

209: How Our Thoughts Shape Our Relationships (with Maggie Reyes)



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Jen Riday

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Jen Riday: You're listening to the *Vibrant Happy Women* podcast, episode #209. I'm talking with one of my favorite people, Maggie Reyes, about how our thoughts influence the results of our marriages and our parenting. Stay tuned.

Hi, I'm Jen Riday, and this podcast is for women who want to feel more vibrant, happy, aligned, and alive. You'll gain the emotional, physical, and spiritual tools you need to get your sparkle back and ensure that depression, anxiety, and struggle don't rule your life. Welcome to the *Vibrant Happy Women* podcast.

Hey, my friends. Welcome back. How many of you have read Anne of Green Gables? Well, in those books, Anne talks about being kindred spirits with her neighbor and best friend, Diana. I love that phrase, kindred spirits. Well, today, I'm interviewing someone who I feel is a kindred spirit, Maggie Reyes. She is so much fun. She shares beautiful, real world examples of what she's trying to teach.

In this episode, we draw in examples from Whitney Houston, Justin Bieber, and the Oscars along with an example from my husband and one of my kids. So many practical examples that should give you ideas on how your thoughts can change the outcome of your relationships and how changing your thoughts will give you a new outcome or result for those relationships.

Many of us spend our time thinking that our spouse or our kids frustrate us, that they cause us frustration because of their behaviors. As I teach in the Vibrant Happy Women Club, our thoughts about their behaviors are what give us the feelings of frustration.

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You can't feel that your spouse is frustrating unless you think, "Wow, he is being frustrating." That thought causes those feelings of frustration. "My spouse is insensitive." Might make you feel sad or annoyed. "My child doesn't listen." Definite resentment causer. All of these negative feelings we experience in our relationships start with a thought. So, we're going to be talking about that in this episode.

Now, I want you to be thinking about, as we go into this, what are the most annoying, frustrating, or resentment-causing situations in your life. Maybe it's that your spouse doesn't care how you feel. Your kids don't listen the first time you ask. Nobody is helping around the house. Whatever is happening, stop for a moment and figure out what is your thought about that situation so that you can get really clear as we go into this episode.

I believe that my husband is insensitive, for example. That's my thought. Don't go any further. Just figure out these thoughts. When we identify our thoughts, we can begin to change them, which gives us a new reality. We go through our lives perceiving everything around us, and we think that our perceptions are the truth with a capital T, but they are just that, perceptions with a lowercase P.

We can think any thought we want to about our finances, about our marriage, about our parenting, about our kids, about our homes and the state of cleanliness or lack thereof. We can create the thought. If you haven't had time to get around to cleaning your house this week, for example, you could think, "Oh, my house is a pigsty. My children are pigs." Those thoughts cause anger. Can you tell? Or frustration or resentment.

There are other thoughts we can think which might give us a different feeling like, "Oh, my house is such a free flowing place for creative expression." That thought feels way better to me. Or, "My children love to

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create and try new things,” feels way better than, “They are pigs.” You get the idea.

So, we’re going to be talking about how our thoughts create our feelings, and our feelings lead to actions, and our actions lead to results. This comes back from cognitive behavioral therapy created in the late 70s and 80s, at least grew popular at those times, and how we can use it in our lives. We can create thoughts that generate positive feelings about our spouses, about our kids, about our lives. We just have to learn the trick, and we have to become aware of our thoughts first. So, let’s go ahead and dive in and learn some real life examples for doing that.

Hey, everyone. I’m talking with one of my all-time favorite people, truly, Maggie Reyes, who is a life coach and modern marriage mentor who helps high-achieving women have happier marriages. Her romantic yet practical approach to love has appeared in numerous publications, including *Brides*, *Lifehacker*, and *Martha Stewart Weddings*, and she is the host of an awesome and brand new podcast called *The Marriage Life Coach* podcast. You should definitely listen.

You can also find her at MaggieReyes.com. When she isn’t coaching, you can find her on Facebook in The Better Marriage Club, her free Facebook group. I highly recommend it. Or reading Arrow fanfiction while cuddling with her hubby. Welcome back to Vibrant Happy Women, Maggie.

Maggie Reyes: First of all, I have to say, Jen, you are one of my favorite people too. Every time we get a chance to chat, every time we get a chance to talk, I always remember that this podcast changes lives in so many ways that you probably can’t even imagine.

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I just want to be a witness to that for you just for this moment and for all the listeners who are nodding as they're driving, and walking, and running with the podcast, "Yup, it changed my life. Yup." This podcast brought you into my life when we did our first interview together, and I just feel deeply, deeply blessed that I get to be a part of your life. So, thank you.

Jen Riday: Thank you. Everyone, if you're like, "What are you talking about? I don't remember that episode," go listen to it right now. It's at JenRiday.com/118. Well, today, Maggie and I are going to talk about marriage because that's what you do, Maggie, but we're going to talk about how our thoughts create the reality in our marriages, or in our partnerships, or with our whoever is the love interest in our lives. Tell us more about how you found that to be true with your clients, Maggie?

