



Conscious Life presents
**HEALING TOXIC
RELATIONSHIPS**

Healthy Relationship Conditions for Thriving

Guest: Dr Marni Feuerman

Disclaimer: The contents of this interview are for informational purposes only and are not intended to be a substitute for professional medical or psychological advice, diagnosis, or treatment. This interview does not provide medical or psychological advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical or psychological condition.

[00:00:10] - Meagen Gibson

Welcome to this interview. I'm Meagen Gibson, your conference co-host. In this interview with psychotherapist Dr marni Feuerman, we're talking about people who struggle with repeated, unhealthy relationship patterns.

Marni's newest book is called *Ghosted and Breadcrumbed: Stop Falling for Unavailable Men and Get Smart about Healthy Relationships*. It will help you understand how to make the changes you need to have healthy relationships. Dr Marni Feuerman, thank you so much for being with us today.

Dr Marni Feuerman

Thank you, Meagen. Great to be here.

Meagen Gibson

I'm of the opinion that even the healthiest relationships suffer from dysfunctional or maladaptive relationship behaviors under stress. Social media and pop psychology have us thinking about toxic relationship patterns a lot more. But I thought it might be helpful for us to really define how to identify if your relationship is suffering from stress and needs a reset or if you're in an unhealthy, irreparable toxic relationship dynamic.

Dr Marni Feuerman

Right. That's very good to figure that out. I think you've got to think in part in terms of long-standing patterns. If you're going through some stress or upheaval, but you pretty much can look at your relationship and say, hey, it's been pretty steady and pretty good, and we feel safe, and we encourage each other and there's trust and there's all those nice ingredients, and then suddenly something happens, usually external.

You're moving, you're selling your house, you're renovating your house, your mom gets sick or you get sick, different things where there's a sudden surge of stress and then you're hitting some bumps with that. I think that's pretty normal, everyday kind of stuff. If the stressor goes away and you return to that baseline, you're probably golden. But if you don't and you find, you know what, we hit the rough patch, but it's like we just are stuck.

It keeps going and we're not doing well and there's a lot of distress and a lot of arguments or we don't talk at all anymore, things like that, then I would say it's probably time to look at things. It's hard, I think, to clearly define toxic because what we were chatting about before, it's a word that

gets thrown out a lot. I think it'll be good to also really figure out what that is exactly and if your relationship is that or healthy.

[00:02:43] - Meagen Gibson

Absolutely. I'm thinking of all the scenarios in which those stressors come in, even good things like a job change if it's something even that you want, the birth of a child, even just death in how unique an individual grief is for everybody. These are stressors that don't necessarily resolve very fast and can have long-tail impacts on us in the way that we relate.

Dr Marni Feuerman

Oh, yes, absolutely. I think people go into, let's say, a relationship or something if we're talking about a romantic relationship. We never anticipate these things, especially if we're feeling really good and we feel like it is good and healthy, we don't anticipate what's going to happen if something big does take place or something happy like the birth of a child. But we know and there's clear data about satisfaction levels with these different things and we don't really go in thinking about that.

Sometimes we're tested and we really pass it, where we did pretty well, like we hit some stress and we did okay. And then other people are certainly just decimated by some of these things and so we just don't really know what's going to happen and how we're going to react and all that. I think a lot of times we're just doing the best we can or we go in with the best intentions and it doesn't always work out that way.

Meagen Gibson

Absolutely. I just want to validate people's experiences. I don't feel like I regained my sense of self or sanity until my kids were about six. That might be longer than average.

Dr Marni Feuerman

Yes. I say I survived twins, so I know we're solid because they're 20 now.

Meagen Gibson

Right.

Dr Marni Feuerman

I hear you.

Meagen Gibson

Exactly. All right, so let's talk through what toxic dynamics might look like and feel like because in so much of what we talk about is what the toxic person's behavior might be. But what I really want to talk through also with you is how you might feel because, especially if you're not a clinician, if you don't talk about this stuff for a living like I do, you can't label it. All you know is how you feel after the interactions. I would love if you could take me through from that lens.

Dr Marni Feuerman

Sure. When I think of toxic, I'm really thinking about a much more extreme situation. I would say most people probably fall along the bell curve. The standard deviations here, people's relationships flow in and out of certain states. But that I would look at toxic as more of a trait than a state. In

other words, it is more long-standing. Usually it's classified by some form of abuse, lot of up and down, roller coasters, frequent escalations, passive aggressiveness.

[00:05:58]

People can't sustain a conversation without it blowing up or there's a big imbalance of power or over-functioning. One person is really over-functioning, whether it's emotionally or in other ways. They feel like the labor load is much heavily on their shoulders and all their attempts to try to rectify that situation, it doesn't get better.

