place where I want to grow? Does this philosophy or this approach match with my values?" All of that, we have to figure that out. That's why I have you come on the podcast, to share, "These are the things we talk about, this is how it works. For everyone listening, this is how we go." There's no secrets that we have here, this is how we do. That's one thing.

Maggie Reyes:

The other thing is, I loved that you mentioned Danielle, she's been on the podcast more than once. We will link to her episodes on this episode. So, if this is the first time you've ever heard the name Danielle Savory, Deise and I are very proud to be the people on Earth who introduce you to her. She is one of the most innovative sex coaches. I absolutely love her work. As you know, we're good friends behind the scenes, and I quote her often as well. So, we'll link to her episodes. Also, just wanted to mention that shout out to Danielle.





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THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/87](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/87)

Deise Clements:

Woo woo.

Maggie Reyes:

One thing that you also said is, this desire to just invest in coaching as a thing, regardless of where it was. I think one of the things that happens to us when we have an experience, when we transform our lives, or achieve a goal that is really meaningful to us, is we say, "Wait, a coach can help me figure that out." My friend Melanie calls it, "Pressing the shortcut button." It's like, "Oh, you press this button and now suddenly you have help." I'm having that experience myself working with a health coach. I have some health goals in my life, I try to do it by myself, it didn't work out very well. But, I knew that there's a coach who thinks about this 24/7 all the time and will show me just the things I need to do. I don't need to think about it 24/7 like she does, I just do the things that she's teaching me, and then I can create different results than what I have in my life.

Maggie Reyes:

So, I just want to pull out all those points, because I think it's so valuable to just see that holistic journey. Okay, continue.

Deise Clements:

Yeah, so good. I even want to add to that too, that's another reason why I wanted to say yes to this. Because, when I really sat with, "What do I really want to do? Just because I want to? Just because it sounds like it would be fun?" Because, I'm really trying to live my life more and more from that desire and passion place driving my decisions. The Marriage MBA was what came up





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THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/87](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/87)

when I asked myself that question. I really want to do this. Not that there's not stuff for me to work on in my marriage, because of course there is, but not so much from... And, I also think it's fine, if you're getting into coaching, even if you are feeling more of a need. But, for me, as part of my growth and this time, I really just wanted to do it, just because it sounded fun kind of a thing.

Maggie Reyes:

Yeah, it's the difference between feeling graspy or feeling detached, this idea between a want or a need. It's like, "Do I need to have this to help me? Or do I want to have this to help me?" Is a great way to look at it. Here's one way that I look at it. I love The Rock, if you listen to the podcast you'll have heard me quote him other times. He still goes to the gym every day. He already has the muscles, they're very well developed, he shows them to the world on a regular basis, and he still has to go to the gym. So, I think there's this idea in our culture, "If I need help with something, something is wrong." Or, "If I need maintenance, or if I need support to keep something going..." It's like, "I think The Rock still goes to the gym and his life is amazing, he has great adventures, but he's still at the gym."

Deise Clements:

Yes, so good.

Maggie Reyes:

Yeah, love it. Okay, continue. What do you have next on your list?

Deise Clements:

The other thing I wanted to share, this wasn't a hesitation so much for me signing up this time,





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but in the past. Because, I actually was introduced to you back in 2018 when I was getting certified as a coach and considering where I wanted to specialize and all these different things. But, I remember looking at your page... I want to speak to this in case anyone else is having these thoughts so they can work through them. I remember thinking, "She wouldn't understand me. She doesn't have kids. She has a different life experience, she got married under different circumstances. She won't understand or she won't be able to help." So, in case anyone else listening to this has any of those thoughts, I just want them to know that that's not true. You don't have to have the exact same life experience as someone for it to be a really valuable and helpful experience. I wanted to just comment on that too.

Maggie Reyes:
I love that.

Deise Clements:

That's another thing that Danielle even helped me work through indirectly, by talking about how amazing you were. I didn't realize that was subconsciously there, but later realized that was there. I just think that's really important for people to know as well.

Maggie Reyes:

I love that for so many reasons. We all have different life experiences. And, you can have identical life experiences and not really understand the person. And, you can have different life experiences and sometimes what you bring is a clean slate. Because, there are things where I have had no experience with, "Well, walk me through it, why is it that way? Tell me more." And in that process, it's not really for me to understand, your thinking becomes clearer about the thing,





EPISODE 87: IMPROVING YOUR MARRIAGE INSIDE THE MARRIAGE MBA WITH DEISE CLEMENTS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/87](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/87)

but I have no assumptions about it because I don't have that experience. So, I don't come at it with a mile of assumptions that we have to get rid of either.

Deise Clements:

Yeah, totally.

Maggie Reyes:

So, what helped you think, "She can help me even if she doesn't have my same life experience,"?

Deise Clements:

I think one was the trust factor, just from hearing how much Danielle talked about you, it just subconsciously built up a lot of trust. But two, I think also just seeing all the moms you were helping. I think at first my brain was like, "Oh, that must be the only mom she's helping," it wasn't conscious, but I think subconsciously it was kind of like when your brain believes something it will discount the evidence to the contrary. You know what I'm saying?

Maggie Reyes:

Right, yeah.

Deise Clements:

But, I think at the end of the day it was also just the desire to work with you and then that became less significant too.