Maggie Reyes: Absolutely. First, I just want to tell everyone who might be listening, if you're not married or in a long-term loving relationship, I speak through the lens of marriage. That's where my examples come from, but these principles apply to every relationship whether it's a family member, a boss, a co-worker. So, as you're listening to us talk today, feel free to insert your own situation and whatever relationship you want to work on, improve, become better, it will absolutely apply the same principles.

Jen Riday: Yes, for sure.

Maggie Reyes: Our thoughts create our reality. This is what's fascinating. You say that, and to some people, it'll sound a little bit woo, like it'll sound a little bit wild and out there. Some people will immediately associate that with something like the law of attraction and be like, "It's either for me, or it's not for me." Here's what I have found in my deeper study of psychology, and how the brain works, and how we observe the brain working.

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If you look at something like cognitive behavioral psychology, which has a whole body of study, which has research associated with its effectiveness and the quality of the results people create when they start looking at their behavior and how their thoughts influence their behavior, it's like the gap between cognitive behavioral psychology and something that sounds a little wild maybe.

Something like the law of attraction, the gap is actually very small. We have now scientific data that shows us that our thoughts and feelings impact our actions and our results. Isn't that wild? Isn't that amazing?

Jen Riday: Yes, tell us more about the data, if you have it in your head.

Maggie Reyes: I don't have it memorized, but if you were to look up either CBT, cognitive behavioral therapy, or cognitive behavioral psychology, there's a lot of evidence now that shows that in many different challenges that we have in life, one of the most effective interventions that we could have is to look at how our thoughts are impacting our behaviors.

When we part from that knowledge, we say, "Okay. Well, let's find out more about how that works." The model that I use to coach my clients is called The Self-Coaching Model. It was developed at The Life Coach School, which is where I trained. Where we list out things that are going to be familiar to some of your listeners. So, you probably talk about thoughts, and feelings, and actions, and results.

We have a line at the top of that that is for circumstances. In our Self-Coaching model, we would write out a circumstance, which is a fact. It's something that happens that's provable in a court of law. Then we have a thought about that circumstance. That thought then creates a feeling. That

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feeling then is what dictates our actions, and all of our actions are inspired by us seeking a feeling or avoiding a feeling.

Feelings become very important when we look at them as data. Feelings are data. If anyone is listening, and they're like, "I'm not into feelings." If you are into feelings, great, you're going to love this episode, and if you're not, just look at them as pieces of data that help us create the results in our life.

So, we take action, and then that's what creates our result. As I was talking to Jen prepping for the show, we talked a little bit about how a lot of her listeners, wonderful Happy Vibrant Women, are very familiar with thoughts, and feelings, and actions, but not as familiar with circumstances, and I'd love to dive into circumstances with you a little bit, Jen, if that sounds good.

Jen Riday: Sure, sounds good.

Maggie Reyes: Okay. Here's what we don't realize about circumstances. We think our circumstances make us happy or unhappy. Like it's cold outside or it's hot outside. Jen is where it's cold, and I'm where it's hot. We could have an opinion about that, which is a thought. I could think it's great, or I could think it's awful. Circumstances aren't actually what's causing how we feel. It's our thought about that circumstance that causes how we feel.

So, we spend a lot of our lives trying to change the circumstances of our lives, not realizing or fully understanding that especially when there are circumstances that are difficult or challenging to change, or we may not want to change because let's say, we love our partner. We want to stay with our partner, but they're not going to change. So, what do we change?

The way we're thinking about our experience with our partner. Now, here's what's twisty about circumstances. Follow me for a moment. We're going to

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go to a special place. When we think that our circumstances create our happiness, and our circumstances are out of our control, we give away our power, and we don't do all the things we could do, and think, and feel, and say, and decide in order to feel better.

Understanding the nuance of the role of circumstances in our lives is really, really important. Whenever I teach this to my private coaching clients, this is the example that I give them, and they never forget it. Are you ready?

Jen Riday: Yes.

Maggie Reyes: Okay. I'm 46 years old. I grew up with Whitney Houston. Do you remember Whitney Houston?

Jen Riday: The greatest love of all, baby.

Maggie Reyes: Oh, yeah. "I want to dance with somebody who loves me," Whitney Houston. So, when I grew up, Whitney Houston was like the Beyoncé of her time, and you would think that she would be the happiest woman on earth. I'm going to give you a list of Whitney Houston's circumstances.

She was beautiful, arguably. She had beautiful clothing. She traveled the world. She lived in mansions. Millions of people loved her. She had an amazing voice. She was creatively self-expressed through her music. She had an amazing career. She made many of her dreams come true.

If she wanted to go on tour, she went on tour. If she wanted to go on vacation, she'd go on vacation. If she wanted to make a movie with Kevin Costner, she'd make a movie with Kevin Costner. Every circumstance that

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you could imagine that most of us aspire to have, whether it's money, or adventures, or creativity, she had them.

If it was true that our circumstances are what make us happy and delighted, then Whitney Houston should still be alive today. There's no reason for her not to be. What happened with Whitney Houston is she had thoughts about herself, about her life, that cost her massive amounts of pain.

