



# EPISODE 116: 10 LESSONS LEARNED FROM 15 YEARS OF MARRIAGE – PART 1

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Maggie Reyes:

Hello, everyone. Welcome back to the podcast. Today I have my favorite person. No, it's not Oprah. It's my hubby. Say hi, hubby.

Mariano:

Hi, hubby.

Maggie Reyes:

So the hubby is back on the podcast because we just celebrated 15 years of marriage. And I wanted to do an episode on lessons learned from 15 years together. And of course, when I told my hubby this, I said, "Hey, let's do a podcast. The lessons we've learned from being married for 15 years." And he said to me, "We've learned lessons?"

Mariano:

It's important checking on that first.

Maggie Reyes:

So basically I said, "Yes, of course we have." Then I put them in a Google doc. We talked about them in the kitchen, as one does. And we've agreed on the 10 things that we want to share that we've learned over the 15 years together.

Something that really inspired me is one of our cousins. We saw our cousins and we had a barbecue, and one of our cousins said, "I thought for sure after 10 years, you two would settle down." But we're very lovey dovey kind of people. That's just how we are.





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It just struck me how our cousin said that, in this way that was like, I feel like sometimes we have low expectations about what a marriage can be, what a union could become. We have, in a lot of pockets of our society, this idea that the longer you're married, it gets boring or there's less affection or there's less delight or less excitement.

I just want to say I really believe one of the things we're going to talk about today, we'll probably start with that one is that you create your relationship every day. If you keep doing that, then it doesn't matter how many years pass because you're creating it every day. So the length of time doesn't make a difference. So, dear hubby. Welcome to the show. Thank you for saying yes.

Mariano:

Thank you. Happy to be here.

Maggie Reyes:

I know that's one of your favorite things or mottos or things about how we create things every day, or we create our relationship every day. So I'd love to hear what your thoughts are on that one.

Mariano:

On bringing the funny?

Maggie Reyes:

No. So, he's looking at the list.

Mariano:





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Oh, we're just jumping around.

Maggie Reyes:

We're jumping around. We're starting with this like every day.

Mariano:

Oh, my God. You know I like saying everything structured, and here you are just playing fast and loose with the rules.

Maggie Reyes:

Fast and loose. We're going to start with number three.

Mariano:

Thank you.

Maggie Reyes:

Then we're going to go back to number one. Everyone is just laughing with us. So hi, everyone.

Mariano:

So confused. What is happening? Why do we even have a list?

Maggie Reyes:

This is why, so one of the things we do, okay. So I don't think this is on the list. Maybe it is. Maybe it's for the next episode. We're going to do two episodes together. But one of the things we do is we laugh about things that other people argue over. This is a classic-





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Mariano:  
That's true.

Maggie Reyes:  
... example that didn't even make it to the list. But it's something I talk about all the time when I'm Coaching is I study our relationship, like why did we get along? What is this thing that we have done? How does it work?

One of the things that we very, very often do is we just laugh about things that other people would argue over. So I invite you, you who are listening to us today to really play with that idea of what is something that you argue about that you could laugh about? Okay. So now, can we start with number three? Does that work for you?

Mariano:  
Yes, yes. Okay. We'll do it your way.

Maggie Reyes:  
Okay. So you create it every day. So what are your thoughts about that one?

Mariano:  
Well yeah, I mean, every day is opportunity for a fresh start and then a fresh opportunity to recommit to the relationship and to loving the other person. So, yeah, that was something we learned when we were first started dating and we're looking on and about how to maintain a long-term relationship.





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The create, create, create, that you create every day. So people just kind of, I don't know, operate in cruise control. They're not really consciously making a decision. But you can.

Maggie Reyes:

Yes. You can consciously make decisions. If you're listening to The Marriage Life Coach Podcast, I know that you've consciously made a decision to make your marriage better. It's something that we do on purpose.

One of the things that we used to do, especially before COVID time, so we would not work in the same space, now we've worked from home for a while, is we would text each other during lunch. It was something that I would always look forward to a little happy face, a little emoji.

Sometimes because I work from home and when my husband didn't work from home, he would go and have all these delicious lunches in all these places, and I would play around and I'd be like, "Oh, jealousy is real," stuff like that. But we would just have fun with it.

I think those little moments, those little moments of connection sometimes when we have a lot on our plates, when we have a lot in our heart, when there's a lot going on, it's easy to miss those little moments of connection.

One thing that I think we have been good about doing is we have always maintained those little moments, whether it's a little text at lunchtime or when we see something funny or anything to share like that. What are your thoughts about that?

