# She’s Helped 4,000 Women Heal — The Secret to Transforming Any Relationship | Megan Touhey | Ep. 104 Transcript

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## Introduction to Relationships and the Guest

There is a lot of women. Particularly, my women tend to be 40 to 80. That tends to who comes to me. And the chronic violence is in 50 to 90. Of age? Of Age.

Really? Shocking. It is. What have you seen with addiction to pornography and relationships? It's a complicated answer that I will give you. Meg Tohe, Australia's leading relationship psychologist and founder of Making Relationships Work.

She's transforming how women see love, confidence and connection. Get ready for powerful insights that can change your relationships forever. I've got all the stories that you could imagine.

With the weapons, with the drugs, the violence, and women hide it. We specialize in crisis. When our women come in, they are in full-blown crisis because everything has failed.

What would you say are the top three things that break a relationship? When you cannot be in relationship with others, or you can not be relationship itself, it is incredibly isolating.

You get helplessness, hopelessness. That's where depression lives, that's were suicidal ideation lives. that where all of the really hard things live.

Is there any point in time that a couple come to you and you just know that you're better off being separated versus working on this relationship? I would say yes, and also that is not my job.

Whose job is that? Yeah, so let me explain. Welcome to another episode of a healthy point of view podcast. I'm your host, Sam Tahata. And as usual, we're bringing experts from all over the world to talk about health, wellness, beauty and mindset.

Today, our guest is coming all the way from Australia. Yes, Australia, Today's podcast, we're gonna be talking about relationships, the power behind relationships.

When we talk about relationship, when I just talk relationships with your spouse, your boyfriend, and your girlfriend, were talking more than that. Were talking relationships and leadership, corporate relationships were talkin' about with relationships your kids, with friends, employees.

We have an expert here, a psychologist, Meg Tui. Welcome to a healthy point of view podcast. I mean, that is my favorite way to enter a room. Imagine if I could take you with me everywhere I went.

Does a chicken get to come with it? I'm so happy to be here. Amazing. And I am excited to dive deep into this conversation. because I personally have a very strong passion about relationships.

I think relationships are the key to success in everything that we do. And having someone like yourself as a psychologist to talk about the importance of relationships, I, think our viewers and listeners are gonna enjoy this podcast.

So Meg, I wanna start off not talking about your profession and about all of this relationship stuff. I want to start talking of who are you and who is the Meg from when she was five years old and how did that five year old lead up to today?

Yeah, it's a beautiful question. And it was, I'm going to actually just bump my age to about eight, because that age is where I remember hearing the words somehow of the idea of a child psychologist.

and I was like that, that's what I want to do. I wanna be the person that helps. And I remember saying it to the adults in the room and most of them were a bit like, I don't really know what that is.

And I didn't know what that is. I just understood maybe the cadence or the power of the words that it was somebody who was there to support children. And if I was to fast forward to when I became a psychologist, which is actually my second career and I know you know, what it's like to change careers.

## Meg Tooeyu2019s Origin Story and Career Path

You do. So my 2nd career is a Psychologist and When I launched my business after I had my licensing, which is what you would say, we say in Australia, my registration, when I was registered or licensed, I designed a business and I wanted to focus on helping children, essentially.

And it was that full circle moment where I knew this when was eight. I know that I want to be the person that came to help children. Now, that particular offer, it actually didn't work.

And I had to get really thoughtful about efficiency and systems. If I systematically want to help children, how am I best going to do that? Well, I could work with their parents, but two people is like a lot of work to to in a room and I did couples therapy.

It's a of lot work and it's sacred, incredible work, and for some people that's their best career. What I knew though was that it wasn't fast enough and it was too slow.

I would sit in a room doing therapy with a couple and I loved them as in like I enjoyed it and i would do what felt like my best work and the two-hour slot would come to an end and then my next two hour slot will begin and would say very similar if not the same things.

And I was like, this is inefficient. It's inefficient and so when that first business of the kids and the family structure and working in that way didn't get off the ground, I need to do the system the child is in.

That is going to be better. And so then I looked at couples and I can't run a group full of couples. And I've got it's just it doesn't efficiently make sense.

So then I actually niche down even more and was the first provider to ever focus on one person in a relationship to lead change. Oh, wow. leading change, and what I know about women is that they are leaders of cultural change.

Leaders of systematic change and it starts with leadership of self. But you know what? Ultimately, it changes the lives of their children. And that's how I built what built and that why I build what build.

Is there anything else that sparked further parts of that journey? I think in order to be able to do that, the design of what I made, I merged performance psychology with organizational psychology because my previous life was in running big national teams of either human resources, leadership and development, talent.

And I eventually ended that segment of my career in consulting. You go in and fix a problem. So I was used to systemic change. So I merged mindset or performance coaching with systemic change in organizations with relationship-based or relationship evidence-base psychology.

When I merge those things together, that's how I made what I make. Nice. So this question here, it's a little bit of a general question, but why are relationships so important?