The way we know that this is true is because we know that she died in a very tragic way, that there was drugs and different substances involved in her departure from this earth, and that she was in emotional pain for many, many years of her life. Why was that, if she had every circumstance we also think, "If I had that thing, I'd be fine. Everything would be great"? Yet she had that, and everything was not fine, and it was not great.

If ever you think about learning why your thoughts and your feelings matter, remember Whitney Houston. Remember that it is something that is in your control, that having a circumstance that's perfect or seemingly perfect isn't the key. It's how you think about that circumstance that will determine your happiness, or your frustration, or whatever result you want to create in your life. That was kind of a big, little chunk, Jen. What are your thoughts about that?

Jen Riday: Okay. It's interesting you asked. Justin Bieber, who I am not necessarily a fan of, recently made a comeback. So, he was on James Corden's carpool karaoke. Justin was on there, and I was intrigued when essentially, I started to pay a little attention and realized he had been out of the scene for like four years.

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Part of the story that his manager shared was that all of these performances from age 13 onward, every huge audience and all of this attention, gave him a massive dopamine hit. I started to realize a lot of stars experience that huge dopamine hit, and then when they go back to regular life, they struggle to find the equivalent. They've had such a massive dose. I hear you on Whitney's thoughts, and I agree with you, but also there's this physiological thing happening. How do you pair both of those up?

Maggie Reyes: That's such a great question. Our brain is part of our body.

Jen Riday: Yes.

Maggie Reyes: We think, "Oh, we must manage our brain," as if our brain was outside of our body. So, our brain is part of our body, number one. Number two, when you have something like that, like a big dopamine hit, and the physiological response is happening, we can have thoughts about it.

Maybe he's going on tour. The tour is happening. The dopamine hit will occur, and then we can decide when we see, "Oh, I feel really exhilarated when I'm doing this, but this isn't what normal life is like. This is an exceptional thing that's happening. How do I come back to my life and realize that it's normal not to feel such a huge high, and how do I manage that?" I'm going to go even another angle with this that is really interesting. The same thing is true for anyone recovering from trauma. We're going to have Justin Bieber's dopamine on one side.

Jen Riday: This is so much fun.

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Maggie Reyes: It's wild. I'm actually thinking about this really deeply as I have a couple of clients who've been through really traumatic, like overcoming an infidelity. Things that are traumatic events that we must recover from that are very intense.

Jen Riday: Yes.

Maggie Reyes: When we have a high level of intensity, and we go to calm, suddenly, it feels like a straight line. If you imagine, I don't know, if we're watching ER or something, and the heart monitor is going up and down, and up and down, and up and down, and then Justin Bieber has up, up, up on his tour, and then goes down.

With trauma, when we have a trauma response, even though it's not fun. Justin Bieber has the fun side of going up, but we could have a trauma response that's also high. So, we go up and down, and up and down, and then we go up, up, up, and then we go down.

When we try to bring ourselves to calm, centered, and grounded, it might feel like we're numb. It might feel like nothing is happening. It might feel uncomfortable, really uncomfortable, to be in a state of centered groundedness to the point where Justin Bieber didn't know how to do that and had to learn. What a great example.

Jen Riday: Yes.

Maggie Reyes: It also happens in trauma situations where we don't know how to not have that automatic response, and we have to relearn that calm is normal and okay, and that that wild up and down fluctuation is the exception. It's not how we live everyday life.

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Jen Riday: That's interesting. We have to change our thoughts about what calm means, that it's not necessarily boring or uncomfortable.

Maggie Reyes: Yeah. Here's the thing that I really would love for your listeners to start considering, and I tell all my clients this, is that the sexiest feelings are really the ones that sound most boring, but they create the best results in our life.

Jen Riday: Okay. Tell us more.

Maggie Reyes: If we think about our marriage, let's give marriage as the example. Like, "I want to be passionate. I want to be sexy. I want to be exciting. We're not exciting anymore. Let's go be exciting." We think that's going to create an amazing result for us, but really, feelings like calm, centered, focused, determined.

Those feelings that don't sound sexy when you hear them actually create the sexiest results because when I'm calm and I can think clearly, I can slow down enough to set an intention, to think about my thinking, which is what we're doing today on today's show. It's like, "Come with us. It's fun. We promise."

Thinking about our thinking is going to be one of the best things you ever do for the rest of your life. When you're with someone like Jen, and you listen to her show every week, what she's doing secretly behind the scenes, she's elevating the quality of your thinking every week, and you don't even notice.

Jen Riday: That's right. I'm brainwashing all of you.

Maggie Reyes: Right, but it's a positive way.

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Jen Riday: For sure, for sure.

Maggie Reyes: By offering new thoughts, new ways of considering how your listeners are living life, what you're doing is offering new ways to think that then lead to different feelings. The feelings are often not, "Oh, my gosh, I'm the queen of the world." Sometimes that happens, but more often than not, it's, "I better add that to my checklist," or, "I better go for a walk," or, "I better take Jen's challenge." Her awesome challenges that she's doing while we're recording this where she's doing new things. Was it for 90 days, 40 days?

Jen Riday: Oh, yes. I'm doing the adventure experiment on my Facebook page. Just doing something new, or meeting a new person, or having a new experience. Yeah, for nine months actually.