Maggie Reyes:





EPISODE 87: IMPROVING YOUR MARRIAGE INSIDE THE MARRIAGE MBA WITH DEISE CLEMENTS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/87](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/87)

For everyone listening, we all have decisions we make, whether it's a program we want to apply for, whether it's continuing education we want to do where we think, "This is not for me." Or, "Other people can have this, but I can't." Or, "This will work for them, but not for..." Any thoughts that are like that. I think it's just important for us to notice we get to decide what's for us. We get to decide if we want to have an experience. I'm a person that even before I became a coach or did this work, I was in human resources, and I did a lot of continuing education in human resources too. There was a time where I went back to college as an adult, so I went to community college as an adult, but there was a time where I had no degree, I had nothing. And, I was like, "I can't have that because I don't have these other credentials that you need to have." I would just volunteer for things, "If they let me in, I'll do it."

Maggie Reyes:

One example of that is I love The Gottman Institute to Research, and they train therapists. They have a wonderful structure for how they do that, they have level one, level two, and level three. Level one, anyone can go to, because levels two and three you have to do practicums and have all the credentials, which is absolutely the most appropriate thing, I totally applaud that. But, I was like, "Wait, I can go to level one? I want to go to level one."

Deise Clements:

I love it.

Maggie Reyes:

I had to overcome my own objections like, "Oh, I'll be the only life coach in a room of therapists, will that be okay?" It turned out to be fabulous. I was fascinated by them and they were





EPISODE 87: IMPROVING YOUR MARRIAGE INSIDE THE MARRIAGE MBA WITH DEISE CLEMENTS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/87](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/87)

fascinated by me.

Deise Clements:

So good.

Maggie Reyes:

So, I just wanted to speak to that for everyone. Because, it takes maybe different names and faces, or a different decision that you're making, but the process of thinking through it is the same, so I love that you brought that up.

Deise Clements:

Yeah. I think it's also been me just over time realizing that it's not actually the circumstances that even create the things, it's your thoughts about them.

Maggie Reyes:

Yes.

Deise Clements:

And so, even if someone has a different life experience, it doesn't mean they don't understand or have an experience like the thought patterns within the different circumstances too.

Maggie Reyes:

Yeah, I love that so much. Tell us, what are some of your favorite takeaways from The Marriage MBA? What are some of the things that have stuck with you that have either helped you move





EPISODE 87: IMPROVING YOUR MARRIAGE INSIDE THE MARRIAGE MBA WITH DEISE CLEMENTS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/87](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/87)

forward now or that you just know you're going to have that in your back pocket for the rest of your life?

Deise Clements:

First of all, I feel like I got that before I even joined because the consult was so valuable. It was a no-brainer to sign up. By the end of the call I was like, "Yeah, totally, absolutely I want to do this." I was re-grounded in my desire. On the consult, one of the things that was so huge is I had shared with you how there are some areas in my life where I really struggled to feel like it was mine, and I would kind of remove myself from it, not let myself enjoy it, feel like I hadn't earned it. And so, there's just all of these things in my house that I just wouldn't use, or wouldn't feel like was mine, or wouldn't take in.

Deise Clements:

I feel like you just asked such powerful questions too. You can just ask one question that is so life changing. And, the homework you gave me is so powerful, where you're just like, "You know what? I just want you to go around your house and just be like, 'This is mine, this is mine, this is mine,' and really taking and soaking that in." Just really allowing myself to do that. It's still a practice for me, because my brain on default, I just notice how it will want to go in that pattern of, "Not mine, haven't earned it." But, actively, continually practicing, kind of like The Rock in the gym, like, "This is mine and I can enjoy this."

Deise Clements:

Even also... This will actually go into one of the next points, but questioning what it even means to earn something and why that's even a thing. That came up actually later in the group. I had





EPISODE 87: IMPROVING YOUR MARRIAGE INSIDE THE MARRIAGE MBA WITH DEISE CLEMENTS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/87](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/87)

this experience where I was really questioning all these things like, “What does it even mean to earn something? Why is this even coming up for me?” Another thing that I’ve done a lot of work in is the keeping score stuff, so I’ll talk about that in a second. I got to this point where I was just like, “I can just have my life.”

Maggie Reyes:

Wait, okay pause. “I can just have my life.” Someone right now needs to hear that sentence. You can just have your life. You can just have it. It’s yours.

Deise Clements:

Yeah. Just so powerful.

Maggie Reyes:

You don’t have to justify it to anyone. And I’ll tell you, I feel so resonant with that because I will say, “This is my real life,” to myself. “I get to work with people like Deise? This is my real life?” I take that in. One of the things, and you know this because I say in the group, is that I do all this stuff that I tell you to do, in some way. Sometimes I’m not working on my marriage, but then I’m working on it in my business, or in my health, or in some other way. But, anything that I’m like, “This is my body.” I’ve now lost 28-something pounds in my weight loss journey, I’m like, “This is my body, it’s mine, I get to have it, it’s mine.” It’s so simple. It sounds so simple. Some of you are going to listen to this episode and be like, “Okay, I’m going to do it tomorrow,” and some of you are actually going to do it, and you’re going to notice that it’s simple and hard. It’s simple and complicated. It’s doable and challenging, all at the same time. When you stick with it, it gets easier, and easier, and easier, and it does get better, and better, and better, no matter how





EPISODE 87: IMPROVING YOUR MARRIAGE INSIDE THE MARRIAGE MBA WITH DEISE CLEMENTS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/87](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/87)

simple it may be. Okay, continue, this is so good.

