



## EPISODE 96: THOUGHT WORK & THE SELF COACHING MODEL

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/96](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/96)

Hello everyone, welcome. Today's episode is going to be a deep dive into one of my favorite Coaching tools and one of the core tools I use to Coach myself and my clients and my students inside my Coaching programs.

Today, we're going to talk about thought work and the self-Coaching model. And I'm going to walk you through all the steps on how to use this tool. I'm going to give you all the basics so you can follow along and use it to help you make your marriage stronger.

Now, today I'm going to give you the very basics so you can start being more aware of how what you're thinking impacts what you're experiencing in your marriage right now and then your life right now. So imagine that you have a camera and you're focusing the lens, and every time you walk to a new place with something different to focus on, you have to adjust the lens. The same principle applies with your thoughts.

Every situation you are in is an opportunity to adjust your perspective, to refocus your lens. So, as I explained everything today, just know that you are learning how to use a new tool. Just like if you were learning photography and you would take lots of pictures and practice and play with lighting, and angles, and your first picture might not be as amazing as your thousandth picture and the same principle applies here.

So whether you're hearing these ideas for the first time, or you're already familiar with them and going deeper, there's always something to play with to enjoy creating your life, like the craft or the art of creating your life. That's how I like to think about it.

Now, as you know, if you listen to the podcast, I always like to start with a fun story and today I





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have a short one for you. So I was chatting with the hubby the other day about something that I wanted to make sure was on both of our calendars, and he said this to me and I wrote it down. He said, "Please assume I do not know the things you have not told me."

And for some reason he was so serious when he said it that I found it so hilarious, I told him, "This is going on the podcast." And then I repeated it back to him like we had discovered that strawberries are sweet or something like that. I said, wait, wait, wait, should I assume that you do not know the things I have not told you?

And then I cracked myself up just all over again. It was the best. So public service announcement for partners everywhere, please assume they do not know the things you have not told them. Pause right now, I invite you to do that, and ask yourself, is there something I am assuming my partner knows that it would be useful if I told them?

If there is, you know what to do, just tell them. Now, please assume they do not know the things you have not told them, I am keeping that one forever. The other fun thing that I wanted to share is, we watched the movie Chan Chi, it's a Marvel movie, you know I love superheroes.

And this is one of the superhero movies and it's based on Asian characters, and Asian stories. And it was so amazing. I could not recommend it more highly. It was fabulous. I just love that movie. So just like to give you a little heads up on some of the things that I'm reading and seeing, and I'm recording this on Thanksgiving week, even though you will listen to it a different day.

I just want to say to everyone listening right now, that I am grateful for you, for you right now, for





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listening to this podcast. I am grateful for your time, I am grateful for your attention, and more than anything, I'm grateful that you are human on earth who wants to stand for love and takes the time to listen to a podcast like this one to get better at it.

You are literally being the change that makes the world a better place. You right now are being the change that makes the world a better place. And I am so grateful to be a part of your day to day, to be a part of your life. So just consider yourself hugged right now with so much gratitude and so much stuff.

Today is going to be an in depth day. So if you're in a place where you can grab something to write with, you want to do that now, otherwise listen to this episode and just know you can come back to it later and take some notes. This is one of the more dense episodes, I would say. I'm going to make it fun as we always do, but I just want you to be prepared.

So as I teach you about the self-Coaching model and the concept of thought work, I also invite you to think about it through the lens of really stopping, if you're doing this, stopping looking for your partner to change for you to feel better.

I know a lot of you that listen to this podcast have that as one of the things that you do, you look for your partner to do things differently so that you can feel better, and if that's something that you have done, I've certainly done it. I mean, we've all done it at some point. But if that's something that's sort of having in your heart right now in your marriage, I invite you to really look at what you own on your side of the table.

So imagine that we have a table, and it's filled with dirty dishes, and you told your partner to put





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away their dirty dishes, but your side has a bunch of dishes too. It's perfect that I'm recording this on Thanksgiving week.

Just imagine a big family dinner with all the dishes and you have one side and your partner has another side, and you keep asking your partner to put away their dirty dishes. And even if they did, they take all the dirty dishes on their side of the table, you would still need to deal with your dishes, you still need to clean up your side of the table.

And one of the best ways to do that is to really question your thinking and understand the relationship between your thoughts and your feelings and the actions that you take, and the results and outcomes that you create in your life.

So if you've ever had the thought, "If only my love will change, everything will be better," this episode will help you so, so, so much. And we can think about our partners, but we can also think bosses, coworkers, friends, family, anytime we have thought, "If only that person will do things differently, then I would feel better." This episode is just going to give you a lot of food for thought.