Maggie Reyes: For nine months. That's awesome. You watch Jen doing new things, and you start thinking a simple thought, "That's possible for me." A simple thought. We think we need these really sexy, profound, deep thoughts. No, simple thoughts like, "That's possible for me. I could try that. Maybe. Why don't we? Let's try it." Those thoughts will bring about a feeling of curiosity, a feeling of expansion, then that'll bring an experiment, then you'll try something new. Suddenly, you turn around, and you're like, "What has Jen done to my life? It's amazing."

Jen Riday: Isn't that fascinating? Back to the Justin Bieber example or Whitney. It even happened to me after my last Vibrant Happy Women Retreat. You come back to regular life, and these supposedly boring emotions of calm, centered, focused, determined that you mentioned, they actually give a great result, but we think thoughts about those feelings like, "Uh, this is boring. Here I am back in regular life. Lame." How do we change our thinking to get a different result?

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Maggie Reyes: First of all, here's an example. I love to give all these show business examples because everybody could relate to this. Let's think for a moment. We visited Whitney, we visited Justin. Now, we're going to go to the Oscars. Everybody put on your favorite dress, get your makeup on, put on your jewelry. We're at the Oscars. We're there.

Everybody thinks the Oscars is such a gala. Everybody looks so good. All the things. How you get to the Oscars is waking up at 5:00 a.m. when you don't really want to and rehearsing maybe in a warehouse that's cold and ugly, and running your lines with your scene partner, and then working out, and then eating healthy. Those calm, centered activities, that is the path that you take.

When you're able to tie the fact that Jen recording her podcast every week over and over again for years, being in her routine, planning her episodes, thinking about what she's going to talk about next, is how the retreat happens in the first place. That's her Oscars, is the live retreat that's so amazing. You can tie that motivation to, "I love going to the Oscars. I need to wake up at 5:00 a.m. and go rehearse now because I want to get to the Oscars."

Jen Riday: Oh, that's cool. So, after the retreat, I just have to look forward to the next one, of course, and then just keep doing the 5:00 a.m.'s.

Maggie Reyes: Right. That is one. Let's do different types of motivation. One motivation is look forward to the next one. The other type of motivation, which is next level, but you guys can all handle it, so we're going to take you there, is the rehearsal is its own reward.

Jen Riday: That is true. It's really true. After the big highs, we forget it, but the quicker we can get back to regular thinking, I think it's true. I love

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regular life much more. It's cool. It doesn't sound exciting when I say it, does it?

Maggie Reyes: No, but it is. One of the things that we're doing is changing the conversation about what's exciting, and I think that's really important. It's like, "Yes, loving my family and loving being home, that's super exciting. Everything else is just a fantasy. It's not really real." We're just going to do all entertainment examples today. Think about the people who are not a flash in the pan, like the people who last over years to come. Someone like Meryl Streep.

Jen Riday: Yes.

Maggie Reyes: Someone like Meryl Streep. Someone like Hugh Jackman. I'm totally obsessed with Hugh Jackman. If you hear them talk, they'll tell you about the craft of acting, of building a character, of being in a play, or making a musical and making a movie. The rehearsal is its own reward. They don't even care probably, I'm guessing, about going to the Oscars. It's a fun night, and it's fine, but what they're in for, what they want is, "Yeah, the warehouse, 5:00 a.m. I'll be there. It'll be amazing."

Jen Riday: Yes. Now, my mind is twisting this. We got to apply this to our lives. Okay. A lot of listeners are married, or moms, or in some kind of relationship. How do we start thinking about the craft or the rewards of being a mom when society feeds us so many thoughts like, "Uh, I'm a mom. I have to get up and get the kids ready. When is it going to be wine o'clock?" I hear that one all the time. Like, "Mommy needs wine."

We've programmed ourselves to think that marriage is a ball and chain, and parenting is a massive sacrifice that sucks most of the time. How do we get

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rid of that and come back to thinking that supports our results that we desire?

Maggie Reyes: You find the place in your heart where you remember that you chose this, number one. No one is making you make the breakfast. You're choosing to make the breakfast. Sometimes an exercise I give for homework to my clients to ground them back into the beauty of their choices and how they're a blessing and not a problem is to add, "I choose this," all day long to whatever they're doing.

That brings you back, first of all, to your own power. "I choose to make the breakfast and to wake up early because I like to make it fresh." Or once to get back to that you are choosing it, you say, "You know what? I hate making breakfast." Then you ask the question, "How can I make it easier for my kids to have a healthy breakfast that doesn't feel terrible to me?" Then you get to be creative about it. Then you get to decide A, some of you are going to love making the breakfast and find the love in the breakfast. Some of you are going to say, "Actually, I've never liked it."

Then depending on how old your kids are, you might make it a fun game with them, and they get to make the breakfast, and they get to put together the stuff. You may decide ahead of time what the easiest, most delicious, most healthy breakfast could be and what it would take to execute that. But you don't get to the point where you make any decisions ahead of time if you're just complaining about the breakfast. You see that?

Jen Riday: Yes.