Deise Clements:

Yeah. Another thing that you talk about that I love thinking about is the spiral, and combining that with the idea of our minds get attached to permanence, “Once you have it then you should never struggle with it again.” So, I love how you talk about the spiral where it’s like, “Yeah, you have it here, and then you’re going to around the spiral and you’re going to be at a different level, and you’re going to experience that same kind of struggle in a different way, and you get to uplevel it.” So, it’s this idea that we keep having the opportunity to keep growing.

Maggie Reyes:

Yes.

Deise Clements:

And so, it was really fascinating. I really lived into that thought solidly the whole weekend, and it felt so incredible. And then, it was funny to watch my brain because after a couple states like, “Okay, we’re done having now, let’s get back to work. You can’t just have your life forever, there’s a time limit or a ceiling on this.” And so, really playing with integrating the having with the creation, versus the feeling of the either or-ness of it. If that makes sense.

Maggie Reyes:

What came up for me hearing you say that is we live in a, “What’s next?” Society. In the cultural narrative that we live it’s always like, “What’s your next project? What’s your next goal? What’s your next thing?” It’s very, “What’s next?” Oriented. That can be useful at times, but what happens





EPISODE 87: IMPROVING YOUR MARRIAGE INSIDE THE MARRIAGE MBA WITH DEISE CLEMENTS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/87](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/87)

is when we don't have any nuance around it and only focus on what's next, we forget to rejoice, and savor, and enjoy what's here and now.

Deise Clements:

Yeah, soaking it in.

Maggie Reyes:

Soaking it in, what's here and now. Even if some are struggling in your marriage, one of the things I always challenge in my students and clients to do is, "What is working? There's a reason you married this human, there's a reason you haven't left yet, or at all, or don't plan to ever. What is working? Let's just give that equal time to whatever it is that you do want next. Not even more time, just equal time." And sometimes, just noticing what's working, suddenly you look around and you're like, "Oh my gosh, we're a great team in this thing and we actually work out great in this other place. This thing actually is working better than it was before. Oh, there's this one area where it feels really painful and I definitely want to focus on that." But, you can start to do that from a place of seeing all the other things that are working.

Deise Clements:

Yeah, I love that. I think the other thing that really helps me too is even just... Because, sometimes we want to go from really bad to really great and positive, and then you elastic back because you'll tell yourself this really positive thing but then your brain's like, "No you're not, that's not true." It feels like this elastic band snapping. Another thing that helps me too is just grounding myself in the facts. For instance, we have this piano, and that's one of the things that I wasn't letting myself own, or claim, or see as mine, or feel like I had earned, all this story that I





EPISODE 87: IMPROVING YOUR MARRIAGE INSIDE THE MARRIAGE MBA WITH DEISE CLEMENTS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/87](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/87)

had around it. So, combining the, “It’s mine,” with just the fact of, “I have a piano, I can play the piano,” without all the story of, “Oh, but I don’t play it as good as this person,” or, “I should play it better,” all the expectations or drama that our mind can create about that. Just going back to what’s the simple, neutral facts that you can just land in, and growing from there too.

Maggie Reyes:

That is so powerful. “I have a piano.” “I have two eyes,” or, “Two arms,” or, “I have a thumb.”

Deise Clements:

Yeah, and even adding onto that, “It belongs to me.”

Maggie Reyes:

“It belongs to me.”

Deise Clements:

Or, “This is mine.”

Maggie Reyes:

“This is mine.” That’s so good. I love it. What else?

Deise Clements:

The other thing that I really loved was the very first session of the program, when we were talking, I think, about stress cycles. And, you had shared with us about how people pleasing is a trauma response, and that was just mind-blowing for me to think about it that way, because it





EPISODE 87: IMPROVING YOUR MARRIAGE INSIDE THE MARRIAGE MBA WITH DEISE CLEMENTS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/87](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/87)

helped me access so much more love, and compassion, and an understanding. So much of the work I've done, continuing with this program on top of work before, deepening my understanding of stress cycles, and the body-mind connection, and processing through, and the expectations we have around our emotions, and all these different things. That was just so powerful for me to sit in having that type of relationship with that. I feel like it also just makes it so much easier to let the judgment we can have go. Because, I think a lot of us who may identify as people pleasers also take a lot of pride in being a person of integrity or honesty. And so, the more that you see that people pleasing is lying, it can bring up a lot of judgment, and being able to hold yourself in compassion, and not make that mean a lot of really painful things about you, like, "There's something wrong with you," or any other number of things, I think is really powerful.

Maggie Reyes:

So, one of the things we talk about in the program is stress cycles, and we go into a lot of depth because one of the things that I have seen... I really learned this reading Emily Nagoski's *Come As You Are*, is if you want to have a thriving sex life, you can't really have one if you're freaked out all the time. So, if you're in a stress cycle, whichever part of it you're in, that doesn't lead to thriving. And, if you're married, there's a small segment of the population that is asexual that I always want to speak to, because we don't really talk about it much most of the time. There's a small part of the population where you really just don't get enjoyment out of sex, and really that's fine. But, so many people have some enjoyment that they can have, and we want to find where that is. And, in order to find where that is, we need to talk about stress. They go together. We can't divorce them. We have to talk about both.