So something that comes up a lot, especially in the marriage work that I do to give you an example is, let's say, that you have a partner where one partner wants to get help, wants to do something different, maybe wants to work with a Life Coach or get a couple's therapy, and your partner doesn't want to do that. They don't want to engage in the same way that you do.

If we take the example of couple's therapy, a lot of people feel like their relationship is doomed if their partner doesn't engage with them in that specific modality. And what I want to offer you





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today is that that doesn't have to be the case, just because your partner doesn't do couple's therapy with you or go to a workshop with you or something like that, it does not mean that your relationship is doomed, and it does not mean that you should stop trying to create the relationship you want with this person that you love.

We want to always investigate, what's possible between the two of you together? The magic question that you'll hear me repeat often on this podcast: what is the best relationship I can have with this person? And then do I want that? So there's so many reasons in the case of something like therapy or some workshop or modality, that a person may not be interested in that thing.

They may not know how it can help them. They might be reluctant to try something if they've had an experience in the past that they didn't enjoy or they didn't feel worked for them or help them move forward. If they don't know how it's going to work or how it will be beneficial, they're unlikely to want to engage with it.

And that doesn't mean that they don't care about you, and it doesn't mean they don't care about the relationship, and it doesn't mean that you cannot improve your relationship without that element. There's so many different modalities that you can engage with.

So I go into depth on this idea of you having so much power to create changes in your relationship in the episode called, The Power of One. So we'll link to that in the show notes, so that if you want to deep dive in that you can listen to that.

Maggie Reyes:

Now for today, we're going to talk about perspective and how you look at things and almost





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how you implement the power of one that I talk about in that episode. So when you change the way you're interpreting what's happening in your life, and you increase your awareness about your observations and opinions and how you form them, you actually take your power back in a relationship, because you stop waiting for someone else to change for you to feel better.

As I've talked about in different episodes of the podcast, and I just mentioned recently on this podcast, if you are struggling in your relationship, one of the most fundamental questions that I have found and one of the most useful questions I have I found is to find out: what is the best relationship I can have with this human? That's your metaphorical clearing up of your side of the emotional table.

And once you find out what that is, then you can decide, do I want that? It's really an evidence gathering moment or chapter in your relationship. To figure out, what is the best relationship we can have? Are we having it already? Are there things that we can tweak? And then once we're there, what do I want? Then you can see what dirty dishes are left, whether they are issues in your marriage or deal breakers that you make decisions about, depending on what it is, I have the whole episode on deal breakers.

So if that's where you are right now, trying to figure out whether it's a definitive deal breaker, or it's just a situation that needs to be managed, that you need to figure out how to work through together. Then definitely listen to that episode. I'll put that in the show notes for you as well. So you can have my guidance on how to think that through step by step.

Now, today, we're going to really focus on getting clear on how to get clear, which brings us to the concept of thought work and the self-Coaching model. Now, this model, which is... I will refer





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to it as a self-Coaching model or just the model, the way that I teach it was created by one of my mentors and the founder of the Life Coach School where I trained, her name is Brooke Castillo.

And it's a derivative, I like to think about it as a derivative, like a baby, created from parents that are in the family tree of cognitive behavioral psychology and dialectical behavioral therapy. Now, not going to go in depth on the theories on this episode, but I can tell you that, cognitive behavioral tools have been widely studied and found to be highly effective, and basically a cognitive approach, which focuses on how we are thinking is one of the best ways to create change.

But if you're wondering, where does this come from? Or what's the background? You can definitely Google cognitive behavioral psychology or dialectical behavioral therapy. And those are two things that are kind of like the grandparents of this tool that I'm about to explain to you today.

And there's a variety of ways that we can change our thinking patterns, there's a variety of tools that we can use. For me, this is my favorite, I use it on myself, I use it in my Coaching programs, I have found it to be highly effective. And so what I want you to do today is give you the basics, and then I'll walk you through an example from one of my client situations that was really interesting, I think will be really useful for everyone, and some useful ideas to keep in mind as you play with this tool.

So the way I think about thought work, which is what we call working with your thoughts is that it has three parts. First, you want to write down your thoughts, it's sort of a really focused type





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of journaling. You want to write whatever is on your mind, sometimes using a prompt, maybe a question related to what you want to get more clear about, or feel better about, whatever goal you want to create, whatever is bothering you right now.