If we were to look at the quality of life, it is about how we spend it and what it feels like to be us. If were were think about the most important relationship we'd ever have, It is the one we have with ourselves.

And some people would also add the relationship with God. Some people call that source universe. I'm open to any of those paradigms. You can substitute the word that fits best.

Relationship with self very much determines your openness and availability to being able to be in relationship with others. And when you cannot be relationship without others or you can not be a relationship itself, it is incredibly isolating.

It is incredible lonely and your sense of identity and sense agency. your sense of belief in self, all of those metrics lower and so what tends to happen is you get helplessness, hopelessness that's where depression lives, that where suicidal ideation lives that is where all the really hard things live What do you say that relationship with self needs to come first before focusing on relationships with others?

Yeah, you know, that's that old airplane adage, fit your own mask first. If you are somebody who's only pouring into others, where does the nourishment come?

You're pouring from an empty cup. If you would like to experience deeper relationships with others, we must first examine your deepest relationship with self.

What parts of yourself will you not connect with? What part of your self are forsaken? Or parts are you guilty or ashamed of? We need to look at those things.

Well, based on your professional experience, I can only imagine the amount of people that come to you, right? That have families, they take care of maybe their parents, their children, and they don't have that relationship with themselves, how difficult is it for them to pivot at that point?

Look, people come to me not because of their relationship with self. They come because their relationships with their loved one, usually their significant other, their husband.

Yeah, because that's in crisis and usually because everything else has failed. So therapy, there are really good relationship and marriage therapies available that are evidence-based that work, and there is a whole lot of therapy that well-meaning therapists do that does not work.

And then there people who don't go to therapy at all, but there's a stigma. There are people that use community leaders. perhaps people in churches or people that they trust or mentors or coaches.

and that doesn't work. And then finally there's their friends, their books. People try nearly everything before they do the work with me.

## Why Self-Relationship Comes First

I tend to be the last stop on the train and I think that's because people take six years to get help anyway and they don't recognize the complexity of the question they're trying to answer.

and the level of build that needs to happen in both themselves and their other person. And then the shared relationship is a third party. They don't understand or appreciate the complexity it takes to heal a relationship.

Wow. That was deep. I like that. when we talk about relationships and relationships being broken, right? Because there's different parts in relationships, we can enhance relationships.

We can learn how to have better relationships with others. When we were talking about the leadership and corporate side of things. But I want to talk how do you dissect a relationship where you can kind of The light bulb turns on and you know that that relationship's broken.

If you can give us some examples of how do people know a relationship is actually broken? Yeah. So if you are using a Gold Star evidence-based couples counselor that you trust the methodology of, you're looking at one main

methodology.

And there are subsets to this methodology, so if your a therapist out there and your like, yeah but what about this part, like I hear you. And the gold star standard is a therapy called the Gottman method.

That is, Dr. John and Julie Gottmann, they set up the Love Labs, set it up 40, 50 years ago, and they have data where they research end-to-end, not just what a healthy relationship looks like, a masterful relationship, but what disasterful relationships look like.

and when you are a therapist that is at least level two or level three trained in that methodology if not certified then you're going to use a system that works and it's really thorough and sequenced and part of the onboarding of that therapy is that you do an intake questionnaire and that looks at what your perspective of their relationship is and what my perspective is.

And then you meet individually with a therapist and they go through that and their screening for safety things like domestic violence. They're looking to make sure that the therapy actually is the way to go because sometimes what comes through is actually it would be counter-intuitive.

to do therapy may cause harm to Do therapy, particularly if there's domestic violence present. So when we're looking at true therapy that level of structure and process because I've only skimmed the surface of that I haven't given you all of the sequences.

That's how you can assess when you're wearing a psychologist hat about a couple in front of you and you in great detail, the areas where there are big differences.

And look, differences in a relationship are normal. 30% of couples' problems are solvable. 70% percent of couple's problems or what we call perpetual problems, which means you will be working on them for the rest of your life.

That is normal, but most humans don't know that. Yeah. Is there any point in time that a couple will come to you and you just know that you're better off being separated versus working on this relationship?

I would say yes, and also that is not my job most of the time. Whose job is that? Yeah, so let me explain why I say it's not My job and I'm now speaking in the work that I do.

So before when I was describing couples therapy, that Is not the Work that i do in that pure form anymore. I Do a different version of that. So now I'm switching to mine.

So I meet a beautiful woman I call my women wise women. I get all kinds of complexity through my doors as does any therapist or any couples therapist.

We see trauma, we see violence, affairs and betrayal, we see neurodivergence, all kinds of things that live in humans because humans are relationshiply connected to other humans, so you're getting the whole person.

We see lots of addiction, and all of that kind of stuff. There are pieces that belong to me to work with and pieces I might recommend specialist providers do.

But if you're asking me the question, how do I know or when is it my job to intervene? My job is to provide the data. And by data, I mean the conversation around what I'm seeing, the psychoeducation around, what a healthy or masterful relationship looks like, sounds like feels like.

And then to hold space for the gap to be realized by that wise woman. Now in that gap, she can have two or three choices. She can choose to leave, and we would support that process.