Maggie Reyes:





EPISODE 87: IMPROVING YOUR MARRIAGE INSIDE THE MARRIAGE MBA WITH DEISE CLEMENTS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/87](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/87)

So, we will link to Emily's episode in the show notes as well, just if you want to go deeper into that and understand that more, that was great to have her on. Obviously, she's such a big influence in my work, and as you know I quote her all the time, so that was great. And then, there's an episode called Advanced Emotional Weight Loss, where I talk about no convincing and no pretending. That pretending part is we're pretending, when we say, "Yes," when we really mean, "No." When we agree to things that aren't genuinely in our heart things that we want to do. That is just not conducive to thriving. So, my hypothesis is, "Let's thrive, let's know what thriving is, let's define what it is for each individual person, it's going to look slightly different what that looks like. Let's figure out what it looks like for you. And then, let's eliminate the things that we know will never lead to thriving not matter what your definition of it is." And, pretending is one of those things, it's not helpful.

Maggie Reyes:

But, we are conditioned, in our society and the cultural narratives that we have, to say, "Yes," when we mean, "No." When we are children and it's like, "It's better to be seen and not heard," we get these messages even as small children around what that looks like. And then, we internalize those messages, and then we take that into our lives, or our careers, or our businesses. So, obviously we go as deep as we can in the program, but today we want you to just start thinking about it, because that will help you.

Maggie Reyes:

What else do you want to share? I know that you have some things.

Deise Clements:





EPISODE 87: IMPROVING YOUR MARRIAGE INSIDE THE MARRIAGE MBA WITH DEISE CLEMENTS

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The other one I touched on a little bit earlier, it's kind of around the keeping score stuff. So, this is actually something that first came up on the consult, because I remember I had submitted to you, "I just want to work on some money stuff. My marriage on average is a four and then sometimes five-star." I remember you asking me questions on the call, and then you made a comment, something about, "It's not a four or five-star marriage," or something like that. At first, that kind of triggered me, because I was like, "Oh my gosh, if I don't have a four or five-star marriage, can I coach people on marriage stuff?" I was making it mean all of these things about what I should or shouldn't be doing, all these different things. But then, also I just opened up to how it could be true and recognize that I've kind of fallen into the trap of permanence, like, "Just because my marriage felt that way the year before..."

Deise Clements:

How I mentioned earlier, things had changed, I started working for Danielle, I was working a lot more hours, there was all the COVID changes. At last minute my kids would be home for two weeks at a time, my whole schedule was influx. And, at some point along the way, I started keeping score again and having, "If I do this, he should be doing that." I hadn't really seen that until we were on the consult that, "Oh my gosh, I've fallen into the keeping score pattern again." And, just recognized that because it's not perfect, first of all. And second of all, it's not permanent. Just because you checked that box at one point, kind of how you're talking about with The Rock and the gym, doesn't mean that you're set for the rest of life. Whatever you continue to practice is then what you're going to build.

Maggie Reyes:

Create. Yes.





EPISODE 87: IMPROVING YOUR MARRIAGE INSIDE THE MARRIAGE MBA WITH DEISE CLEMENTS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/87](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/87)

Deise Clements:

And, just because you hit four or five-star marriage doesn't mean you're guaranteed that the rest of your life if you're not still practicing things that continue to create the type of relationship that you have.

Maggie Reyes:

I love that so much. I want to clarify a couple of things. We had the consult, and if you're listening to this in 2021 and beyond, I now do it by application.

Deise Clements:

Okay.

Maggie Reyes:

But, what I did was, for everyone listening who's like, "I need to apply, I need one of those consults," I put all the best questions from the consult in the application. So, it is very literally what I would have asked you person to person. And, some of the answers might feel triggering, like when Deise said, "That felt a little activating when you said that." So, couple of things, as a coach, sometimes I will say something to another human that I see and I will see if what I see is true for them, or if I'm wrong. I am always open to being wrong. And, I will say something that can feel very confronting, or activating, or triggering, to see what's there. Because, you could have said, "No, I completely disagree, I'm completely anchored in our progress, this is how it is, you're just wrong about that." Which, I'm totally open too.

Maggie Reyes:





EPISODE 87: IMPROVING YOUR MARRIAGE INSIDE THE MARRIAGE MBA WITH DEISE CLEMENTS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/87](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/87)

But, because I said this thing, you were like, “Oh, here’s everything that I discovered where actually there is something there to look at.” So, here’s what I want to say about that, because it sounds a little intense out of context, so I want to give it some context. What I want to say is you, you person listening to us right now, you are the expert of your own experience, always. Whether it’s listening to this podcast, whether it’s in a group program with me, whether it’s in a conversation we have whenever we have it, you are always the expert in your own experience. I’ve talked to 100s of women about their marriages over the last few years, and I will see patterns that you don’t see, that’s why you hire a coach. It’s just like in baseball, they’re like, “Oh, did you notice that you always shift left when you’re going to go at bat? Maybe you should shift right, let’s see how that works.” Because, you’ve seen 1000 people go to bat, and you can ask that question.

Maggie Reyes:

Now, one person will say, “No, shifting left is how I make all my scores, that’s my signature move,” and then you’re done, there’s nothing else to talk about. Or, they might say, “Oh, maybe I should try that shifting right thing and see.” So, I want to just give everyone a little bit of context around that, because I think coming to things with a clean slate is something really important, just in the coaching process and just in how we think about things. I do come at it from a clean slate with, “Is this insight useful for you? Have you seen this? Have you observed this?” I just want to share that with everyone, especially if you’re not really familiar with what coaching is and you’re like, “I wonder what that’s like.” Sometimes it feels confronting. I literally have Deise here now to share that, to say, “It felt confronting and it was useful, because now I’m in a completely different place about it.”