So this writing down of all your thoughts, my Coaching school refers to that as a thought download. You're literally just downloading whatever is in your brain, and sometimes with a little prompting or a little direction. And you can do that on a Google Doc, you can do that in a diary, handwritten. I have a variety of things that I do, so I have a bunch of journals, sometimes I like to write things out in handwriting, and sometimes I like to type it up. So whatever works for you works.

And that's the first step, is just to write things down. I personally love using prompts and in my self-study program, The Marriage Mindset Makeover, I have a journal with 30 prompts that you can use. And I really think of it as writing your way to a better marriage. So if journaling doesn't come naturally to you, if that isn't something that you experimented with already or found your way with already, that is a great resource for you to play with.

And then once we write things down, you want to separate out the facts of what happened from our story about what happened and what we did as a result of the story that we created. So we want to see the relationship between our thoughts and our behaviors, and the way we do that is by picking out one thought that feels juicy or useful to explore and writing it through the structure of the self-Coaching model.

So that model has five components. And I'm going to first tell you what they all are, and then I'm going to walk you through each component step by step. The components are: circumstances,







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thoughts, feelings, actions, and results. That is the official way it is taught at the school where I trained, which I mentioned is called The Life Coach School.

In my practice with clients working through a lot of models with a lot of people, I added a sixth component that is very unique to the way that I teach it which is sensations. So we have a feeling like joy or sadness. And then from that feeling, there are sensations that arise in our body. And very often I work with very brainy people who can label a feeling really well, but dropping into their body and noticing the sensations doesn't come as naturally. And I will say, I am one of those people too.

So I always did this with clients, and it is always part of the exploration of feeling. So it is an official part of the way we do thought work. I just pulled it out in order to highlight really connecting with our sensations.

So one day I was Coaching a client and she was telling me how she was feeling, and I think she was feeling something like anger. She was very upset. And then she immediately told me, because she was used to me asking her, and how does that feel in your body? And she said, she felt constricted in her tummy, she felt it gripping in her shoulders.

She started describing very vividly what these sensations were that were coming up. And when she did that, I realized that separating out sensations and taking the time to really notice and bring awareness to the actual expansions and constrictions and flutters and grips and loosening and sparks that you notice in your body really helps you come into a deeper awareness and really helps you actually move through that feeling, and feel it completely so you can process it and move forward.





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So officially there are five components and I like to add the sixth one as I found it so useful. It requires us to slow down, just be where we are, notice how we're feeling. And I used to think about my head and my body as two separate things. I felt like I was walking around in my head a lot. I was brainy and studious as a kid and I didn't really feel super connected with my body.

So if you've ever had that experience, this just adding the sensations helps you slow down, and it's almost like you're always connected with your body, but you're not always focused on that connection, and this helps you harness that connection. So this will help you do that.

And one thing I have found as I've been exploring sensations, even more deeply with my students and my clients and my Coaching programs is that, we have in general, a lot of us, and I'll include myself in that, a very poor sensational vocabulary.

What I mean by that is, we literally do not have words to describe what is happening inside us, and very often, this has happened with my students a lot. So if it doesn't happen with you, that's awesome if you have a great sensational vocabulary. That's great. But if you're like me and you're kind of like, well, it feels like opening the door of a house as opposed to, it feels like a flutter in my tummy.

So if you use metaphors and analogies, it's like a level of literacy about our own experience that we're lacking, and how we do that is by practicing and noticing and labeling. So some of the labels that we would use for something like a sensation could be a flutter in your stomach, a tightness in your shoulders when something feels noded or throbbing or shaky or still or relaxed. So anything like that.





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So I mentioned the components and now we'll go one by one and I will explain how they come together and how to use them. So we have the thought download, which is just all of your thoughts dumped into some format, whether it's paper or electronic.

And then we have the model, which includes, circumstances, thoughts, feelings, sensations, actions and results. So let's start with circumstances. Those are the facts of our lives. Did any of you watch Days of Our Lives growing up? When I was in high school I used to love Day of Our Lives. I have to say, like sand through the hourglass, these are the facts of our lives. And I really amuse myself, I hope you're amused too as we think about the facts of our lives for a little while.

So circumstances in Oxford's learner's dictionary definition is, situations and events that affect and influence your life that are not in your control. Situations and events that affect and influence your life that are not in your control. Circumstances are facts. They are simple and they are, if we go to a court of law, we can prove them, we can have video, we can say this happened. They are very easily provable.