Separate as gently and clearly as restoratively as we can. She can choose to stay and see if she can influence or change the relationship. Or she could choose be all in.

And whilst I might have an opinion, people need to come to their own decision about what they're going to do. Always. So my job is to provide quality clinicians and coaches and education in safe frameworks so people can do the work to decide what they want to do.

Interesting that you say that because, you know, I have the opportunity to interview a lot of experts in the medical field, PhDs, MDs DOs and a of other people that I would always considered healers, right?

Sometimes alternative type of healer and Ayurveda and other types of modalities.

## Recognizing Broken Relationships and Therapy

And one thing that i've learned and you kind of touched on this, it's the individual, they have that free will to really make that decision. And would you say that you're more of a guider of guiding people in the direction of making that choice?

I would say I'm a pretty strong person. We have a little in-joke with my clients and I, it's called Meg's waggy finger. So I get a bit like this, but I don't wag at them.

It's never criticism or contempt or derision for the decisions they've made. Instead, my wagging finger speaks to the higher self. speaks to the heart of the person or people about what masterful looks like, feels like sounds like and their inherent value and deservingness of being able to live a life in coherence with that.

So you better believe I'm strong. Don't mistake my framework for quietness. But I am also, it's not my business to tell you what's right for you because how would I know what is right to you in your journey?

I can paint a picture of what's possible and I show you the steps for you to build your way there and then I put my hand out and it's going to be you that has to walk towards me.

And most people when they get to that stage you know what is right or wrong. You just have to make that decision at that point as a person. I, you would think so.

I've been doing this eight years now. 4,000 women have come through my program. Wow. I'd say we're one of the biggest, if not the greatest, version of what this is in the world.

And I would say it is confusing. Because what we are talking about is someone's life partner. And they are usually all in. And even if they're not all-in, they were.

So to extricate yourself from that, to decide to leave, They're here in my program doing the work with me because they want to make sure that they've dotted every I, crossed every T before they chop the limb off their tree that says we're no longer together.

Right. And so it's complicated because they've got to answer a lot of their own questions. They think about their kids, they think where they'll be in 10 years, 20 years or 50 years.

The cost of divorce. And whilst there is agency for their own change and their growth, they often need to test how far they need go before they hit their limit of actually that's enough.

Some people know really quickly. Other people need the time to be sure that it's not possible or to sure it is possible. And I and my team work with women for eight weeks or 12 weeks and then for one year, two years, three years or four years if they want to because we specialise in crisis.

When our women come in, they are in full-blown crisis, because everything has failed. Full crisis. I'm talking out in the ocean, going under. That's where we start.

And by the time we've done eight or 12 weeks, their found solid ground, or they're coming to shore. But I actually

don't know how to build from here. How do I actually build a life?

I'm out of crisis, I've got it. But now will you walk with me as I build the life that I want? This experience of mastery and knowing myself and leading differently and living congruently.

And so everybody's journey is different. Right. I recognize and respect that. Meg, you said eight years and over four thousand women. Four thousand. That's a lot.

Thank you. I can only imagine, but with that said, I worked in the fire department for 12 years and I saw a lot of crisis and saw things that most people don't see.

You did. And I assure you that by me saying this right now, you probably see and hear a lotta things most don. I do. So what do you do for yourself to decompress and stay grounded?

Because it doesn't seem like that's an easy thing to do, Look, I run what's called a coaching program. We are ungoverned in the coaching industry. Where we have no leadership board that is looking at stewardship or governance.

And I've run my coaching programme as close to a psychology practice as I can. But we do not do therapy. I'm going somewhere with this because I know the question you asked me.

So to be able to sleep at night and so that my team of clinicians who are registered or you would say licensed clinicians at the highest levels. I have doctors, I've all kinds of clinician, this incredible clinician team, 75% of which have been with me since the beginning.

So we are together week in, week out. We have to know our women that we're coaching, you have to know them. And so I have built systems to gather their safety information, which no other coaching company does, let me tell you.

Which puts in place safety plans for those who are living in chronic domestic violence, Which, Let me Tell you, there is a lot of women, a LOT of Women, particularly my women tend to be 40 to 80. That tends to be who comes to me.

And the chronic violence is in 50 to 70, 50-80. Of age? Of Age. Really? Shocking. It is. Shucking. And do you know why? Because they grew through those decades where this kind of information and conversation wasn't available.

So for me to be able to decompress, I have to know that I've set up a governance, a stewardship, care that keeps my coaching clients as safe as possible.

And so I run safety meetings every week with my head of programs. We look at all the scores of all, the women we look, at the outliers. I do basically as though I'm running a private practice with literal clients.

But I am a coach in this space. So I can rest, I, can decompress because I have built the safest systems I. Can and when someone's. Let me tell you this a different way.

If a person comes across my desk, that would be harmed by my work. We don't work with them. Many times my women hide the level of complexity. I've seen it all.