Maggie Reyes: I'll tell you this. I live in a house that's many, many years old. I love my house, but its kitchen is very small and very tiny, and we do not have a dishwasher. I and my husband, my husband and I, hand wash

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all of our dishes. For anyone here who's like, "Oh, Maggie doesn't know what I go through."

When we're washing the dishes, which is not necessarily the most fun thing that you can plan for in a day, "Let me go wash a dish." We use that time to chat together, to connect with each other. We call it let's have a wash and talk date. Like, "Oh, let's go do a wash and talk," and we'll go wash the dishes, and make each other laugh, and have fun with it. Any activity that feels rote, or repetitive, or unfun, you get to decide if you're going to bring the fun or not.

Jen Riday: Totally. Then it becomes fun. You think it, and it matches the result of what it is. If this is lame, it's going to be lame. If this is wash and talk, it's so fun, it's going to be fun.

Maggie Reyes: Yeah. How I describe it, it sounds like we have a blast washing the freaking dishes. The way that I talk about it, the thoughts that I have about it, creates my experience. Jen and I were talking about the stories we tell ourselves about our lives.

Right now, as you're listening to us, think about the predominant story. How do you describe your marriage? How do you describe motherhood? Is it all sacrifice? That story, if it is another sacrifice, if that's how describe it, we invite you to tweak it. We invite you to think about, "What do I love about being a mom?" Remember when that was your dream? The thing you wanted most in life, and now you get to live your dream every day.

It's a totally different experience. You're still a mom. You still got to wake up early and make breakfast, but now you're experiencing that from a completely different place just because I asked you a question, and then you answered it with a new thought or a new story about that experience.

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Jen Riday: Okay. Do you think it would be cool if we could do an example? I will share a couple of thoughts, and you coach me to a new thought maybe. Would that work?

Maggie Reyes: My pleasure. Let's do it.

Jen Riday: Okay. A story about my husband. It's changing already, but it's been there for quite a while. I'll narrow it down to I'm never going to experience true emotional intimacy with him. I have to find it through my friends instead. The breakfast example you shared, I'm being reality based, but is it the healthiest thought? Should I be thinking that thought?

Maggie Reyes: I'm never going to experience true emotional intimacy with him. How do you feel when you think that?

Jen Riday: I actually feel really good because the opposite thought is what I thought for way too many years. "He's so insensitive. We're never going to be close. My marriage sucks." Whereas this feels more empowering. "I'm going to find the emotional intimacy elsewhere and we'll just do what we do together, which is have fun sometimes, talk." So, I guess it feels okay actually, now that you're making me say it.

Maggie Reyes: Yeah. Here's what's really interesting. A thought could be constructive or destructive, even depending on how we're looking at that thought. For someone else, this could be something that causes them a massive amount of pain because they feel that they should be experiencing that intimacy with them, and they feel that something has gone wrong, and it causes them so much pain to think that thought.

For you, because of the place you are in your own personal development, that thought brings you relief because now you have a solution, and you

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say, “They type of emotional intimacy I want, I can get from another place, and I could just love my husband as he is today.”

Jen Riday: Yes. I get chills when you say that because this feels amazing. It lets him off the hook, and I can actually start enjoying what he does do well.

Maggie Reyes: Yes, yes.

Jen Riday: You’re making me feel like I did something right. Yay!

Maggie Reyes: Notice this. I want everyone to listen. I’m not making her feel anything. Her thoughts are making her feel this way. I’m just pointing out to her what her thoughts are because it’s so easy, especially when you’re working with a coach or any of you who are in therapy. We say, “Oh, that person made me feel this way, and now, that person is not here. So, I can’t feel that way anymore.”

I always want to remind you. I always take my clients to this place where I show them their own power, and I constantly am returning their power to them. I’m like, “No, it’s yours. No, it’s yours. Here, take it back. Take it back. Take it back.”

Jen Riday: Yes. I have to interject. You guys, if you want to work with the best relationship/marriage coach ever, you’ve got to work with Maggie. Just want to interject that. Go to MaggieReyes.com. She’s amazing. People love her. Let me tell you. For real.

I want to go to the opposite extreme, a place where I haven’t cleaned up my thoughts yet. One of my sons, my thoughts aren’t very clean, or my husband. So, this particular son does have days of school does some

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illegal activities. The listeners can guess what those are. My predominant thought is, “His prefrontal cortex is totally offline.” That’s the most positive version. Or, “His life is going to suck. He’s engaging in loser behaviors.” That’s my worst case thought. What do I do with that?

Maggie Reyes: Okay. The thought, just to be clear, is he’s engaging in loser behaviors, or do you just think he’s a loser? What do you really think, Jen?

Jen Riday: I really actually think he’s a freaking winner. Why is he doing this loser stuff?

Maggie Reyes: Yeah, good. Okay. We always want to take a moment, and sometimes we have a lot of thoughts about a situation, and we always want to take this moment to really distill it to what is really there. So, he’s a winner. Why is he doing this?

Jen Riday: Yeah, and I’m actually really angry about his behavior. Like, “Why are you throwing away your whole life?” He really is. He is not going to graduate from high school. No plans for college. You know. Not very helpful because I realize those thoughts cause me to look down on him, and that doesn’t help the relationship.