I'm definitely all one for trying to resolve it, trying to problem solve, trying to figure this out. But I would say if it still never seems to get to where it needs to be to a healthy place, then it's either time to get another pair of eyes on the situation, whether that is a therapist or sometimes friends and family, but I know that could get tricky. But chances are if it's really toxic or really unhealthy, you've heard elements of that before because the people that care about you, they're going to say it, they're going to blurt it out.

You may be in denial, but if you think back, oh, gosh, a couple of people have actually made comments that we fight all the time and we seem to hate each other, or something like that. I look at that more as like an extreme situation that luckily, probably isn't the norm. But like you said about feelings, you don't feel good, you don't feel respected, you don't feel you have a voice. You feel like you have no sense of control or someone's controlling you.

Certainly if it's physical, it's very obvious. But a lot of this stuff isn't physical, it's very psychological. That's where people, it gets a little tricky for them to really see that and define that. Once in a while it's one person. One person is much more healthy than the other. And then there's also situations where two people are very unhealthy and they co-create a very toxic situation, but they might do better with someone else, but that person brings out the worst in them. We know there's some situations with that as well.

Meagen Gibson

Often, I think, especially when we're younger, we find that we can solve a lot of our immediate relationship issues by getting out of the relationship and getting into another one. Sometimes we see whispers of old patterns of behavior following us around because we're still the consistent factor in our relationships.

Dr Marni Feuerman

Yes. You're going to want to know that. Yes, because otherwise you will just trade out the person, but the problems are going to follow. We know that.

Meagen Gibson

Yeah, absolutely. I was writing as you were talking and the unpredictability and your inability to have a voice. All of those things and power and control and so much of that go into it.

Dr Marni Feuerman

Those are like ten different topics you can talk about in these interviews.

Meagen Gibson

Exactly. Where do I go back to first? I want to dive into over-functioning because that's always a really appealing topic to me. That can be emotional labor. We can be the one half of the couple or relationship reading all the books and we're doing all of the therapy and we're trying to drag our

partner or parent or sibling, child, doesn't matter, trying to drag them along. Trying to do all the feeling on behalf of both of us. It leads to this emotional indigestion that gets all stuck.

[00:09:47] - Dr Marni Feuerman

Yes, absolutely. I think it's a little bit easier for, I might get in trouble for saying this, a little easier for women to be the over-functioners, especially when it comes to the emotional labor. I think that's a pretty known type of issue. Not that men don't have other things too that make things out of balance. But I think when it comes to that, and we know that there's certainly a lot of reasons for that, and I think we're coming further along with helping men understand their emotional side to them. Express it. Look at it. Honor it.

Not do what they normally do, which is what we've taught them to do, which is push it down. It's not manly or masculine or whatever it is. I think we're coming a long way with that. But certainly we know that there's people that can be very rigid in their thinking around that or they've had their own situation where they've been exposed to, where it was very dangerous perhaps to express that stuff.

Sometimes these people tend to attract each other like magnets where you have somebody who is really deficient in that with somebody who is really good at that. I always think that if you have willingness, you have a partner who's willing to look at it and if they hear the complaint, like, hey, I'm carrying most of the emotional load of this relationship and I'm not feeling as close and connected because we can't have deep conversations and talk about feelings. The other person can at least hold some curiosity around that.

Maybe that's the case or you know what, I'm not really so great at that but I'm willing to learn or I'm willing to do some work around that, then I think that's great, that's healthy, that's moving in the right direction. But I think when people are in denial, either they can't see it, they lack the self awareness or they just refuse. Oh no, I'm not doing that. You just have to accept me the way I am and that's that.

I think people will run into problems at some point. Sometimes it's more physical labor. We hear about division of labor in the house, like housework and chores, and some people just have different old school thoughts or there's gender roles or there's different things that people think and again, they hold it rigid so there's not the willingness to be flexible or make some changes or look at it.

Those people will stay stuck in that before long, as you know, people get very resentful. It causes a lot of deeper negative feelings about the relationship so it doesn't really work. Of course, we know sometimes this happens with parents and children. We talk about there's all these other relationships that can happen in. I'm sure some of your listeners feel like they had to over-function for a parent.

They had to be adults really quickly or younger than was expected, or the parents blurred boundaries and put them in a more adult role, or the parent maybe had a mental health issue or a substance abuse issue. Sometimes those kids don't just lose that also as adults, they find relationships where they end up doing the same thing. That's where these patterns can certainly repeat. But a lot of times, if people look at their history, that probably started earlier, probably started when they were pretty young.

Meagen Gibson

Absolutely.

[00:13:34] - Dr Marni Feuerman

It's not so unusual to then get in that kind of relationship.