You've see it. All I have seen the same thing, but I see a virtually you had to go into the to the room. But there's I got all the stories that you could imagine with the weapons, with with drugs, there is a threshold that I cannot work with that woman without putting her in jeopardy and I have to be able to measure that and women hide it.

## When to Stay, Leave, or Rebuild

So even if we get down the road and we find that chronic type of violence I will do my very best to get her to safety

We will pause her until she's safe to work with us again, or we will off board her, refund her and show her how to get crisis support.

So it is a different answer to the question that you're asking me, but I can only recharge and rejuvenate knowing that my systems are in place, my team is briefed.

You wouldn't believe the kinds of things that people email us on the weekend and say, this has happened. It's a crisis. The reason why I ask that question is, in the medical field, working with a lot of doctors, and doctors that are oncologists dealing with cancer patients, one of the things is you absorb a lotta that energy.

And you have to be able to basically get rid of that negative energy and kinda reset and recharge. You do. And, you know, for me, when I went to the fire department, one of the things that started happening, there was an increase in suicidal rate.

So they started implementing certain programs and they would get certain leaders within the emergency medical services division. to get training, proper training and be that voice to help other.

Like a mental health. A mental-health advocate that would help. Yes, there's a word for it. We call it like a safety officer, but it's for mental heath.

Yeah. There's phrase for that. It was specific to suicide. And the one guy who actually took the leadership on it and was taking all the classes, traveling around, and he was helping a lot of guys.

But he ended up committing suicide himself. And it was very hard for all of us knowing that he was the guy there helping everyone, but there was no one really to help him.

So I always try to engage with any medical providers and always tell medical provider, hey, you got to think about yourself, too. This kind of goes back to what you were saying, what's self.

So it's interesting to hear from someone like yourself of what you do and how you have your systems and processes in place. I could add a couple of words in that direction for you.

The other piece I think of the puzzle is that most therapists in Australia, if you're licensed, registered, you need to do clinical supervision. So you to have a certain number of hours.

It's 12 hours a year, which is an hour a month. So you're under supervised care. I still am. And you take your cases, you takes your stress and you give that to a clinical supervisor that is making sure that your wellbeing, your methods are all ethical and in line.

So there's that piece. The other piece is peer supervision. So I run a big team of clinicians and we gather for 30 minutes before every call. We do a two hour call twice a week for my eight and 12 week programs where everyone can ask a question.

They go into small groups in the right space for them. we pre-brief all of the clinicians on who they're getting that night, what the question is and make sure everybody just makes sure they understand and test, this is a tricky person, This is what I'm thinking, what do you think?

We do all of that every single week. And that group often bring their own clinical work and say to the group, in my practice, when I am actually doing therapy, I've got this thing.

What do think about that? So what i have made inadvertently is this incredible peer supervision group of incredible, incredible clinicians. I'm talking like A plus clinicians that share and support and lift up.

And then in general, what you're also looking at is therapy for yourself. To thine own self be true. If you are giving therapy to somebody else, you better be able to have equivalent levels of self introspection or you can't help

somebody.

Agreed. You know what they say, every great athlete has a coach. They do. I have many, I use a lot of people to help me a lots of the time. Millions of questions about the human condition, mainly from my own lived experience.

And I don't know, 10 people that I'll regularly be like I've got this question on my childhood trauma, and I'm gonna call Gina. This question about how to solve this people thing.

You know like, you need a bench. Meg, what would you say are the top three things that break a relationship? There's a concept called the friendship system.

Friendship system is about the amount of energy in the bank account between us. So you and I in a relationship, we both need to contribute to the Bank account that builds our energy and our connection.

And one part of that energy is a deposit that we make. These are when I say really nice, thoughtful, specific things to you. We call it noticing and appreciating.

Yeah, then there's a trust of pillar. Can I trust that my friends got my back? Yeah. So there is two. Then the third one is commitment. And I trust that my friend's going to keep updating their map of me and let me grow and shine.

And trust when I am in conflict with my person, 70% perpetual problems, there's gonna be conflict in a relationship. It's normal, it's healthy. Yeah, that's just how you do it.

Can I just that even though we have conflict, he still thinks that I'm a good person. He still has a story about me that is neutral to positive. These are the pillars that show whether we're going down the disaster lane or we are going more into the mastery space.

I like those. Very powerful. Earlier you were talking about you brought up addiction that can cause issues in a relationship. What's the difference between addiction and obsession?

## Crisis Work, Safety, and Supporting Women

You know, it's a really good question. So my clinical brain would say obsession. We start to look at OCD, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, right? DSM, which is a Diagnostic Statisticians Manual.

Number five, we're up to, and the Americans are the research group that do it. Australians use that same one, so do lots of other countries. Okay. the obsession of needing to insert the type of behavior.

Needing to wash your hands all the time, needing check the lights are off, that kind of thing. Addiction is defined in many ways. The definition I use is through a partnership with the Gottman Institute, which is a, in a sense, a response to trauma and a need to try and make it resolvable.

And so how do we numb the pain? We find a way that makes it feel better for a minute and then we get habitually kind of locked into that space. So with addiction, when we're talking about relationships and how addiction can affect relationships, there's certain things that people can be addicted to.