Maggie Reyes: The real thought, and notice you guys, this is what happens in your own self-coaching and when you’re coaching in this style to really uncover how you’re thinking is creating your results, is your thought about his behavior is, “You’re throwing away your life.”

Jen Riday: Yup.

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Maggie Reyes: Yes. When you think that, you get really angry. Or what is the feeling?

Jen Riday: The feeling, because anger was so painful, I've let that go. That's pointless, and I couldn't handle the pain of that feeling. So, the thought is acceptance to some extent, and sadness probably.

Maggie Reyes: I think if we went to acceptance, it would probably be fueled by a different thought.

Jen Riday: You're right.

Maggie Reyes: Just to model that for everyone, there's a place in Jen's life where she probably thinks, "I've done everything I could." That part is acceptance. "I've done everything I could for him. This is what he's doing, and I accept." That is probably in the family of the thoughts that lead to acceptance, but in the moment when he does one more thing, and you think, "You're throwing away your life," the sadness comes. See the difference?

Jen Riday: There's a bunch of thoughts. You're right, it's a family of thoughts. There's maybe thoughts of, "I should be doing more," but that thought is super painful. So, I pushed it very far away because I'm not sure I can do more. I really want to start thinking, "He's really awesome," and really just always think it because I know that will help him maybe rise to the occasion of, "Oh, my mom thinks I'm awesome. Why shouldn't I be?" But then these behaviors don't match awesome. That's where I get stuck.

Maggie Reyes: When we look at our result, we are the only person who appears on our result line. When we're thinking about the result, it's my experience of that other person. I'm going to take you to a place that you

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weren't thinking about now, but as I was listening to you, I think it's valuable for everyone listening to hear this. You touched upon how painful it is to think, "I should be doing more." That model, so that's a model that we're thinking in, if we think of the self-coaching model. I'm going to say it. So, the circumstances, "My son does things." He just does things. Right?

Jen Riday: Yes.

Maggie Reyes: That is the most neutral way to describe what he's doing. We have a judgement about those things, whether they're good or bad, whether they're constructive or destructive, but at the end of the day, he's doing some things. Right?

Jen Riday: Right.

Maggie Reyes: Your thought about those things is, "He should be doing more. He should be doing the things that will help him grow, learn, evolve, have a great life. He should be doing more."

Jen Riday: Or he should stop doing the illegal things, at least.

Maggie Reyes: Totally. All of that, this is the reason that they're connected because let's imagine that you think he should be doing more. When you think that, how does that feel? Just let yourself be there for a moment. What is that feeling that comes up?

Jen Riday: Disappointment.

Maggie Reyes: Disappointment. That totally makes sense. Now, when you think he should be doing more, what are some of the things that you do or

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stop doing in your role as his mom, or when you think about him, or your relationship to him?

Jen Riday: Oh, my gosh. This is hard, but I already know the answer. Rather than go into disappointment, I withdraw and keep myself as separate from him as I can because that gives me the least discomfort.

Maggie Reyes: You withdraw from him, and then you also avoid some of your own feelings. Like, “That feeling feels too hard. Let me not feel it.” I just want to so deeply honor you for sharing this with your listeners because literally all of us have felt this way. All of us have done this. So, first of all, thank you, Jen, for just being so open and so transparent so that all of us can learn and grow.

So, “He should be doing more. I feel disappointed. I withdraw. I avoid some of my intense feelings because they’re too hard.” When we avoid them, we never process them, so they’re just there waiting or getting bigger. What do you stop doing? What stops happening when you think he should be doing more?

Jen Riday: Well, when I think the thought, “I wish he would stop doing these illegal things,” well, I stop hearing what he’s doing because I don’t want to hear about the illegal things. So, I just kind of stop talking about anything he’s doing.

Maggie Reyes: Yeah, you stop connecting with him.

Jen Riday: It’s almost like to protect myself, rather than see the good things, I just see the bad things. Then I won’t be disappointed. You know what I’m saying? It’s really sad, but I’m trying to be vulnerable.

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Maggie Reyes: Thank you, because again, all of us have had this scenario with someone at some point in our lives. You withdraw, you avoid some of the intense emotions, you stop connecting with him. You don't get to enjoy the things that he is doing well. You miss out on celebrating those things, no matter how minor they may be. They may seem really small, but there are some good things that are happening, but you don't get to enjoy those. The result of thinking, "He should be doing more," is that you experience yourself as, "I should be doing more."

Jen Riday: Uh, icky.

Maggie Reyes: Right?

Jen Riday: Yeah.

Maggie Reyes: It's a little trippy because we think, "Oh, it's all about him. It's all about he should be doing more," but the truth is one of the things that causes you this pain that you want to avoid at all costs apparently, is when we really go deep into, "Oh, I'm experiencing myself as a mom," as, "I haven't done enough," which is like poison to our mom heart.

I'm not a mom, but I obviously can have so much compassion and love for anything that we love. We love our kids. We love our families. So, we think that the thing we love the most, we're not doing enough for it. It's like poisonous.

Jen Riday: Okay, that makes sense. The thought I've been trying to practice is, "He is really awesome. He just has to wake up to that fact." That feels better. Do you think that's a good thought to practice, or is there one that would be even better?