EPISODE 87: IMPROVING YOUR MARRIAGE INSIDE THE MARRIAGE MBA WITH DEISE CLEMENTS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/87](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/87)

Deise Clements:

Yeah, I think triggers are such a gift, and I do think you do that so well. I think that was actually a huge part of my work in the beginning, because that was another thing I recognized part way into the group. Because, my brain on default, when someone says anything... You can see this even when my husband didn't have the same opinion as me for the consult or when you didn't have the same opinion. My brain on default will go to this thought of, "I'm doing it wrong," and it will happen so quickly. And so, even if I was solid in something, I'll all of a sudden now think that I wasn't and I'll very easily question and doubt myself. I even got onto that even more in the group, because I was writing these huge lengthy posts in the group like you have to know everything.

Deise Clements:

And, I stepped back for a minute, I was like, "Why am I..." Not that there was anything wrong with it, I think however you want to show up and need to show up is great, showing up for who you are. But, I just took a moment to step back and I was like, "What model am I in when I wrote this post?" And I realize it was coming from this assumption that I'm doing it wrong. And, I needed to share every corner of my brain so you can find all of the ways that I'm doing it wrong and tell me. It's like, "Make sure that I'm doing it the right way." And so, as soon as I really [inaudible 00:31:03] model, it really helped me to just acknowledge that that thought was coming up, and that was just a thought that I was doing it wrong, that it didn't mean I was actually doing it wrong. I was just kind of in the stress cycle about it. In the past, I've always been a person who has a really hard time showing up in groups, always wanted to get the right answer, would want to hide or cower when they're going to call on someone, "Don't pick me."





EPISODE 87: IMPROVING YOUR MARRIAGE INSIDE THE MARRIAGE MBA WITH DEISE CLEMENTS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/87](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/87)

Deise Clements:

That was part of the reason why I wanted to do the group too, is really growing in community, and being able to be seen, and being able to be like, “This is me, take it or leave it,” and, “This is what my experience is, and my experience is okay. It’s not bad or wrong just because someone else doesn’t agree with it.” Really wanting to build up that story more for myself. That did come up a lot for me, especially in the beginning. Of course, it still comes up some now, but not so intensely as it did right at the start where I was really deciding that I belonged in the group, and really deciding that I was the authority for my life, and I ultimately get to decide, and you’re asking me questions to help me explore. But, at the end of the day, what I decide is best for me is what’s best for me. Whereas, I think at the beginning it was like, “Oh my gosh, Maggie knows best, and if I’m not doing it the way Maggie would do it then I’m doing it wrong.” But, it was what was happening in my brain, not what you were telling me how it was.

Maggie Reyes:

Right. I love that you said that, “What I decide is best for me is what’s best for me.” Somebody needs to hear that too today. Somebody’s listening to this thinking something’s best for them, and somebody in their family, somebody they trust, somebody in an authority position is telling them, “No.” I want you to hear this, person. Person, if it’s you, what you decide is best for you is what’s best for you. Period. End of story.

Deise Clements:

Yeah. I think also acknowledging it’s okay if that feels hard, because it still feels hard for me a lot of the time.





EPISODE 87: IMPROVING YOUR MARRIAGE INSIDE THE MARRIAGE MBA WITH DEISE CLEMENTS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/87](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/87)

Maggie Reyes:

Yes.

Deise Clements:

And, so much of my life I have outsourced my authority and just assumed that other people know better, just do what other people say, that's what makes you happy, all these different things. So, even just really grounding in, "I really love helping people be their own authority," that's something that really lights me up. So, even just grounding myself back in that just felt so much better to start to approach things more from that place.

Maggie Reyes:

My goal, as your specific coach, Deise, is not for you to be more like me, but it's for you to be more like you.

Deise Clements:

Yeah.

Maggie Reyes:

And, it's like, "I'm going to share some things that have been useful to help me figure out who I am." But really, the goal is never for anyone to be more like me, it's always for you to find what's already inside you that wants to come out.

Deise Clements:

Yes, so good.





EPISODE 87: IMPROVING YOUR MARRIAGE INSIDE THE MARRIAGE MBA WITH DEISE CLEMENTS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/87](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/87)

Maggie Reyes:

Okay, good. What's next?

Deise Clements:

The other thing I really wanted to speak to that was really powerful, was that the Inner Child Integration Workshop that you did, that was kind of a bonus thing.

Maggie Reyes:

Okay, so let's talk about that for a second. In 2021, it is my intention to be offering this for the foreseeable future in my group, in some format. It might not be in the same format that you took it, but one of mentors, her name is Layla Martin, and she created, what I call, an Inner Child Integration session or workshop that I've done with all my one-on-one clients since 2018. They've always found it to be so powerful. And, one of my goals in our group was to figure out how to offer it in a group setting. So, I really went through the whole exercise and thought about, "Okay, if we're going to do this in a group..." Sometimes I would ask you questions back and forth, and sometimes I'd have you journal things and, "What would be a good way to do that? What would be a good flow?" It's currently not an official part of the program, it is a bonus in the program. Partly because, just like I told you all when I invited you to do it, I said, "Listen, I've done it 57 times with one-on-one people, but this is the first time I'm doing it in a group. Let's see what we all think."