And I think this is something that a lot of the viewers and listeners will resonate with because either themselves or even a family member has this type of addiction.

What have you seen with addiction to pornography and relationships? There's a lot. Well, no, let me rephrase that. That is a definitive stream of relationships that come through our doors where we will see a pornography piece.

It is a complicated answer that I will give you and it won't satisfy all listeners because we would need another podcast to do this well and to it in justice.

Okay. So I would do my best to paint enough of a picture for you to understand or help or to help our listeners. When we're looking at addiction, we are looking a self-soothing mechanism.

That's what we're looking at. We're Looking at a nervous system that is either in fight, flight, freeze, fawn, flop, the five F's that show that the nervous System is dysregulated.

And I'm speaking to the converted. I know you already understand this, where it is in some version of threat. Yeah, so maybe it's a psychological threat, maybe It's financial threat?

Maybe it s a literal for your life threat There is There is some version of that at play. The person tries something, has something. Those feelings disappear.

They have relief. And then they want to do it again. They want relief. That's where it comes from. And, then, of course, we have the substances themselves become not quite enough to get the relief, the newness.

There's a word that is escaping me at the moment. It'll probably come to me the wrong time. What is the word for when you It's in the direction of new, but it is novelty.

When the novelty wears off on the brain, and the brains like, oh, that's what this is, we have to up it, up up, until sometimes we're like how did I get here?

And the thing is you don't just generally, although it's possible, you know, generally go from here to here. It generally takes steady decision points each day to try and soothe that system, to find some peace.

And whether it's pornography, whether its drugs, alcohol, anything in between, this is usually the root of it. So correct me if I'm wrong, but there's obviously, with any of them, regardless of its pornography or drugs or alcohol there is a behavioral adjustment that has to go into place.

But what about individuals that have a chemical imbalance where now they're seeking that serotonin and that dopamine adjustment and they are going to these different vices to adjust it.

And the reason why I'm asking this is like, And I do wanna shift gears, talk about other relationships besides just like marriage, but we're already here.

So when we talking about a couple that's together, and one is, I don't want anyone to take it the wrong way, one so far off and addicted to a lot of these things that have created this chemical imbalance where yes, you still have to implement a behavioral change, How do you work with your coaching on that?

Are you teaming up with other clinicians and getting more medically involved in that sense? Well, because we're not a therapeutic program. There are times we recommend a Therapeutic or a medical psychiatry intervention.

And again, we are a coaching program, so we make the recommendations and then that woman that we're working with needs to go and do the actions to have those happen.

So if we were to talk more generally what you're actually circling is a bit of a new frontier and some clinicians will be in agreement with this emerging research and others will not because this brain imbalance, this chemical imbalance is a conversation that has been running now for two decades or so.

And it was widely thought to be true. And I don't think there's evidence confirming that it is or is not true, but it's certainly under question about whether there is another answer to why people look for soothing that nervous system.

Not just about a serotonin hit, a dopamine hit. Although that is a byproduct. The conversation is shifting very much on the fringes, but you don't mind a bit of a fringe thing, it's coming to a conversation about neurodivergency.

Right. which is divergent from neurotypical, which a body, a brain, and a system which are outside of the bell curve. So when we're doing statistics, we are looking at the Bell Curve, the middle is 50% of population and then we go out, out until we get to the one or two percents on either side.

When you're neurodivergent, you are inside the main, outside the typical. So when we're thinking about neurodivergent populations, we see more sensitive nervous systems, which means it's much harder to regulate.

We see a whole generation of people sort of 30s on saying, hang on a second, who am I? Because their children are getting picked up and screened in different ways that weren't available when were growing up.

And there is a conversation that is saying, if you are somebody who is easily attracted to those kinds of substances or needs that kind of support, then the question becomes, because there's a huge correlation and they're working on causation data to show that it's very likely that you're actually neurodivergent and you have been trying to survive in a world that was built for neurotypical people.

And that is the emerging conversation. Very interesting. You know, sometimes in relationships, especially I remember you earlier talking about the different age groups and the older age group.

Yeah. Part of like one partner sometimes will come up and says, you know. My husband has changed, he's just very snippy. He's not remembering things. And sometimes it could be an acute onset of a neurological disorder.

Can be, yeah. Those are things that I want people to recognize and hear from you as an expert that sometimes, it's more than that. You have to seek different positions of help, right?

Because it can be easy where people should say no, you know, they're very snappy and they need anger management. But what if there's an underlying issue?

No, and anger. Management is a thing. There is subsection of the community that actually really needs rehabilitation skills, self introspection because of that domestic violence element of which anger management is one piece.

## Addiction, Pornography, and Neurodivergence

So that exists and it's very real. And the people who do that work, we have two of them on my team for this very reason, they do God's work. I have one particular clinician who specializes in male offenders.

And can I tell you, the work she does is jaw-droppingly beautiful. And it's a certain type of person that can do that. Wow. Yeah. Amazing. So Meg, other relationships.