Mariano:





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Yeah, I agree. That's my thought.

Maggie Reyes:

That's all you're getting, folks. That's all you're getting. Okay. Let's go to number one. So bring the funny. I think it is kind of, we've already demonstrated it for the audience.

Mariano:

That's right.

Maggie Reyes:

Is that we try to laugh on a regular basis and really enjoy each other's company and really enjoy making things fun. And we were ... what were we doing? We were ordering food from Home Chef, shout out to Home Chef. We like it. We had so much fun just looking at the things on the menu. You would think that we were doing some really fancy thing and we were just like-

Mariano:

Or we've had fun just doing groceries, just go down the aisle, chatting, joking.

Maggie Reyes:

Yeah. So we really bring the fun where we go. We don't wait for outside circumstances or for the situation to be fun. We bring the fun. And like you said, doing groceries. I remember laughing at like Lowe's hardware store. Whenever we're doing anything that can seem like one of those mundane tasks of life, we are like how can we make this fun? Then we challenge ourselves and have fun doing that.







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Mariano:  
Totally.

Maggie Reyes:

What is the effect of that for you? I know for me, it just, I look forward to the time we spend together, and make some of the things that aren't necessarily something I'd look forward to, I'm like, "Oh, I wonder how this is going to go." For me, it just adds to the joy of daily life. What does it do for you?

Mariano:

Yeah. It prevents things from becoming a drag or a chore. It's like, oh, you still have to do, there's things, you have to adult. Adulting is required. But it could be adulting with fun.

Maggie Reyes:

Yes. I love that. Okay. So the next thing, we're going on to number two. So my husband, we have a Google doc he's following along with. Okay. So the number two is something that I'm going to explain first, and then we'll talk about it, which I teach a concept called holding space in The Marriage MBA.

And I have a podcast episode that we will link to in the show notes called, The Art of Holding Space with my favorite, one of my favorite resources teachers on what holding space means. His name is Adam Brady. He's phenomenal. And we talk about it in depth there.

In the process of understanding what holding space is, so let's imagine that it's just holding with loving compassion something that someone is sharing. When we talk about holding space, I





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teach it in depth. There's other elements to it.

But if we were going to distill it to its most simplest thing, it's like being able to hold something with loving care, with loving compassion. As we learn to hold space for each other and be practicing that in our relationship, one thing that I have found is super useful to know and understand is when it's a good idea to do that and when it's not a good idea to do that.

Mariano:

Wow. I can't wait to learn about this.

Maggie Reyes:

So for example, as you all know, listening to the podcast, I'm a life Coach, I run my own business. It's a Marriage Coaching Company. As I started my business, I had a lot of fears about money and how the company would grow and evolve.

I would go to my husband, who's the person I'm used to processing difficult things with. And he had his own fears about things. In the process of asking him to hold space, to hold something from your loving compassion, I realized he may not be the best person, when I'm afraid about a specific thing that he's also afraid of, to go to for that moment.

So I learned to go to my girlfriends, talk to my Coaches and my mentors, use the other relationships in my life to hold something when I was afraid, so that it wasn't the person that also has the same fear, isn't just, "Let's both be afraid together." It's not usually the best idea.

So that's what I mean by holding space with fears and knowing when is it a good time to turn to







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your partner and when it isn't? And sometimes if we're frustrated or angry because our partner can't hold space for something that is really important to us, we forget that they're human too and that they have also fears and doubts and things.

I just want to remind everyone we're all married to humans here. So that's what I wanted to share about that. What would you like to share, my love?

Mariano:

Yeah, just the importance of knowing the other person, as much as you love them and you may put them on a pedestal, they're also human, and they're going through their journey, and they have their fears that they have to struggle with and stuff.

And you can love them and have compassion for that, and that's part of the journey that you're doing together. Hold space full of fears. And respect that they can have fears and it's okay. It doesn't mean anything negative about them. That just means they're human.

Maggie Reyes:

Yes. Especially when you're having fears, right? It's like, "Oh, I'm having some too, right?"

Mariano:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Maggie Reyes:

I love something that you said about not just that they're human, but sometimes we put our partners on a pedestal in some ways. It's so important to be mindful when we do that. It serves





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the relationship for us to look at things with rose-colored glasses, for us to think that our partner is the best human ever, right?

I always talk about my husband as, “He’s my favorite person.” It’s useful when you’re cultivating connection. But we want to be careful to not put our partners on these pedestals, where we think they can hold anything. They can do anything. They should be able to do superhuman things that maybe they’re not able to do.