Maggie Reyes:

I like transparency, so if I'm doing something new, if you're my test person, I will tell you, "Listen, do you want to do this? It's up to you." So, Deise said yes, raised her hand, participated in that





EPISODE 87: IMPROVING YOUR MARRIAGE INSIDE THE MARRIAGE MBA WITH DEISE CLEMENTS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/87](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/87)

workshop. And, it went well, so I'm now offering it. I will definitely be offering it all of 2021 and probably most of 2022. If you're listening to this in 2025, listen, I don't know. We might have changed it, I can't make any promises. It's called the Inner Child Integration Workshop, and tell us what you want to share about that.

Deise Clements:

There's a few things. The first thing that was really surprising to me is the version of my inner child that I was working with, it was really shocking to me that she was hiding in the shadows, and all blacked out, and lifeless, really. She was from a time, like elementary age, when I was experiencing more bullying and stuff. I was really amazed at all the pain that came up around that and processing that. And, just how that whole experience, by the end of that, she was filled up with color, and I was able to release her into the world to live her life. And, not from this place of there wouldn't be any pain, but that she could handle the pain, and that that didn't mean anything about her, and that there are plenty of people that would like her as she was and you don't need these specific people to like you or be your friend to be worthy or valuable. And, even reflecting on that afterwork.

Deise Clements:

Another thing I've been working on a lot this year is just my relationship with anger, because in the past I've always been conflict avoidance, and I've been really developing a more healthy relationship with anger. And, I was reflecting on even after the fact... Because, part of the exercise was speaking to her, "What would you want her to know now?" Kind of a thing. And, I was reflecting on that and how it didn't feel like it fully landed. And, I realized that it's because [inaudible 00:37:07] also trying to sugarcoat it, or make her feel good about it, like she needed





EPISODE 87: IMPROVING YOUR MARRIAGE INSIDE THE MARRIAGE MBA WITH DEISE CLEMENTS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/87](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/87)

to just be okay with what happened or something. And, I realized it was missing that fear self component, that fire part where it's like, "You know what? You don't have to feel good about this if you don't want to, and that's totally okay. Of course you would be upset that this thing happened, anybody would feel that way. And also, that that doesn't have to be the thing that is driving how you live." I have a struggle putting that into words. But, I realize after the fact that it was missing that fire, how your feeling is valid and okay, and I don't have to just make you feel good about this thing so you can just be happy all the time.

Maggie Reyes:

Yeah, I love that so much. I know a lot of people who listen to our podcast, The Marriage Life Coach Podcast, their interpersonal development, as am I, I listen to more than one podcast, I read more than one book. And often, when we're really into growing ourselves as humans, we have this fantasy that I called the myth of feelings immunity. Which, is we think we're going to arrive at some point where we'll be just immune to feelings. Or, always happy, or always good. First of all, that's not the point. The point is we can have any feeling and flow with it, and it doesn't have to run the show. So, it's like, "Wait, I can have this feeling, but it also doesn't have to make every decision for me from now on."

Maggie Reyes:

I was bullied too as a child, so when you said that, that really hit my heart. Because, I have that person inside me who felt so little, and so small, and so belittled by other people. And, it's like, "Yeah, but she doesn't have to run the show. I can love her with tenderness and kindness, but she's not in charge of the big decisions here."





EPISODE 87: IMPROVING YOUR MARRIAGE INSIDE THE MARRIAGE MBA WITH DEISE CLEMENTS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/87](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/87)

Deise Clements:

I didn't share this with you yet, but this is too much of a coincidence, that same day my oldest son came home and told me that he was being bullied at school. And so, I don't think I would have been able to hold space in the way that I did, or even if he would have felt enough safety to talk to me about that, because it was such a trigger for me, if I hadn't processed so much emotion around that. And, that I wouldn't have been able to show up in the same kind of way to talk to the teachers about it or talk to my husband about it. I think I would have been so much more easily shut down around it. So, the ripples continue.

Maggie Reyes:

That is amazing. Let's pause there for a moment. This is so important and thank you for sharing that with us. We do have a podcast episode on the art of holding space, I will link to that in the show notes. Holding a space is a term that we use to just say, "Meeting a human with love and compassion." We can elaborate on it, and explain it, and have a whole class on it, and we do a workshop on it in The Marriage MBA. The essence is just we meet a human with love and compassion. One of the things I always affirm, as you know and if you listen to the podcast you'll hear me say this, is my clients always get everything they need. Whatever it is they need. I may not know what they need, I just affirm on their behalf they're going to get whatever it is they need for whatever they need to figure out in this moment. And, sometimes it's an inspiration for me to offer a workshop, and there we go. It wasn't even on my radar when we started, to be honest.

Maggie Reyes:

I was like, "I love doing it one-on-one, I'm not sure how it's going to be in a group." I wanted to





EPISODE 87: IMPROVING YOUR MARRIAGE INSIDE THE MARRIAGE MBA WITH DEISE CLEMENTS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/87](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/87)

do it and I was like, “I’m going to figure it out.” We didn’t know then this is what you needed, but my clients always get whatever they need. So, we can call it magic, we can call it God, we can call it the divine order of the universe. You can pick whatever name you want to call it, there’s something that happens that’s unexplainable when you rise up and say, “I want help with this,” and you work with someone who says, “I want to help you with this.” That collaboration becomes really beautiful, even in a group with other people. It’s like, “I set that intention for everyone, and maybe someone else said something else that we talked about at different days what they need, but that’s what comes up.”