OK. You have an expertise in leadership relationships? I do. What is a leadership relationship? Well, I have never phrased it like that, but I might pop that in my back pocket.

My whole philosophy is built on leadership. That's where my formative career came from. Came from leadership in companies. And in order to be able to lead a relationship, lead the family system, we need to A, be ourselves, B, understand what leadership is, and C, remember how much agency and how efficacy and how much power we actually have.

And when we're in a relationship with somebody else and it's in crisis or it is on the way to crisis, our self, how might I say this? It either dwindles our belief and our remembering of who we are and how powerful ability to create.

We either forget or that relationship has come to this point because it's time for both of us to grow. It's for our next iteration. Okay. As, as we're kind of switching gears here and talking about the leadership of relationships, I want to ask you a question specifically with an individual because this can go on the couple's relationship and also leadership like in the corporate world.

Is it possible for one person to shift the relationship. That's my whole vibe. Without the other person being engaged? Absolutely. Well, yes. So let's do this.

This is my favorite conversation because it's women's favorite. Yeah, but Meg, how can I actually do that? Yeah but, Meg you don't understand, my husband is XXXX.

My partner is this, this this and I say got it. And they say, also, why should I be the one? Why am I the One that has to do this? why won't they do so much, so many big feelings in my world that I lead?

And the answer is, well, if not you, then who? Right? And also you might end up separating from this person and you used to really love them. They meant something to you.

You had children potentially, probably most of my women have children. you had Children with them, you have a family with. And this we're at the junction.

We're the choice point where you know, You've given it everything. and then you roll the dice and see. with your leadership, what might be possible? So that's one part of my answer.

The second part is even funner than that. And I know you thought that was fun. Let's go. Ready? You know mirror neurons? Mirror neurons are the thing that allows us to connect.

You mirror me, I mirror you. We have our body language together. It might match my cadence. you might pick up my energy. That's all based on mirror and neurons.

it's like a social learning part of us. All of have them. When you are in a dyad, a partnership, you deeply connected even when you're in great crisis because of all that you've already been through.

Interesting so one person shows up and doesn't engage in the old Remembers the good in you because you got to remember when these people come in they have all these stories When let me rephrase that you can cut that bit, please when my wise women come and they all have these Stories about their husbands and there is truth in those stories But that man, we call them the good men, they are good-men 99% of the time.

They are a good man and they have a story about their wise women. That's what we do when we don't understand why someone's different to us. We make a up about them and the story is usually He doesn't listen.

He's no good. he doesn' care about me. He only cares about this.he doesn"t love me, he's untidy, etc., etc. And they have a story. The good men have story about my wise women.

She's so hard to please. I try everything and she doesn "t listen." Oh, it's going to be like that again, is it? And we get ourselves caught in these stories.

And so when my beautiful wise women start my program, whether it's the eight week program or the 12 week one, when they start that process, they get their life mask first.

I do a combination of self-leadership and leadership with others and the first stream is always self, the second stream, which happens simultaneously, is others.

And when you have done, I say three weeks in, when are three week into that eight or 12 weeks, you'll have a different map. you legitimately can show up in that first week differently and it starts to change the tone.

And so when I teach you what to do when you change that tone and then I taught you how to work through the perpetual problems, the solvable conflict, and when they teach how you build and dream of a different future, which happens towards the end, you have a whole different roadmap.

And so does every relationship get saved in inverted commas? No, but not every relationships should.

Relationships naturally come to an end sometimes and that is okay.

But every single woman comes through that process knowing they A, gave it them all. Wait, let me say that again. Gave it their all and B, know how to separate gracefully.

or at least gently or neutrally. And without all of that skill and without that leadership that was going to end in a firebomb and it was gonna end really painfully.

So the skills are life skills regardless. The leadership taught holds that woman in her next chapter with her friend, partner, husband, or in the next of her life as a co-parent or as an ex-partner.

## Leadership, Mirror Neurons, and Changing the Relationship

However you cut it, it's helpful. Wow. Meg, do you obviously have your own relationship? I am. I'm married. So that relationship, that also takes work, right?

It does. How do balance between helping so many other people with their relationship and then your relationship. My husband and I… Is he in the same business?

Yeah, you just really see this mirror neurons, they're working. I knew they exist. So my husband's name is Alfred. He is the great love of my life. And I met in 2004. It's 21 years we've been together.

And I would say each person has a context in which they come and they have a series of life questions. I have book coming out called Heartprint. It's the idea that behind every person's Life lies their heart print, which is as unique as their fingerprint in terms of what they're supposed to do.

My heartprint has not had too many relationship challenges with my husband in it. It has, don't get me wrong. But that's not been my major thing. He and I are besties.

We live together, work together work from home together and raise our kids together. And we operate, I'm doing a thing where I've got the two backs of my hand where i do this and he does that but we are like right up against each other.

So I founded the business and six months later I was like honey I need some help. And when he said he would help me, I was thrilled because that man is a genius.

