



## EPISODE 94: NOTICE YOUR LENSES

**THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/94](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/94)**

Hello, everyone. Welcome. I am so excited to be back with this solo episode for you today. I just got back from three days in Dallas, and I need to tell you all about it.

The amazing Coach Kara Loewentheil, who created the Advanced Certification Feminist Coaching that I did earlier this year runs a membership program called The Clutch, and she hosted a live event for her members on how to create any goal.

And I had the honor of being one of the guest coaches helping everyone figure out their goals and how to accomplish them in one of the breakout rooms and just going deeper into the work that she was teaching in the big conference room.

And I'll definitely link to her website in the show notes. You definitely want to check her out. I highly recommend her podcast. If you love self development and you want to explore what that looks like through a feminist lens, you will love her work.

I had so many takeaways from that event that I'm going to share. One of the most powerful ones today on the episode that I really see at a whole new level, and it was just incredible to experience it firsthand and just have a new level of awareness even for myself in my own experience as a woman, so here's what it was.

I sought a whole new level, how we are socialized as women not to want things. So this was a goal setting weekend conference. It was all about choosing a thing and wanting a thing. And it was so fascinating to see what happened, the sort of push and pull around wanting something and all the feelings that came up about deciding what that was and what that looked like.

Now, Kara calls her members, chickens, the members that were there at the live event, as they





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identify in different places of the gender or spectrum. So I want to mention that most of the humans at the event identify as women but they are on different ends or different places in the gender spectrum.

And one thing that was so apparent as we dug into the work of the weekend was how we judge our goals. What is a goal? A goal is a declaration of desire. I want this thing. That sounds so simple. Right? But when you layer on how women are raised and socialized to prioritize others first, it's like so many messages are leading us towards living what I am now calling a leftover's life.

If we want the main dish, fresh, we have somehow done something wrong. And it's super sneaky because we always eat something. So it looks like we're okay. But in reality, if we take this analogy around the leftovers and the main dish, in reality so many times we're not eating our first choice thing or eating whatever was left over, whatever was available after everyone else was fed.

And the way this really came to life for me in my own experience was seeing how much shame came up just for having a goal at all. So some of the chickens were ashamed their goal was too big. Some of them were ashamed their goal was too small.

It didn't really matter the size or shape or format of the goal or that declaration of desire. What it seemed like was this idea that we have internalized that wanting anything is bad. So, either way, no matter what shape or size our desire is, shame comes up. And I recently had Emily Feairs on the podcast and she said this, I'm going to read you one of her quotes because I just feel it at such a deeper level now.





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So she said, “Just being socialized as a woman, I think there’s a lot of ways in which we try to overcompensate for the fact that we have either been dismissed or not listened to or whatever. I think in a marriage it can often look like you said -- feeling as if you can’t always voice what you want, because in this case, men are so used to, their as a man being socialized as a man, really having everything they want and everything they need to completely be fulfilled all the time. Anything they want is just fulfilled. And their opinion, they’re so used to that their opinion is the one that drives the conversation.”

That really struck me when Emily said that. We’ll link to her episode on the show notes. But their opinion is the one that drives a conversation. Their desires determine the goals so many times. Then we get into these habits, and that’s where we internalize the patriarchal constructs, where we’re the ones who are constantly deferring to others and feel so much reluctance to prioritize something that we want especially if it has no direct utility.

And if you have ever felt guilty for taking a break or a nap or doing something you wanted to do that felt like it took time away from either partner or your family, that is what internalized patriarchy looks like in practice on the day to day.

I remember I saw a meme a few days ago that said, “Raise your hand if your partner has ever been called a working dad.” Like do you hear the term a working dad? Just notice that is what internalized patriarchy looks like when we take it as a given. Right?

How we describe these things. How we experience these things. Whose opinion is driving the conversation? Whose desire is determining the goals? And it really just hit me. I do not want you to live a leftover life. If you’re listening to this podcast, I want you to live a five star life, whatever that means for you.