Maggie Reyes:

So, I also wanted to say I honor you for raising your hand and showing up. It was this very experimental thing and you were like, “I’ll try it.” That openness, I have found in my own life to be very powerful, to just be open to a new experience. And, it turns out that experience becomes very handy for whatever the next thing is.

Deise Clements:

I just really love that experience too because it was such a good opportunity for me to practice living into the identity of the one I want to be. I’m a woman who shares her experiences with people. Whatever I share, whatever comes up for me is enough. It’s okay for me to take up space. These different things. I talked about before how I was like, “Don’t pick me, I’m hiding, don’t see me,” versus, “You know what? I’m going to raise my hand and volunteer to share.” And, even that transformation, that over time being able to do that, is so just powerful and meaningful to me.





EPISODE 87: IMPROVING YOUR MARRIAGE INSIDE THE MARRIAGE MBA WITH DEISE CLEMENTS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/87](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/87)

Maggie Reyes:

I want to mention that when you're in a group program, at least the program that I run or any program that I run, sharing is always optional and it's always consensual. I'm never going to call on you, I'm never going to say, "You have to tell us," I'm never going to do that. I'm going to encourage you to always get what you came for. And, if part of your growth is sharing, I'm going to encourage you to challenge yourself in whatever way feels meaningful to you. But, consent is very important to me in a variety of places in my life, including here. So, I think that's just important to mention, when you're in a group program, you still get to choose, always. You can choose how much or how little you want to participate, how much or how little you want to participate in public with the other people, whether it's in the Facebook group or on the calls. You can get everything you need and not participate in those ways, and that's fine too. Would you like to speak to that a little bit?

Deise Clements:

Yeah. I also think it's so important not to be, "One is better than the other."

Maggie Reyes:

Yes.

Deise Clements:

I really honor, love, and respect equally version of me who really needed to do things on her own and really needed to be anonymous, to have that safety to get the help that I needed.

Maggie Reyes:





EPISODE 87: IMPROVING YOUR MARRIAGE INSIDE THE MARRIAGE MBA WITH DEISE CLEMENTS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/87](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/87)

Yes.

Deise Clements:

She's beautiful, and there's nothing wrong with that. And also, where I am now, my growth is the sharing, and I love that too.

Maggie Reyes:

Yes.

Deise Clements:

So, just that not one is better than the other, just this is where I am now that feels like what I want to be doing.

Maggie Reyes:

That's so beautiful. I love that so much. What else do you want to share before we start wrapping up today?

Deise Clements:

I also really want people to know how amazing you are at creating safety. I love how you have this slowness, and this gentleness, and this tenderness, and this deep respect for humanity and what people are experiencing. And, at the same time, you have fire too. You have that tender self-compassion and that fear self-compassion. You provide so many experiences and all the safety stuff. So, I mentioned earlier, part of what I'm unpacking is some of my own money beliefs within the context of marriage, and up-leveling those, and questioning those, and all the things.





EPISODE 87: IMPROVING YOUR MARRIAGE INSIDE THE MARRIAGE MBA WITH DEISE CLEMENTS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/87](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/87)

I think even working through the stress that has been a huge part of that, because that's the more you can be with the stress that is coming up for you or the emotions that are coming up with you, the more safety you're creating for yourself to really sit with the hard stuff and work through it.

Deise Clements:

And so, I'm so appreciative of how much you're able to hold a person, especially in a group setting, when a lot of that emotion may be coming up. It's even been really surprising to me to see, like we talked about earlier... You gave this really amazing list of questions of things to consider for designing how you want your marriage or life to be. And, I had sat down to go through those questions with my money stuff, and the very first question, which I didn't even think about to look at what that question was until you're like, "What was that question?" It was something like, "What is your truest desire?" Something like that. And, my literal physical response to even thinking about the question was my body putting me to sleep. It was so overwhelmed with all the thoughts there was such a lack of safety to even consider this question. That, I was literally physically... My body was making me go unconscious. It was so astonishing.

Deise Clements:

So, even just the whole process of approaching that with so much gentleness, not pushing yourself, letting yourself go in and out if you need to, or whatever you need. It's like you talked about the win moments, "What do I need?" Checking in with yourself and being genuine to that. And then, just, like you said, trusting that you're going to get what you need and knowing that nothing's gone wrong if stuff feels hard. This is just a part of the process and it doesn't mean





EPISODE 87: IMPROVING YOUR MARRIAGE INSIDE THE MARRIAGE MBA WITH DEISE CLEMENTS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/87](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/87)

that you're doing anything wrong, or that anything's gone bad, or that you should be further than you are, or any of these things. It's just acknowledging that that is there and that maybe it's hard, and that it's okay if it's hard, and that doesn't mean that it's not also something that you can work through. It doesn't mean you can't create what you want.

Maggie Reyes:

I love that so much, because so many of my clients, like you, are Type A, super driven, their checklists have checklists, is how I like to say it. And then, our growth is to be gentle. Our growth very rarely is to push through and do more. Sometimes it is. In some contexts it could be. But, one of the things that I'm constantly talking about in the program, as we explore different areas of your life that maybe you've never thought about this way before, or never explored in this way before, I'm like, "Homework number one is gentleness," and then you do whatever else it might be. What I find is we're so used to our coping mechanism that has got us this far in life is to push through. That sometimes it feels really hard even to be gentle.