So he runs half of the company and I run the client experience of a company. And we're co-CEOs and besties. That's amazing. Yeah. I love that. You know, when we're talking about relationships, the relationships with your couple, with their significant other, yeah.

With your spouse. Yeah. You. Know, finances can have a huge impact on relationships. Yep. So what I put this. Should you share a bank account or not share bank accounts?

Should everything be together or. Not together. Look, you've known me now for a little while. What do you reckon I'm going to say? They should be. Together.

Oh, this is what I'm going to say. It depends. Oh boy. And it depends because how would I know what's right for you? Right. Because I am not you. So what, I would say is in the Gottman research in The Love Lab, they tried to quantify or operationalize what money meant to people.

When they got to a hundred different meanings, They stopped trying to quantify it. They said money means something different to everybody. So for some, sharing a bank account is exactly right.

My husband and I were babies when we met, all in everything, everything shared, Everything set up so that everything is shared. And I know that if for whatever reason we ever separated, I knew for sure that the structures

that we've set out would be equal, 50-50.

Because that's just the way that were both wired from a money perspective. I'm not saying that it's better or worse than anyone else, just an example.

The thing is though, if you can't quantify it through the love lab of 40 or 50 years worth of like relationship data, If money can be quantified, then how on earth could there be one right way to do it?

There couldn't be. I guess obviously you're right on that because if you are sharing an account together and all your finances together, if both are good with finances, it works.

But if one is not too good, with the finances it might be better off having separate accounts. Let me just challenge that. You might be better off having the one who's stronger at finances help you.

And so you might, that might an argument equally to have it together. Do you see how complicated it is? Everyone's different. Yeah. and the nuance. Relationships is where nuance lives.

yeah. do you think communication is one of the biggest issues with relationships? I think humans are the biggest issue with relationships. I must agree.

Humans are so tricky. And no human is alike. No, gosh, no. Oh, we're so flawed. humans Are so floored. and it really hurts us when we see our flaws and our blind spots.

It's so hard for us. Yeah. But what is What is the truth that makes people very uncomfortable? What truth makes very people uncomfortable. There is no silver bullet.

It's like you and your health work. You've got to rebuild. We've gotta build brick by brick, stone by stone, takes time, take skill, it takes dedication, It takes courage to face the work that needs to be done to.

I don't know if you've heard this quote, its Freud. Freud was asked, Pretty sure this is the question he was asked. What is a definition of a successful life?

And he said to love and to work. And I said that to a friend of mine 20 years ago, 15 years, and I watched him think. He was like, oh, I've got a job.

I have got to partner. And we look at the nuance, how tricky it is to have work working well and have love and your love relationships working. Well, and for both of them to be working, well, that is mastery.

Right. Now. You said you get into your relationship about 21 years ago. Yeah. So 21 years ago, things were different. We didn't live in such a digital era.

I met him in a bar. There were no dating apps and there was like the internet was no phones. This was not iPhone. They had match.com, I think. But you didn' do that.

That was taboo. Right. Back at that point in time, I think Facebook was just coming out. It hadn't come out?

## Money, Communication, and Modern Love

It hasn't even come up, see? Right, it came out when I got married or a bit later. Wow. Yeah. So, you know, thinking about that, How has love truly evolved since back then?

Because now you go out to a restaurant, you know, and you got couples and they're both on the phone. And it's just like, are they texting each other? You know?

So it like what have you seen on how love has evolved? Is love still the same thing of what it was before? Love is

the the way in which we onboard to love is different.

What we know is that the isolation levels and the loneliness levels are at an all time high. And we also know that one company has bought all the dating sites and now it's pay to play and you don't really get to meet anyone the way you did at its peak, you know, when it was working really well, the Dating sites.

It's not like that anymore out in the, dating world. So when we're talking about dating, we are now seeing a return to, what do you know, in-person events at places like bars.

Remember those times where they did speed dating? I think that went out of vogue for a little while, but when I was young, back in the day, speed-dating was just a thing.

So it's this way to actually meet people in real life. Yeah. And be disconnected yet that the real-life thing is is the deal right? Well, this is where it actually happens.

Yeah, right, Meg the The next couple of minutes I want to give it to you and I wanted to come from the heart I Want you to take some time? And tell the listeners and viewers what you want the world to know about you and relationships.

I would go to the concept that as far as I know, I coined, which is a heart print. Your heart print is different to your loved one's heartprint. It is as unique as your fingerprint and it is the full expression of yourself ready for you to explore across this one beautiful life that you get.

The greater that your inside world matches your outside world, matches therefore your heart print, the more contentment and satisfaction, peace and positive emotions you're likely to feel.

You are a human, you will still feel negative emotions. That's normal. that's feedback, that data. If you can't avoid it, I don't want you to avoid. It that where the growth lives.

Where the next iteration of self lives is in the pain and confusion. I would like to invite you to remember who you are and I'd like you do one thing today that honours the things that light you up and then tomorrow add another new thing and over time you're going to build yourself into a version of you that is much more congruent even if you quite congruent now it's going build you even further and the closer you get to that heart print the happier No, because happy is actually a transient emotion.