So I love that you use that word because it just reminded me to just remind everyone that it’s useful when we assume positive intent, when we look at whatever is going on with our partner with the most loving, generous interpretation, but not to cross the line over to giving them qualities that they don’t have or expecting things that just are beyond the scope of what they’re capable of.

Mariano:  
Correct.

Maggie Reyes:  
Okay. Number ... what number? Okay. Number four. Okay. Appreciation. I have a lot to say about appreciation. I’m going to have you go first. What are your thoughts? We just wrote appreciation on our list, but what are your thoughts about appreciation? What do you want everybody to know?

Mariano:  
Appreciation’s good. But seriously, showing your appreciation for ... Don’t just take it for granted





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that your significant other, your spouse does something nice for you or something that speak to your love language or whatever.

Or even if it doesn't, it's just constantly appreciating each other for things, whatever the other person is contributing to the relationship or doing for you. That's just, why would you not?

Maggie Reyes:

We forget. I love this question, "Why would you not?" Here's what I see all the time. Everyone listening is going to think this is familiar. A lot of people, when something goes wrong and they're upset about one thing, they're like, "I can't express appreciation about this other thing because this thing hasn't been resolved. So I'm just going to hold back on any appreciation until we solve this other thing."

I always want everyone who listens to me to know that you can, instead of thinking of life as "this before that," think of life as "this and that." We still have to reply. We still have to figure out whatever's going on about the thing that hurt us or that could be a problem.

But we don't have to go all or nothing on how we're relating to our partner, just because something stressful or upsetting has happened. So that's why we do not. Good question, hubby.

Then for appreciation, I always say that appreciation and sex are like marriage glue. They're two things that help you stay glued together. And they have very similar effects, appreciation and sexual connection and whatever sexual connection feels good to you. Everybody's sexual connection is different. But what happens is the engaging in those activities releases really good chemicals in your body that contribute to feeling united and connected.





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Then when something goes wrong, when something isn't going the way that you'd like, you have this foundation of positive regard of connection, where it's what I call relationship elasticity, which is it's, you can bounce back from whatever it was that happened because you're keeping that, I don't know, it would be like something that's well oiled or something that bounces maybe. The engineer, help me out here.

So appreciation is so important because it creates, it helps you cultivate positive regard and teamwork and connection, and it helps your brain look for what is working instead of constantly looking for what isn't working.

When we were talking and putting together our notes for the show, one thing that I was just reflecting on with the hubby is we've had all kinds of hard things happen over these 15 years. We've had literal hurricanes. We had one Christmas, we found out that we had to replace our roof, a huge unexpected expense, and we both freaked out. We calmed down, we have the roof, everything's fine now.

But it's not like we haven't had major life events of every kind that you can imagine. It's just that we keep doing the things we're talking about today, where we find what's funny, where we appreciate each other and all the little things that we do, where we remember to create the connection every day. That's what keeps us really strong and really united as a team. What else?

Mariano:

That covers it pretty well. I mean, the other thing I would add is sometimes people think they





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don't have to show appreciation for something because the other person should do it. It's part of their, I don't know, their role in the relationship, whatever. And yeah, that's wrong. That's all.

Maggie Reyes:

You heard it here.

Mariano:

That is incorrect thinking.

Maggie Reyes:

That is incorrect thinking. So what is your recommended thinking?

Mariano:

To appreciate everything that someone brings to your relationship. Why not? Why hold back? It baffles me.

Maggie Reyes:

We already answered that question before, my love.

Mariano:

What exactly was the reason?

Maggie Reyes:

Why hold back? Yeah. If we have this, it's a cultural narrative, "The person should be doing this thing, so I shouldn't have to say thank you about it." It's expected. And it's like, why not, like you







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said, say thank you? Why not cultivate partnership and connection?

We have to be careful sometimes with our expectations. I mean, we always have to be careful with our expectations. But when we expect somebody to do something, and then we show no appreciation for it being done, what is the mindset that's creating, not showing appreciation? What are we believing about that person or about that thing?

It's really fascinating if you just slow down and say, "Why not?" And everybody listening, just answer that question. I had this conversation, I quote this story all the time, with my friend, Mary, who listens to the podcast, so shout out to Mary.

She said, "Why should I thank my husband for something he's supposed to do in the first place?" I said, "Don't believe me, just try it, just do it." It was such a huge impact for her because she just started thanking him for things. And then he felt amazing. And then she felt amazing.

And then he started thanking her for things. Then they both felt amazing. It's like, that's why. This is why you do it. Okay. Number five is reporting on your personal state. So I call this telling the microscopic truth.