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But for it to feel like a five star, cozy, delicious bed with your favorite meal for room service and a beautiful tub, and just like every detail is taken care of and you're so well nourished. That, of course, you have the energy to care for others.

And, of course, you also have the energy to care for your dreams and goals, and you feel energized and refreshed on a regular basis instead of overwhelmed and exhausted. That is my dream for you. Whatever your current situation is, I always invite you to think about one tiny step towards a five star life that you can take today. What is one tiny step that you can take in that direction? I invite you to think about that.

I'm going to give you some suggestions, of course, in the episode. But I want you to think about that. And no more leftovers. No. No. Okay. So, as you have that on your mind, it's kind of perfect for our topic today because the number one question people ask me all the time is, how do we communicate better?

And my impression is, we have some kind of communication crisis going on because it's something that, even though we do it every day, it feels like we don't really know what we're doing half the time. I know for some of you it really feels like you're walking in the dark when you want to communicate about something important with your partner.

And there are so many layers to the things that impact your communication from your stress cycles, your socialization like we talked about before, is it okay to talk about the things I want? To make my declarations of desire? The feeling that it may not be okay? There's so many layers to that. Right?





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Your partner's emotional reactions to a variety of even both automatic and habitual responses that we all have when difficult topics come up. So, if you listen to the podcast often you will know I created a whole communication framework to help my clients because so many people came to me and asked me about communicating. It's called Soul Centered Communication. It has five very simple steps.

And I designed it so that your partner doesn't even have to do those steps with you. You can do it on your own. And it's very simple. So you can definitely check out that podcast episode if you haven't already. We'll link to it in the show notes. I teach it in depth inside The Marriage MBA.

And if you're listening to this in November of 2021, when this episode was originally released, we are opening enrollment for The Marriage MBA at the end of the month. You definitely want to get on the wait list right now so you get first dibs when enrollment opens. You can get all the details for that at [maggiereyes.com/group](https://maggiereyes.com/group).

And The Marriage MBA is my in depth, six month coaching and mentoring program. We meet weekly. We talk about all these things. We unpack them. And we just help you be equipped to handle all the different situations that arise in your relationships. So if you want to get on the wait list and be ready when enrollment opens at the end of November, go to [maggiereyes.com/group](https://maggiereyes.com/group).

Okay. So on the topic of communication, I'm always thinking about how to make things easy and simple and doable, and how to help you communicate in a more powerful and constructive way -- in the way that helps you love more, that helps you create more connection and closeness in your relationship. And one of the ways to do that is to engage in a practice that I call noticing your lenses, notice your lenses.





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So, imagine a photographer with one of those big fancy cameras where they change out the lenses. And sometimes they have a wide angle, and sometimes they have something called a telephoto, like a long telephoto, a short telephoto. I had to Google this. Right?

They have different kinds of lenses. And there are very specific types of lenses that help you take very specific types of pictures. So a wide angle you use for a landscape, and there's something called a macro lens that helps you take close up shots depending on the type of picture you want to create. You can change the lens of the camera every time.

So, with that in mind, think about the last conversation you had. Is your first thought about that conversation, the talking or the listening? I usually think about the talking part first. Right? Yeah. Most of the time, the most important thing we do in conversations is to listen. Right? And hopefully with focused attention and whenever possible with love. Right?

So the first thing I invite you to do is to think about, is to notice that you can decide the lens through which you listen, the lens through which you listen that feels automatic and habitual. And like, this is the lens. This is the one I'm using. This is the one in the camera. Right? Is actually a decision you can make.

You can listen from fear, from hope, from anger, from love, from resentment, from compassion. Like a camera you get to choose which lens you're going to listen with. And just like a wide angle lens will get you a different picture than a focal lens.

Listening from anger will get you a totally different picture than listening from love. Right? And I can imagine someone listening right now thinking or asking me, right? But what if I am angry? What if that is the lens I want to listen through? So if you're angry or you have some other





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heightened emotion, you want to notice that. You want to be with it and decide if it's a good time to have the conversation, or is it better to process that anger first and then engage in speaking and listening about the topic?