Like, the car is blue, the door is open or it's closed. A human said something, like words were spoken. The more specific and more isolated and more clearly read out a circumstance, the more powerful your overall model will be. Now, what is important to know about circumstances is that, they are neither positive or negative in their essence, like at their core. They are neutral and can be interpreted in more than one way.

Now, I'm going to explain this in depth. So just stay with me for a second. The door being open, for example, can be the best news to one person and the worst news to another person. The





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door being open is just a fact. And then we can have any thought we want to have about it.

So let's say I have the door open and the AC is leaving the house and to one person, that's a terrible thing, but to have the door open and you can hear the birds chirping outside, to another person, that's a wonderful thing. So the door is just open and then we add a thought about it.

So let's say that it rained, let's give another example, and I was late to a meeting. It could be wonderful because I met the love of my life in the rain, or it could be terrible because I missed the meeting. So for me, if I met the love of my life in the rain, I'm thrilled that I was late to the meeting, it's good news for me. For my boss, maybe it's bad news that I missed the meeting and maybe my boss is upset about that.

So the same event can be interpreted in more than one way. And even in this example, when I tell my fictional boss that I met the fictional love of my life in the fictional rain during the pretend meeting, my imaginary boss might now have a new thought about that same event and be happy and excited that I missed the meeting and that I met the love of my life instead.

So it's easy to see with that example, how even with a new piece of information or with a new insight or a new awareness, our experience of the same event can evolve. So to recap, circumstances are facts. You can interpret them in more than one way, and why that's very good news for you, and your marriage and your side of our metaphorical table is, we can look at some of the things that are on the table right now and we can determine at the meanings that you're currently making are useful, if they are, you keep them, and if they're not, we can see what other meanings might be useful.





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Now, I could probably do a whole episode on each of these components and maybe one day I will, but for today, I really want to hone in on the separation between our circumstances and our thoughts about them. So pretty much the whole world believes that their circumstances determines their happiness. I believed this too for many, many years.

This is why we think that when we have something, we will be happier, when we get promoted or go on vacation or pay the mortgage off or... Whatever the next thing is that you're thinking that is the thing that will change everything, that is because we are socialized in a culture that tells us that when we change our circumstances we will find happiness, so we spend our whole lives changing circumstances.

And what have we found out? That for so many of us, we did all the things we were told would create success and happiness and the interior experience of joy and delight, and yet we feel like crap, how is this possible?

It's possible because it's not our circumstances that determine our satisfaction or happiness or how we feel, it's our thoughts about those circumstances. It's our thoughts about those facts. It's the stories we attach to the situations that we observe. So that is what determines how we feel and what we do. The ultimate outcomes that we create.

Now, whenever I talk about circumstances and how our thoughts create our feelings and our ultimate outcomes in our lives, I always like to illustrate with an example, to make it super clear what I'm talking about. And my favorite example to use is Whitney Houston.

Now, as I record this, I am 48 years old and she was the Beyonce of my high school years.





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Everybody wanted to dance with somebody who loved them back then and many of us still do. So she has a famous song, I Wanna Dance With Somebody who loves me. And Whitney Houston was everywhere.

She had every imaginable thing that people aspire to have in the material world. She was rich, she was famous, she was loved by millions. She had beautiful clothes, fancy cars, houses, anything you can imagine people dreaming about materially she had. And if those things were the things that created happiness, then why wasn't she happy? Why isn't she alive today?

If our circumstances create our happiness, then Whitney Houston would be one of the happiest people alive. Now, are there times when changing circumstances might be a great idea? Absolutely. But going, what I call circumstance hopping, hopping from one situation to another thinking that that will bring you ultimate joy doesn't seem to work in the long term. I haven't seen it work yet.

Learning how to manage your mind by being aware of your thoughts is a much more productive approach. It can help you in so many ways. Now, when I say the words, manage your mind. What I mean by that is, imagine a garden that you're attending to, and a garden can either be filled with weeds or the garden can be filled with flowers.

So when you're managing your mind, you're tending to the garden of your brain, you're tending to the thoughts. You're watering the flowers, the thoughts that are amazing, and you're tending to the weeds, you're going through them, you're seeing what needs to be seen to help yourself have a beautiful garden. Things will grow in it, a variety of things. It doesn't mean we won't have weeds, but we will have hopefully more flowers than weeds.





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Now, of course there are layers of nuance in anything. And any tool we use for our growth can also be turned into a weapon when misused. And I like to think about forks and spoons and knives, and how they're super useful for certain functions, but not as useful for others.

So for most of us, most of the time, it's going to be easier to eat with a fork. And for most of us, it's going to be really useful to notice the space between our thoughts and our circumstance, and create awareness, and then make decisions on how we want things to go based that new awareness.