Deise Clements:

Yeah.

Maggie Reyes:

And so, to be in a group where we normalize that and where it's like, "No, this is how we do things here, this is how we go." And then, to see as the months pass, and that's why it's a six month group, is to have the space to breath, to see yourself have the ups and the downs, to see yourself take a break, step away, do whatever it is you need to do, take a nap if that's what you need. And then, to see yourself still make progress, "I can be gentle and make progress? I can





EPISODE 87: IMPROVING YOUR MARRIAGE INSIDE THE MARRIAGE MBA WITH DEISE CLEMENTS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/87](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/87)

feel better and be kind and not berate myself?” That is sort of baked into the overarching things that we’re doing, is that experience of holding ourselves with love and compassion. Because, when we learn how to do that, paradoxically, it helps us do that with our partners, with our kids, if you have kids, with whatever it is we’re struggling with. And, you’re building that skill no matter what the actual topic is that we’re working on.

Deise Clements:

Yeah. Because, I think a lot of times we don’t even realize that we’re not being gentle, because on the outside people might say, “You’re the nicest person I know, you’re so thoughtful, you’re so friendly, you’re so kind,” all these things. Externally, you may be described as the nicest, gentlest person, but what we’re talking about here is that internal experience with yourself. It was really amazing for me, over the years all the time, to see how hard I actually was on myself. That internal critic and just that motivating yourself from the stress, the pressure, the duty, the obligation, versus the difference of when there is the compassion, or the understanding, or even just the desire, whatever it is, the contrast. And, it doesn’t mean that won’t ever come up, but it’s just the frequency, or how long you spend there, or the way that you relate to it when it is there, all of those things; it makes a really huge difference in all the ways that you’re talking about.

Maggie Reyes:

I love that so much. Is there anything else you want to add before I ask you a question from the Questions for Couple’s Journal?

Deise Clements:

I think that is it.





EPISODE 87: IMPROVING YOUR MARRIAGE INSIDE THE MARRIAGE MBA WITH DEISE CLEMENTS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/87](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/87)

Maggie Reyes:

I love it. So good. I like to, at the end of every interview, just pick a random question from the Questions for Couple's Journal, and this is the one that I picked for today, I think it's going to be so fun. 20 years from now, when you look back at your relationship with your partner, what would make you consider it a great success?

Deise Clements:

I love this question so much. The first thing that comes up for me is really just looking back and seeing my husband and me as sexy besties. There's this warmth there, there's this understanding, we're there for each other, and it doesn't necessarily mean that we always see things the exact same way, that we're always exactly on the same page on all these things. Just like that. Warmth, and that understanding, and that leaning in, and just having the conversations and letting it be messy. Sexy besties doesn't mean that it's perfect.

Maggie Reyes:

Yeah. For everyone, if this is the first time you've ever listened to the podcast, I have this idea that part of thriving is that you're just sexy besties. You can talk about deep things and totally inane things, and have the best time, just like you can with your bestie. And, you have whatever sexual connection makes sense for you. So, for some of you it's going to be a lot, for some of you it's going to be a little, for some of you it's going to be adventurous, for some of you it's going to be super vanilla. Whatever that looks like, it's sexy besties. And, if you have that sexy bestie energy, it's basically impossible that you're not thriving in your relationship. That's how I like to think about it, is, "What would make it absolutely inevitable?" This is one of the things that would do it. Looking for the sexy bestie energy and all the things





EPISODE 87: IMPROVING YOUR MARRIAGE INSIDE THE MARRIAGE MBA WITH DEISE CLEMENTS

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Maggie Reyes:

So, first of all, for me, as your coach, I just see you integrating everything we've been working on in such a beautiful way, and I think that's so powerful. So, I just want to celebrate that with you. And, I want to invite all of you to think about right now, can you describe yourself as sexy besties? If you can't, is it the sexy or is it the bestie part that you need to work on? I like to keep it so simple. It's like, "Oh, now you immediately know, 'This is my growth. This is the next thing to do.'"

Maggie Reyes:

Tell everyone how they can find you if people want to stay in touch with you and learn a little bit about how you help moms check different boxes in their life, the most meaningful boxes, not just the external success boxes, how can people find you?

Deise Clements:

My website is coachingwithdeise.com and Deise is D-E-I-S-E.

Maggie Reyes:

Okay.

Deise Clements:

But, it will also redirect you if you type it like the flower.

Maggie Reyes:

That's so smart. Love that.





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Deise Clements:

So, you'll get there either way. And then, I'm also Coaching With Deise on Facebook. And then, YouTube, if you search Coaching With Deise, you'll find me on there too.

Maggie Reyes:

What's your favorite YouTube video that everyone should go see?

Deise Clements:

I have one on there, the most popular one so far, because my YouTube channel is newer, is The Four Elements of Communication, which actually goes along well with the marriage stuff.

Maggie Reyes:

I love it.

Deise Clements:

So, learn from Brooke and that you've talked about too.

Maggie Reyes:

The Four Elements of Communication, on YouTube, Coaching With Deise. I love it. Thank you for saying yes, for sharing from your heart, this was so beautiful. I know that this episode will be life changing to someone. I just feel it in my heart what you shared was so profound, so thank you for always coming with that openness and for sharing from your heart.

Deise Clements:





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Thank you so much, such a pleasure to be here.

Maggie Reyes:

You're welcome. Bye everyone, we will be back next week with more ways to make your marriage stronger.