What will help you get the result you want to create from that conversation? There's really no right or wrong answer. Right? Just different results. For me, personally, if I'm listening from anger, I try to pause and breathe as often as possible, and notice and see if I might want to listen from a different angle or not.

Once you have that covered, you can take these specific steps, especially if you're anticipating a difficult conversation. I always like to give you ideas, starting points that you can jump off from. So you can set an intention. Right? You can ask yourself what you want to accomplish, how you want to feel at the end of the conversation.

It can be something as simple as, "I set the intention to remain peaceful and open during the conversation." Or "I set the intention that we arrive at a point of clarity about our immediate next steps at the end of our talk."

And so setting the communication in that framework, that would be the solution focused part of it. You can set an intention. What does resolution look like? You can schedule a specific time for your conversation. So, blind siding the unexpected, the surprise, is almost never a good idea.

And especially if you're going to talk about something that feels difficult or tender with your partner, making a date, giving a heads up, having a focus is always, always a good idea. And I have an episode on how to talk about money in your marriage, where I really walk through that in a lot of detail.





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But giving a heads up, planning ahead, can change the entire outcome of the conversation. And then the U in soul centered communication stands for uncomplicated. And it's probably the step I get the most feedback on, how something so simple can have such a huge impact.

So don't try to tackle every single issue at once. Right? Pick one thing. You're much more likely to experience progress if you limit your scope to one thing and then move on to the next thing. Right? And it's so important to remember, so here's another step to remember that you are on the same side.

This can be easy to forget if you have different backgrounds, different feelings about what you're discussing, different points of view or values on a particular topic, but you're on the same side in the sense that you both want to create a life that you love together. That's the ultimate goal.

So, noticing your lenses is about noticing what lens you're listening from, and is that helping you? And if that isn't helping you, you can switch out your lens to something else just like if it was a fancy camera.

So today I'm issuing you a Life Coach challenge. Okay? You can journal on this or you can play with it in whatever way feels good to you. But all day today, this is the challenge. Notice what lens you're listening from. So even right now as you listen to this podcast, think about, what lens are you listening from?

For most of you it's probably something like, openness or curiosity. Just notice. As you go about your day today in all your conversations, any lenses that pop out at you. Are you neutral? Are you excited? Are you worried? Are you hopeful? The more you notice how you're listening, the







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easier it becomes to manage which lens you want to use when the conversation gets intense, when it may be really useful to change out that lens.

And you can think about, are you listening from a positive emotion or a negative emotion? And you can play with choosing a lens on purpose. Could I go from listening with worry to listening with curiosity? Could I go from listening with curiosity to listening with excitement? What would that look like?

And if you want to get fancy and keep a log, you can write down who you've had a conversation with, what lens you were listening from, and then you can answer this question. How does the lens I was listening from impact the conversation? Just notice.

You can also do this on social media or with texts. What lens am I reading from? How does that impact my experience? If it's something where I reply, how does that impact my reply?

I remember, I think I told this story. It's on the episode called Choice Based Love, where I got an email and my first lens that I was reading from was sort of like activated. I'm not sure if I was really offended, but I was definitely activated. And then I switched the lens and I made the assumption, what if this person loves everything I do?

And by switching the lens, I completely changed the outcome of the interaction with the person that I was emailing with back and forth. If you're curious about that, the episode's called Choice Based Love. We'll link to it in the show notes where I tell the whole story.

So notice your lenses. What lens am I reading from, if it's social media, or if it's a text, or if it's an email? And I really think it's one of the best, if not the best communication hacks, like what are





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some communication hacks that can help you communicate better?

And the reason I think it's one of the best communication hacks for your marriage is because, you can immediately change the direction of the conversation just by noticing what lens you're listening from. Some very simple act. It takes some awareness and it takes like setting that intention. Right? To be present with yourself to notice that. But once you are present and you do notice, you can change the whole outcome just by switching out a lens just like a camera.

Okay. That is all for today. I invite you to go forth, have fun, experiment with noticing your lenses today. And I invite you to be loving to yourself today, as equally as you are to others, not above or below, just equal to. This is how we change our lives. This is how we change the world.