Meagen Gibson

Yeah. We come by it honestly, don't we? We all have defenses, oriented around our identity, and nobody wants to get feedback and then go, please tell me more about how I've been a terrible partner, parent or child. None of us by instinct, are leaning in, saying, please tell me more about how I can do better.

Dr Marni Feuerman

I know. I think the hardest thing for us is to not, like you said, be defensive and immediately react to the criticism. We can certainly give feedback to somebody and do it in a way that is as non-threatening as possible and from a place of love and care and saying something about, look, I value our relationship and something's bothering me that I really need to talk about.

Again, if you're in a healthy relationship, be that friends, relatives, family, a romantic partner, there's safety around that. There's emotional safety where you can share your feelings, share if something's wrong and not worry about some bad repercussions or punishment or that there's a threat of the relationship ending or blowing up. We should feel like, hey, you know what our relationship is strong enough. The bond is strong and secure enough that if I'm really troubled by something, I can talk about it. We know not every relationship has that, but the healthier relationships do have that.

Meagen Gibson

As you were talking, this whole time I've been contemplating how to bring up how we test emotional safety. There's some relationships where we know we're emotionally safe and secure. It doesn't always mean we're comfortable, but we're emotionally safe and secure and physically and such. But there's a lot of relationships where, because of all the things we've already named, there might not be emotional safety and it might be a complete and uphill battle to establish it.

I assume that that's where somebody like you comes into play, where you can ask for support and ask for at least the accompaniment of, like, hey, I feel like we need some support to work on some stuff. Are you willing and able to accompany me to a session so that we can talk this out, in an environment where we're encouraged to speak from our hearts and with our shared goal of remaining in good relationship.

Dr Marni Feuerman

In a nutshell, what you just described is really the ultimate goal of therapy that involves a relationship, whether it's parent-child. Well, with parent-child it's a little bit different because the care is one direction. The parent has to take care of the child. When you're in a romantic relationship that flows back and forth, where you caretake each other and there's a healthy dependency that both feel like it's balanced.

But if I were to say what a goal is, it would be that people can take those risks and they can share their innermost feelings and fears and troubles. It's safe to do that where you feel like there's an open pathway and that the person responds, even if they're upset. This doesn't mean no negative feelings, but I think it just means that there's enough safety for people to feel what they're feeling and talk about it and be present with each other around that.

[00:17:11] - Dr Marni Feuerman

And that they sort it out and they get to a place where they feel like if there's a repair that had to be made, it was made. Or if there's something to be learned about how to function better together, that there's openness to learning that. That's definitely the target, what you just described.

Meagen Gibson

Yeah. I found that in a lot of relationships, both people feel like they're doing everything sometimes. We all feel like we're doing the most and not being recognized for it. Do you find that to be true?

Dr Marni Feuerman

Yes. It's hard to take someone else's perspective too. It's hard to just say, maybe that's true, maybe they are doing more. But I think if people can get out of the blame game or trying to find like, okay, who is really doing more? Is this person at 60 percent and this person's at this percent? That's not really going to solve it, but that you can openly discuss it, that you can say, oh, tell me why, what's been happening with you lately that you feel like you're doing so much? Tell me more.

I think if we can respond to each other with, again, that curiosity, and asking open-ended questions and to try to learn that you don't have to agree. In your mind, you might say, there's just no way, I know I'm doing more than them. But I think the ultimate goal isn't to necessarily have a perfect problem solve for that, where you divide everything up perfectly, because I just think that's impossible. But I think you'd won if you could have an intelligent, open, sensitive conversation and go, okay, wow, I didn't realize that.

Maybe I can change or tweak this behavior because it's bothering you or that you'll reach some agreement or some negotiation that you both can live with and feel good about. And that there's an open door if the problem feels like it's coming up again, that you can go and you can say it again and say, hey, I know we talked about this a couple of months ago, I'm kind of feeling that way again. And that two people can have a sustainable conversation where there's just space for that. I think that is ultimately what I hope people can do, whatever the relationship is.

Meagen Gibson

I really want to come back to what you said at the beginning when you started to answer me, which was that understanding does not imply agreement.

Dr Marni Feuerman

In fact, when I see people for therapy and it involves a relationship, I've been able to validate both perceptions, but they won't hear me agree. They won't hear me say, I get how you could feel that way if you see it that way. I hear you're feeling really upset about it. All those feelings can come forward and they deserve to be validated. Two people are certainly not going to have the same exact world view, but they can actually find a way to preserve the relationship even when they're far apart on a perspective.

I think that's really good news because I think that's certainly where people get caught up. They're like, I have to get that person or convince that person to see it my way. Sometimes they do, but if they don't, do you really want to keep doing that? Because it's not going to get you to the end goal, which is that you want to find a way to move forward even when you disagree about something and maybe find a way that one person might be a little happier than the other.