Now, there are times when being in a relationship with our thoughts in a healthy, loving relationship with our own thinking, feels really hard. And there are other tools and approaches that we use in Coaching for those times. So I did a fabulous interview with Sally Winston called, The Reassurance Trap, where we talk about what to do when it feels like your thoughts are a runaway train. We will link to that episode in the show notes. I want you to have that as a reference point.

And today I invite you to think about this tool that we're talking about, thought work and the self-Coaching model as a fork. It's super useful most of the time for most things, and yet, if you were going to eat a soup, you would want to use a spoon. That's how I think about Coaching tools.

Sometimes I need to question my thoughts and sometimes I need to sit with a feeling, or with another human being and just be with them or just be with myself. And we will link to my episode on processing emotions, it's called, Processing Negative Emotion. If you want to look





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that up, we'll link to it in the show notes as well.

And I also have an episode with a brilliant colleague named Shelby Leigh on trauma, resourcing and windows of tolerance, so that you can get a practical feel for what I mean by forks and knives and spoons as a metaphor for Coaching tools.

So now you can think about the circumstances in your life in a much deeper and much richer way, hopefully than before you started listening to this episode, and the circumstances in your marriage, you can think about them differently too.

What are the facts? And what are the stories and thoughts that I'm attaching to those facts? So, as we walk through the components of the self-Coaching model, we just talked about circumstances, now, we're going to talk about thoughts. What are they? They're electrical impulses in our brain if we want to get super drilled down, but they are also sentences we carry in our minds. And I think that's an easier way to relate to them for our purposes today.

When I think it was great that I missed the meeting, to keep using that example or that it was terrible that I missed that meeting. It is a thought that I'm having about the fact of missing the meeting. Thoughts we have are sentences, and that's all that they are. Sometimes we can feel like a prisoner to our thoughts, we have so many of them, sometimes they can be really disturbing, sometimes they can just create so much distress for us.

So when we want to take our power back from thoughts, the first thing we want to do is isolate what they actually are, electrical impulses, sentences, phrases, words strung together. The image I like to use that brings me a lot of comfort is, I like to imagine Dorothy and the Wizard







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of Oz, when she goes to the wizard, and imagine your thoughts being like the wizard, and then she sees that the wizard is just a man pretending to would be a wizard. So thoughts are just sentences. And we are the thinker of those thoughts. And we think them, they do not think us.

So that brings us to feelings. Feelings are vibrations in our body, again, they're also electrical impulses, and they are a label for a vibration in your body, and you experience a feeling through your mind and your senses. And feelings are like fuel. They're like gasoline. They drive our actions, the things we do or don't do in any given situation.

Now, our feelings are inspired by our thoughts, and they propel us into action or non-action in the material world. So let's say we're out in the rain, excited to meet the love our life, and the action we take is to say hello and talk with them, we're intrigued by this person. And I connect with this person. And from that feeling of excitement to connect with this person, I say, hello, reconnect, and an epic love story begins.

Now let's imagine that I'm out in the rain and I'm sad, and I don't even know what is the person. And I don't talk to them, and I don't say anything. Maybe that sadness has me looking down or paying attention to something else. And then the actions that I take do not lead to connecting with that person and no epic love story happens there.

So then with sensations, you can imagine what happens in your body with the difference between excitement and sadness. For excitement, you might feel a twinkle in your tummy, maybe a flutter or some tingling. For sadness, you might feel a gripping in your tummy, or a constriction in your shoulders. There are physiological responses to the combination of thought and feelings that you're having in any given moment. And you can notice them and label them.





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And by doing that, you create awareness. And I love awareness. Awareness is the best. Because with awareness, you create authority. Once you are aware of something, you have authority over that thing. So my hubby always says, “You cannot manage what you do not measure,” in his typical engineering way. “You cannot manage what you do not measure.” If you’ve worked in any corporate situation you’ve probably heard that sentence at some point.

And I always replied to him, “You have to see it to heal it.” That’s the Life Coaching version of that. You have to have awareness of something to have authority over it, whether it’s the numbers on a spreadsheet, whether it’s a medical report, or whether it’s how you’re feeling on any given day.

So in our house, it’s like the engineer and the Life Coach get to the same place, we just use different words for the same things. So awareness is where it’s at. I want you to have as much of it as possible because the more awareness you have, the more authority you have to make decisions over the experiences and outcomes of your life. That brings us to results. The outcomes of our lives.