And when I told my husband, he just had a good laugh. He's like, "What the hell is that?" He said, "I want to call it reporting on your personal state." So we're calling it what you said because I liked it. So tell everybody what reporting on your personal state is.

Mariano:

I think obviously everybody has good days, bad days and maybe you got in a fight with your







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boss. You were looking at some really complicated spreadsheets and your brain is burnt out. Something really scary happened that you're off your center.

I think it's important to report to your spouse how you are feeling, if you're not your normal self because when they see you when you're a little off, it's not ... make it clear, it's not about them. It's not that you're upset with them or anything.

You are just not 100% yourself for X, Y, Z reason. That helps with the context why you may be behaving in a certain way or maybe not responding a certain way. I certainly have, whatever, the sleep deprived and not spoken as clearly as I would've liked or whatever. So I think that's important.

Maggie Reyes:

Yes. Okay. So for everyone who's listened to the episode on Soul-Centered Communication, one of the steps in Soul-Centered Communication is un-complicate it. There was a recent moment in a car, we were in a car trip where my husband just said some wacky things. I just want all of you to imagine.

So he's driving and I'm in the seat next to him, and I'm just repeating to myself over and over again, "Un-complicate it, un-complicate it. Remember to talk about one thing at a time. Un-complicate it." It's what I used as my mantra to calm myself down after the wacky things were said, and it worked.

So there you go. Okay. So reporting on your personal state, I mean everything that you said, of course, I agree. Then the reason I call it the microscopic truth is it's tiny things that it wouldn't





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occur to us to normally share.

It's so tiny, but it makes such a huge difference in the well oiled machine of your relationship. So sometimes because I am a Marriage Coach, I'll have very intense Coaching sessions, like everybody cried that day, and it's just intense for whatever reason.

He'll come home and I'll say, "Hey, if I'm not my normal enthusiastic self, just a heads up, today was intense." Then he doesn't have to go and make up a story of "What did I do? Did I do something? Did I forget something? Is it my fault?"

We bypass having any of that kind of stress because we tell these tiny little truths that are tiny, but so powerful. Same for him and his situations at work and when he comes home, and he'll share something, and we'll talk about what we want to do that night or whatever plan we're making.

And it's like, "Oh, it's not anything particular with you going on. It's just, I had this big thing happen. And I just don't have the energy tonight to do whatever it is." And we do it a different day. So that idea of reporting on your personal state is one of the things that I think, one of the ways or one of the lenses I look at it is you'll constantly hear me say on the podcast and in my Coaching programs is the fight you don't have is the fight you don't have to recover from.

And reporting on your personal state and telling the microscopic truth is one of the ways that you just don't have a fight about it. Because imagine if somebody came home grumpy and then we're like, "Well, why are you grumpy? What's going on?" Then it becomes this whole big thing versus "Oh, something happened today that was just unsettling." And now we move on with our





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night.

Mariano:

Yes.

Maggie Reyes:

Okay. Is there anything else you want to add?

Mariano:

No, that's well said. You covered it well.

Maggie Reyes:

Okay, great. Okay. So this is 10 lessons learned from being married for 15 years. These are the first five. Next week, you're going to hear the next five. But I always like to wrap up every episode where I have a guest with a question from The Questions for Couple's Journal.

So I'm going to ask the hubby this question. It's so fun. I'm so excited. I can't wait. I don't even know what he's going to say. I'm so excited to hear. You get to play only one board game for the rest of your life. What game do you pick and why?

Mariano:

Well, we've both been playing Bridgerton Monopoly and having quite a lot of fun with it. So I think I would go with that one. I think we both have a shot at winning because also my wife is a Scrabble queen and I get crushed on a regular basis if that was the only game we ever play. So I'm branching out to something that gives us all the chance to have fun, and win.





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Maggie Reyes:

Okay, so first of all, if you don't already know this, I'm obsessed with Bridgerton, especially season two, absolutely obsessed to the point where my friends send me, they'll see something about Bridgerton in the news and send me messages about Bridgerton and things.

If anyone listening to this is in any way connected to Bridgerton, go to Instagram at The Maggie Reyes and message me because I want to know. Okay. So the fact that my husband, the love of my life picked Bridgerton Monopoly, it warms my ever loving heart. I will give up being Scrabble queen for this. I'm there. I love it.

Okay. Thank you for being on the show and for being such a good sport. Thank you everyone for listening. If you're not already following me on Instagram, go to at The Maggie Reyes and follow me there. And remember to subscribe to the podcast, if you're not already subscribed. We will be back with the next five lessons learned from 15 years of marriage in the next episode.