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Maggie Reyes: Here's the thing. You guys, we're going in a deep level because you listen to Jen's show. You're ready for it. Okay? When we learn that our thoughts create our results, all of us want to jump into better feeling thoughts. Sometimes that's a great idea, and I highly encourage it. Jen and I teach people how to do that for a living. So, that's great, but the next level is to be with the uncomfortable thought and just let it be there.

Jen Riday: That I should be doing more.

Maggie Reyes: Just allowing yourself to think, "I should be doing more."

Jen Riday: Oh, no. Don't make me!

Maggie Reyes: Without judgement. To allow yourself to be in the model that you're in and say, "This is what's happening right now. This is what I'm creating. I've created my experience of my son. I can now choose to have a different experience of my son." But to skip over processing the feelings that you have about the model that you're in is what I wouldn't recommend, and thank you for giving such a clear example of that because you're like, "I want to feel differently now. Switch my thoughts now," because we all want that.

But the process of understanding that we can have a very real feeling like disappointment that's real in your body, it's now a physiological reaction in your body like Justin Bieber. It actually happened. That real feeling can be based on a false thought or a thought that we could reinterpret or reimagine, which is a new one, but once we have the feeling, once the feeling has occurred, we now need to process that feeling.

Jen Riday: Yes, I believe you. I call it feel it to heal it.

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Maggie Reyes: Yes.

Jen Riday: As you focus on it, it will dissolve. I believe that.

Maggie Reyes: Yes, 100%. If you think of a baby. I love using a baby as an example because it's so cute. You think of a baby. They stub their toe, they start crying like the world has ended, and then two seconds later, they're on to their next doll, the next thing. "Doll, play, yay." We as adults need to be more like babies in that way that we say, "I feel disappointed. I feel massively disappointed. I hate feeling disappointed."

Let disappointed wash over you without becoming disappointment. Just let it be there. Just allow it. See that it's a vibration in your body. You will not die from it. You do not have to avoid it. You do not have to pretend it's not there. Just like a baby who stubbed their toe, you let yourself cry if you need to cry. If you need to punch a pillow, I have punched a pillow in my time. You let yourself do it, and then it dissipates. Then you can start thinking, "I love my son even when he's doing some wacky things."

Jen Riday: I got you. Okay. So, work through wherever you feel that strong sticking emotion, don't pass it up and replace it right away. Feel it first.

Maggie Reyes: Yes.

Jen Riday: Okay. I like that.

Maggie Reyes: Yes.

Jen Riday: So, I have some shame to work through still. I thought I had done it, but you helped me to see that there's still some shame there.

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Maggie Reyes: Yeah. Shame is a really intense feeling for a lot of us. What I invite you to do is see that shame with compassion and love like if you were holding little baby Jen. Imagine that baby Jen came into your care, and she came into the world with this mountain of shame. You would hold her with so much compassion and love, and show her that shame is a feeling that we feel. All humans experience it at some point. It's not who you are. It's not who you were meant to be. It's not your greatness. It's not your wisdom. It's just a feeling.

Jen Riday: It's part of being human. It's okay.

Maggie Reyes: Yeah.

Jen Riday: That's cool. I can kind of sense as I deal with this feeling in myself it will resolve the feeling I have toward my son too. Isn't that weird?

Maggie Reyes: Isn't it though? See. Yeah. When you can accept the darkest parts of yourself, guess what happens with the darkest parts of your son?

Jen Riday: I feel it. Does the same thing work in a marriage when you have very dark, critical thoughts about your partner? Do you really have some work to do on yourself?

Maggie Reyes: I always say we have work to do on ourselves no matter what. We're human. If we left our human brains to just go to their own devices, they'd be like toddlers putting their hands in the sockets all the time. So, our brain in its natural state is like a wild child. It's just running around getting into traffic. We don't want that. So, we always have work to do on ourselves.

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Often times, especially when it's criticism, if it's criticism that we feel, or disappointment, or anger, or resentment, which happens often in marriages, the step back that we take is to look at how am I showing up in my life and what can I do to be the person that I want to be regardless of what my partner is doing, which is exactly what we did with your son.

You want to be a loving mother, a devoted mother, no matter what he's doing on any given day, and who you are is that person who's loving and devoted regardless of what he's doing. What's happening now is he's doing some things, and then you're like, "Well, maybe I'm not such a loving mother. Maybe I'm kind of bitchy."

Jen Riday: Right.

Maggie Reyes: The same thing applies in any relationship whether it's our boss, our husbands, an extended family member, the cousin, whoever. Who do I want to be, and can I be that person no matter what is standing in front of me?

Then usually, to answer that question, requires quite a bit of personal investigation, requires some intentional thinking, requires us looking at what did we think before, what results did we create. We can always tell what we're thinking in our life by the results that we have created. Good things, great. Things that are not so good, there are some tweaks to be done in our thinking there.

Jen Riday: Then you look at your new thoughts. What new thoughts must they think for a new result, perhaps?

Maggie Reyes: It's going to change and be different for everyone. A thought that works amazingly for you is that you're not going to have the

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emotional intimacy with your husband that you thought you were going to have. That thought brings you so much relief.