Let me change that. The more contented and satisfied you'll be. And when you're in contentment and satisfaction, it's more of a neutral state. It's not a peak state, but the neutral State is where real connection lives.

And we know that when you are feeling connected to self and you belong to yourself, you belonged to your loved ones. When you like you and the people you love like, that's where wellness lives.

And I want that for you. Amazing. Meg, we're going to have a little fun here now. Oh, all right. OK. One of my favorite podcasters, Steven Barlet, with the diary of a CEO.

So he came out with these conversation cards. I'm going go ahead and give you that. Okay. You're going to open it up, grab one from like the middle or something.

Do I get to ask you something? No. I was like, Ooh, finally back baby. So you shuffled them up? I'm gonna, you know, like a tarot card, knock my energy in and get one.

That's easy for me to answer. And, uh, okay. Grab two of them to grab two. Challenge. All right. I don't mind a challenge. And then what you're going to do is you going read it and then answer it.

Well, if this isn't the funnest thing, I dunno what is. Okay. We're gonna go with this one first. This is really nice. When was the last time you cried and why?

It's actually really easy to answer, it was just the other day. I was having dinner with a friend. It was in an Uber by myself because I running late, I recording in LA and meeting my friend and his mom for dinner at Soho House in Malibu.

And I in the Uber and it's my first time driving through Malabu since the fires in January. Mm. Sobbed. Wow.

## Heartprint, Reflection, and Closing Advice

that were helping, you know, the helpers bring me to tears. Every time I see the Helpers, it just touches me. So I saw all the people that we're building, I so all of the charred palm trees, and I also saw the pylons also char.

from where the fire had destroyed. And then I saw houses standing next to the. I just grieved. You're going to make me cry now? I tell you, I couldn't stop.

It was like the ugly cry in the back of the Uber. Like I was the only one there. That's and I. Was like, yeah, so that was easy one, but a hard one. You won't believe it.

What does that one say? It's blank. I think that means you get to ask me a question. That's just one more, one. Well, why is that in there? I told you I was magical or I didn't, but I am.

It sounds very interesting. There's a blank one I made you a magic blank on. All right. We'll pull one out next time. No shuffling. Still got my energy on them.

Here we go. This has got words on it, right? The person you cherish most in life dies tomorrow and you have a 60 second phone call with them. What do you tell them?

So I have trouble splitting the one person because I've three. I had my two boys and my husband. I think about death more than most people. I don't know why.

It's just one of those things I thing about all the time. And I it has to do with Ericsson's psychosocial stages of development. When you hit 60 to 65, I thinks it's 65. You spend the rest of your life wondering or measuring whether you lived a life that matches who you are.

Mm. and I learnt that, 10 years ago. And so I've been preoccupied with that for 10 years, but I was interested before about death. So I'm really thoughtful already about telling my people how I feel about them effusely all the time.

Everyone in my family is very clear on how much I admire them and how, ah, much they've made my life richer. So if they were going to die tomorrow, I wouldn't make it about me.

I'd make about them. If they knew, we both know they're going die, then I would be saying I'm going be right here. You are going held to the end. When you're gone, you'll be in a different form to me, But I'll still feel you.

I'd know your energy anywhere. And I got you and you got me, right? You're going to the other side. I'll stay here. i'm goingto finish my work here until my time has come.

But i will never forget you, I will live in your honor andyou can still talk with me. And on we go until we meet again. Powerful. Meg, as we wrap up here, if there's anyone listening or viewing this podcast that truly resonates with today's message, what is that one thing that you can leave them off with?

I feel like you are more powerful than you know. You have more agency than, you have a more untapped cleverness than your realize and that perhaps if you think you're at the edge of what you can do and you found your limits and it's not possible.

then my reminder to you is that nobody could run the four minute mile until they could. And then everybody could

do it. Well, not everybody. I'm a terrible runner.

Literally can't do. But then a whole lot of people could so you might be surrounded by people who say this is as good as it gets. Every ceiling is breakable and every ability to grow is not defined because you haven't been able to do it yet.

So if you're on that recipe, if think you can't, I would like to remind you how powerful you are and that I believe in you and you that can do that. Amazing.

And Meg, where can people find you? At Meg Tooey Official. I love it. Meg, it was a pleasure having you on a Healthy Point of View podcast. Thank you.

I loved it and come again anytime. thank you for the work that you do and thank for inviting me here. Guys, you heard Meg. You are more powerful than what you think.

Relationships are extremely important. The relationship with yourself is where it begins. Don't take it upon yourself to just do it, right? There's people out there that can help you throughout this process.

There are people like Meg. Make sure you go, follow her, look at all her other content. You're going to learn things. This might be the next step that you need for your relationship, with your partner, business, colleagues, whatever it might There might be someone close to you who needs this information too.

Make sure to take a look at her new book that's coming out, Heart Print. Guys, make sure you share this podcast, subscribe, leave all the fun comments, do all that good stuff, and we'll see you for the next one.