In this example, the result that we created was either epic love story or no epic love story. And imagine that it’s like a mathematical equation, circumstance, plus thoughts, plus feelings and sensations, plus actions and non actions, plus the things we don’t do, the non actions, all of those things put together equal the results we have in our life. Our experience of our day to day world.

If you’re looking at the results you have in your life right now, in your relationship at home, at





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work, with your honey, and you don't like the results here is the good news, we can go to the thoughts and feelings and the actions that we can control, and we can impact our results by changing this part of the equation.

It's like there are certain variables that are in our control and certain variables that are not in our control. The ones that we can control can impact the outcome of the equation. I think about it like love algebra. Now I did not like math in school. Trigonometry still freaks me out, but I am here for the love algebra. I am all about it.

So to recap, thought download is to dump your thoughts, and then you pick a thought that feels useful, to check in a little deeper. It may be a thought that feels emotionally charged or a thought that upsets you or lights you up in some way, maybe it inspires you. And then you run it through the components of the self-Coaching model.

Now there are two types of models, your unintentional model, which is just like the weeds in your garden. It's what's happening in your brain when you're not paying attention. And there's your intentional model, which is like planting the flowers in your garden.

This is what you want to think about a situation or how you want to feel about a situation written out step by step, including, the thought, the feeling, the sensations, and all the actions you would be taking or stop taking if you were thinking and feeling this way.

Now, an intention is something we want to live into. So very often for your intentional model, you're using your imagination to think about how you want it to go. And when you do this, you're using the model as a tool for creation. You're actually creating something with it. Now, when





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you're writing down your unintentional model, you're using the model as a tool for awareness, you are just noticing what your current results are and what thinking led to creating those results.

So I always like to think of the model as a tool for awareness, and a tool for creation, and we use it in different ways when we're building awareness versus when we're using it to create something. So today we don't have to get into a lot of detail about all the different ways we could use it, I just want you to be aware that your unintentional model is what happens when you're not paying attention.

Your intentional model is what happens when you decide what you want to proactively create in your life. Now I'm going to give you an example of an unintentional model and then an intentional model from one of my clients. She came to a session one day and told me very sadly, this was very painful for her, that her husband was just not that into her anymore. And that's what we were Coaching on that day.

So for her circumstance, we might put, "conversation she had with her husband on Saturday," and then her thought was, "He isn't into me." Her feeling was sad, but it was like really the deepest sadness you can imagine. It was really super painful for her to think that thought. And then the actions that she took from that sadness were, she kind of ignored him.

She planned to do things without him, she didn't share what was happening in her life with him. She had decided that he didn't care, so she didn't share anything. She sometimes avoided him. She spent a lot of time doing things without him. And then she would also ruminate about how not into her she was, and her mind was spinning with a lot of thoughts about it.





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Now, notice what she was not doing was she also stopped cultivating connection with him, stopped inviting him to things. When she was feeling sad, there were both things that she stopped doing and things she started doing that then created her experience of her result, which if I was going to put it in the result line, I might say a sentence like, I experienced my husband as if he's not into me.

But here's the nuance, it's not because he wasn't actually into her necessarily, we don't know, we just have to collect some facts, which we'll do next, but because of how she was thinking about it. So I experienced my husband as if he's not into me because of how I'm thinking about it. That's one way we can interpret it. There's probably more than one way, but for the purposes of today's example, that's the one that we're going to use.

So here is what happened, she presented the situation to me, we walked through it. We walk through feeling that sadness, and just holding that with loving compassion. So imagine if a little child comes to you and they're sad about something, you wouldn't tell them, you shouldn't be sad, no, you say, come here, tell me about the sadness, what's happening? What's going on?

You would comfort them as best as you can. So we practice some self comforting and some really being in loving presence with that sadness. And then I believe in testing hypotheses, I believe in evidence and testing things.

She was having this thought that he's not into her, but to her, she was reporting that like the news, like it rained at six o'clock and the sun is out and the cloud are parting, and he's not into her, as if it was a fact. So her homework was to test the fact, to question it, to find out, maybe he





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is maybe he isn't. We don't know.

So her homework was to pretend she was a detective and look for clues that he was actually invested in the relationship or not. And the smallest clues counted and she would make a list, and it was a running list of whatever happened. She had to keep her running list, and then we see what would happen throughout our time Coaching together. And we actually did this for several days.

So if he brought her coffee, it went on the list. If he kissed her goodbye on the way to work, it went on the list. If he gave the kids a bath, so she could take a break, on the list. And listen, once she put that list together, there were over 32 things on that list. That list ended up being huge. So when we actually paused to gather the data, her thought that he wasn't into her was not factual. It was not actually correct.