Jen Riday: Yes.

Maggie Reyes: But If I thought that thought, it wouldn't bring me relief. I'd have some other emotion with that thought.

Jen Riday: Yeah, that's so weird. Okay.

Maggie Reyes: What brings them relief is going to be slightly different, but the idea to remember, what is the story I'm telling about this situation, and is that story bringing me pain or bringing me delight? If you wanted to really distill it to something super simple that you could just walk away from this episode knowing what to do, it's what is the story I'm telling? Is that story serving me or hurting me? What is the new story that I want to tell? Then the model that you use, or the exercise that you do, Jen will guide you through her exercises in her amazing program. In the Vibrant Happy Women Club, she will guide you through a bunch of different exercises, and there are so many different things that you can do. From my opinion, I love having a person who is living this in her own journey. The way that Jen shares her journey, you know that she's guiding you the way she's guiding herself. So, I feel the relief she feels that she described about how she feels about her husband now, and to process what she's processing about her son now. That is the kind of person who's going to show you, if you've never done this before, how to do it and knows the pitfalls and where you might slip up.

Jen Riday: It's good stuff. The fact that we create our realities even in our relationships is so empowering. We don't have to feel stuck anymore waiting for other people to change. We can change it all.

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Maggie Reyes: Yeah. What's really, really amazing is when we have a moment of clarity where we can see how we contributed to a result, and then changed how we are showing up in that relationship, and completely experience the relationship differently even if the person doesn't change at all, is amazing.

Jen Riday: It really is. If I can have happy relationships, everyone, you can. I think that's why my relationships have been what they are, so I can give you the example of the worst case scenario. No, just kidding. That's a thought. Change that. I'm just kind of kidding, but kind of not. Anyway, if I can do it, we can all do it. That's right.

Maggie, I want to thank you so much for being on the show. I love talking about how our thoughts affect realities, especially in relationships, and you are the master. Everyone go listen to Maggie's podcast. Tell us again what it's called and where they can find it.

Maggie Reyes: Absolutely. It's called *The Marriage Life Coach* podcast, and it's literally everywhere that podcasts are out, or you can go to my website, MaggieReyes.com/podcast, and see all the episodes, and then subscribe wherever you like to listen to podcasts.

Jen Riday: It's a good one. I listened to the first three episodes, and I need to catch up again, but it's such a good podcast. You are doing good work in the world. We appreciate your gifts, Maggie. It's amazing.

Maggie Reyes: Thank you so much. I receive that with such a grateful heart, and I can't wait for us to talk again.

Jen Riday: Thank you. We will do it again. Have a good day. Thanks, Maggie.

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Maggie Reyes: Bye.

Jen Riday: Oh, Maggie, Maggie, Maggie. I love her. I wish that I could go live in Miami and be her neighbor. A, she's amazing, and B, it's warmer there. I hope you learned some good stuff from this episode, especially about identifying your thoughts about the important people in your life. Your spouse, your kids.

I'm going to challenge you going forward this week to look at your thoughts. Journal about your thoughts. Do a brain download about your thoughts. If you are like I used to be toward my husband. My thoughts used to be that he is insensitive, he's a jerk, he's mean, he's cold, he has autism. The negative focus resulted in a negative outcome because my experience of that relationship is my own, and my thoughts caused it.

When it began to shift my thoughts and look for those positives like, "He's a really good dad. He makes really good salad dressing," and slowly my brain started to see more, and more, and more of the good things. My new thoughts are, "He really can be sensitive in the ways he is capable of. He is a good listener. He's becoming a very reflective listener."

I start to see new positive truths about him that change my feelings about him, and therefore, change the entire result of the relationship. I love it. When I start to slide back into old patterns of negativity, or I notice that I'm not really liking him, I have to stop, identify my thoughts, feel what I feel, and then go back and change those again.

We learn this tool over, and over, and over again in the Vibrant Happy Women Club. If you want to heal your marriage or heal your thoughts and feelings about your kids, or your mom, or your dad, or your neighbor, or a friend, definitely join us in the Vibrant Happy Woman Club. We do this over

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and over again through our monthly workbook, through coaching calls with myself and with guests like Maggie Reyes.

Next week on the podcast, we'll be hearing from Laura Froyen. We get to learn from guests like that in the club like that all the time. Practical, real life coaching calls where you can ask your questions and have them coach you. It's a great, great place to be if you want to grow at a great, great price, and I would encourage you to join us if you would like to grow in this area. That's at JenRiday.com/join.

Well, I appreciate you listening. I will be back next week with Laura Froyen, a positive parenting expert, and she is so good. I loved talking with Maggie today, and I feel so privileged to get to interact with people like them. Most especially people like you, the Vibrant Happy Women listeners. I love you guys. I hope you feel my love. I admire your commitment to growth and to happiness for yourself and for your loved ones. Thank you for listening, and make it a vibrant and happy week. Take care.

Female Announcer: If you enjoy this podcast, you have to check out the Vibrant Happy Women Club. It's my monthly group coaching program where we take all this material to the next level and to get you the results that will blow your mind. Join me in the Vibrant Happy Women Club at JenRiday.com/join.