Now, this is why we must question our thoughts. Questioning them doesn't mean we don't keep some of them, but we don't want to make any sweeping life decisions without questioning the thought process that led to the decision.

So if we're going to do an intentional model for the scenario, we might say husband's actions like we said before, and then we could choose a thought like, it's possible my husband loves me, it's possible he's still into me. Maybe for an intentional, what we want to think on purpose.

If he's totally into me, feels so outlandish and so far away, maybe we want to bring something a little bit closer to think about a step ladder, we can think about a thought that feels more accessible, closer to where you're standing right now on that step ladder. So the feeling could





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be calm or open or focused.

Notice that it doesn't even have to be a sexy feeling, it can just be a feeling that moves you into action. So there we are considering it's possible. And then the action from that feeling, let's just pick calm as a feeling for this example, then the actions might be, look for evidence that love is present, write it down, talk about it in Coaching, thank my husband when he does a nice thing that I enjoy, savor the feeling of being loved when I notice something loving is happening, like actually slowing down to receive the thing that our partner is doing.

And then the result is, in this case, in this scenario, is to notice all the ways that my husband expresses his love for me. Now this is just one example to illustrate how to use the tool, and of course there could be different scenarios where the evidence comes back differently.

But what matters is what I explained earlier about cleaning up your side of the table. In so many relationships, there are some thoughts that are not accurate. We want to catch all of those first and then see where that catching experience, that questioning, determining, what is accurate and what isn't, where does that leave you.

By really noticing how your thinking creates your experience, you can start taking your power back in your relationship. You don't have to wait for anybody to agree to anything, you don't have to wait for anybody to change anything, you have a big epiphany. You can have your own epiphany and you can have a huge impact on your relationship.

Now, one of the things that I mentioned when I started this episode today is: what if my partner doesn't want to go to counseling or workshop or something like that, should I just give up? And





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my answer is absolutely not because you still want to clear up your side of the table.

When you come to me, if you say Maggie, I did everything. I tried the self-Coaching model, I started creating fun things for us to connect, I started forgiving my partner for every single resentment that I ever had about that person, I started forgiving myself for every single resentment I had about myself, I did all of these things and still didn't work, then we can talk.

But just because they didn't do one thing differently or they didn't do the thing you thought was the only solution, that doesn't mean that there aren't other solutions. You just look for another way until you really come to a place where you can see your side of the table is completely cleaned off of all the dirty dishes, and then you can make decisions on what you want to do about what's left on the rest of the table.

I always want everyone in my community, that means you, to own your power around how you want to manage your relationship. I want you to be able to know how to clear your side of the table, to own your experience. And from that point of clarity and ownership, make any decision you want about how you want your marriage to go.

So I really invite you to play with this tool, truly with spirit of playfulness, you can take notes from today's episode, or if you want to watch me teach it live, you can do that in The Marriage Mindset Makeover. I cover it in one of the live workshops and in the workbook included with the makeover details. You can see all the components on paper.

And to recap, I want to make sure that we are super clear, the basics of thought work, consist of, your thought download, your unintentional model, the model that is more like the thought weeds







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in your brain when your thoughts are just growing everywhere without a gardener. And then your intentional model, which is more like the flower thought that you planted on purpose that you want to water, that you want to grow.

And one of the most powerful things you can do with both models, either one of them, is to practice being with your feelings. Imagine your feelings are like the cast of friends, and you're hanging out with them at a coffee shop and you want to hear all their stories and all their adventures, and really be with them, feel them in your body and just be in loving presence with them.

This can feel difficult at first. And I always like to use the example of a microwave and an oven. We can't really microwave our feelings, we have to bake them. We have to slow down in order for them to really reach their maximum potential, both on the positive or negative end of the spectrum of feelings.

In other words, we cannot fast forward through them, we have to watch the commercials. And when we do try to fast forward through them, they have a way of just coming back louder and stronger. So when we think about slowing down to speed up, when we slow down to be present with whatever we are feeling, we're actually speeding up our ability to have and hold a variety of feelings and sensations, which then allows us to do so much more in our lives.

Because, if we can move through difficulty, and stay in forward motion, and then enjoy ease and really savor it, we're building this emotional muscle that can just handle whatever life throws at it, both the heightened great things and the deeper, more difficult things. And I have an episode on the art of holding space. I will link to that in the show notes as well.





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If you're wondering what it could be like to just be in loving presence with a feeling, I will link to that episode on the show notes so you can listen to that. But then think about someone that you care about right now, what came to mind for me was my grandmother. She passed away several years ago, but I can immediately connect with being loving presence with someone when I think about her. I will just enjoy her presence. If I had to one more day with her, I would just enjoy being with her.

So, absolutely just think about something like being in loving compassion or loving presence with a feeling, especially think about the feeling you don't want to feel that feels like the black sheep of the family feeling. Imagine that feeling feeling welcomed, welcome to the coffee shop, welcoming your life. Welcome to teach you whatever it's here for you to learn. Just imagine that.

So one thing that I also want you to know is, this tool is a deep concept to understand. It's simple but deep at the same time. So if you've been thinking the same way for 30 years, like I'm 48, I've been thinking the same things about the same things for a very long time, this is not something that you're going to master overnight.

It's not something that just because you heard me talking today, you're going to be like, "Okay, I have nailed all my thoughts," because every day we have new ones and old ones to work through. Like I mentioned in the beginning of the episode, imagine a camera, where you're walking down the street and there's always new things to take pictures of. There's always new angles to take, there's different lighting, there's different things to consider.

So doing thought work, just like practicing the art of photography, requires practice. It takes





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focus, it takes practice, but it will be some of the best work of your life. And if you listen to the show and wonder what we do in Coaching, I wonder what that might be like? This is it.

We question thoughts, we feel feelings, we decide outcomes, we use your imagination, and all the things I talked about today. We take the things we talk about on the podcast and apply them to your specific situation. And I teach a variety of concepts and tools and you set goals, and then we Coach on whatever is in the way between you and the result you want to create for yourself or for your marriage.

So you know I like to think about thriving, like a five star marriage. I believe no one wants to live in a motel marriage. We want the nicest sheets, the comfiest bed. We want to feel the warm, welcome feeling, the freshly baked cookies upon arrival. And I believe you can have a five star thriving relationship, and you do not need to wait for anyone else to give it to you.

You can create it, but you have to work at it. It's not just going to happen. It's like we have the weeds and the flowers. We have to plant the flowers and we have to see what we're going to do with the weeds. So if you think of Disney or the Ritz Carlton or any place that you go that feels magical, that feels amazing whenever you go there, think about how much intention and how much work goes into creating that magical, warm, welcome experience. It's going to take emotional effort.

It may not take physical effort, but it's going to take emotional effort, your intention, your focus, the investment of your time. The challenge of looking at something in a whole new way that you would never looked at it that way before and allowing yourself to sort of, if you're imagining like you're from the side of a mountain, you have reached a place in the mountain where you can





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see a whole new this side, you can see a whole new perspective you couldn't see when you were on the other side of the mountain, that is like emotional effort.

So you can create it, and I want you to know that, and I can definitely show you how to do that. Now, one very simple thing that I invite you to do this week is to notice the facts of your life and notice your thoughts about them. Think about a distillery, like when we distill something to make spirits, we distill something to its essence. What is the fact? The most basic fact.

And then notice the story that you attach to that fact. And as often as you can, notice the sensations in your body, label them, and as often as possible, think about descriptive words for what you're experiencing, for those sensations. Or whatever comes to your mind to increase your ability to be an intimate relationship with your own body.

So some of my clients use metaphors, it feels like open skies, it feels like a beautiful ocean. If you need a metaphor because something like expansion or constriction or flutter or throbbing, doesn't come as naturally to you, use whatever comes to you in the moment.

When we want to be in deeper relationship with someone else, a beautiful place to start is to be in deeper relationship with ourselves. It's like we're building our thriving relationship muscle, our five star muscle. And then we can take that strong muscle back into the relationship that we want to work on. But now we can go deeper because that muscle can hold whatever needs to be held.

If this is resonating for you, I invite you to really commit to mastering the skill of self-Coaching. And I invite you to join me in my Coaching programs, either, The Marriage Mindset Makeover or





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The Marriage MBA, and many of my clients are in both.

So the Marriage Mindset Makeover and The Marriage MBA, and you can find all the details for both programs on my website at <https://www.maggiereyes.com/Coaching>. And if you are brand new to my work, definitely start with the makeover. It's my simple self-study program. It walks you through so many of the foundational things that then we build upon in the marriage.

Okay. I want to know, what did you take away from today's episode? What are you going to try and play with? And what are you going to apply? Tag me on Instagram @themaggiereyes and tell me your favorite takeaway from today's episode. I would love to hear from you.