[00:20:58]

But then at the end of all the years you're going to be together, if you feel like it's overall balanced. You're not winning every argument, but maybe you're winning a few. I think preserving that relationship has to take precedence over winning that argument. I think that's what that's about with the perception argument that people get stuck in.

Meagen Gibson

Absolutely. Just to totally tattle on my relationship, I had several conversations with my partner in those early years that were so tough with kids and about share of labor in the home and things. His perspective, which I came to understand later, was everything I'm doing is for our family. But I'm like, well, wait a minute, you're not here, so how is that true?

It was just this back and forth of us not understanding one another. And then when we both did a lot of work to understand how could that be true to you? How could I feel completely abandoned being home by myself with these two grabby clingy kids feel like you're not present and how can you feel like everything you're doing is for us? How is that true for you? Creating that mutual respect and understanding.

Dr Marni Feuerman

I think behind that is usually someone longing for something. It may go a really long way just for your spouse to say, oh, gosh, that must be really hard. It sounds like you really want me to just see how much you're doing and maybe show appreciation. I'm not saying that enough or something. Even though they still think I might be doing more too, or I'm doing just as much, they can just pause and pivot to validating your side of it.

That goes a really long way. You might feel good and it calms your nervous system even though the person didn't necessarily say I agree. I think that's something good for people to remember as well that sometimes we're just trying to co-regulate a little bit, or we want that appreciation, or we want someone just to be able to honor and say, I see you, and I see how you're feeling. I get it. That means a lot to us.

Meagen Gibson

You mentioned co-regulation and just in case that's the first time anybody's ever heard it. We're talking about our nervous systems and the way that everybody who's ever had a partnership, or been in relationship at all, knows that our faces and our heartbeats and our breathing rates and our posture all communicate. Even when our words are saying one thing, all of that stuff might be revealing another side of us.

And then we're picking up on that and asking about it. Our partner is denying that that's the case. When we're able to keep our nervous system regulated even in the face of perceived conflict or difference of opinion, it tells our partners that we're safe to be around even when we're questioning or coming to them with hard things.

Dr Marni Feuerman

Absolutely. I think we have responsibility to do both. Sometimes we're self-regulating and we're having to calm ourselves down because we know we're coming at something way too reactive. If we're too reactive, then it doesn't feel safe to the person that we're dealing with. Sometimes we got to keep that in check and some people we know have a lot of trouble with that, but there's lots of good skills and there's lots of things that you can learn.

[00:24:49]

The thing that I think is talked about less is the co-regulation part that even adult to adult, especially in a romantic relationship, because people think that maybe they're too needy or you're not really supposed to. You should be able to manage your own emotions all the time and it's just not very realistic. We weren't born that way.

If we think about when we had children, and they can't talk but we pretty much knew when they were in distress. They would cry and if you're a good parent, you're not going to yell at them necessarily and say stop crying, but we know to pick them up. They need cuddling and soothing and we talk in a nice voice. We're calm and we bring a certain energy to the child.

It may sound funny, but there's a version of that that we want to bring to our partners too. When we see they're in distress, maybe we can be more of a calming force. We can say, oh gosh, I know you're not doing well right now and come here, talk to me, sit down, put your arm around them. There's an adult version of that and we were born needing that. That need doesn't go away. It just looks a little different when we're older.

Sometimes partners aren't so great at doing that for each other. Sometimes we don't even think about what we need, so we can't even articulate it. Sometimes people have to do a little bit of work around that to figure out what are they feeling, what is behind it, what do they think they need. When I say need, I'm talking about comfort, care, support, help, things that can be hard to ask for. I'm sure you have seen this or heard this, where sometimes people find it so difficult to ask for help, but no one's doing themselves any favors by not sometimes asking for help.

I think if you have a partner and you have that safety, then you should feel free to be able to say, I need your help with something or I'm not doing well. Can you just sit and give me a hug or hold my hand or whatever that looks like? But I know that people sometimes really struggle with that.

Meagen Gibson

Absolutely. It's hard, especially if you haven't been in relationship, your family system didn't feel safe for your emotional needs and things like that. It's hard to get that vulnerable and say, I'm not doing well, I just need you to be with me or just hold my hand or just do all these things. The analogy that you have with the children, that's totally it. How would you sit and be present with a kid's emotional dysregulation or big reactivity or for me, I had to learn how to stop the cycle of matching my kid's, not oppositional, but very aggressive, very physical, very big emotions.

I would just match him. We would just sit in this circle of misunderstanding until embarrassingly recently. But once I learned all of this nervous system stuff and was told about borrowing safety and borrowing calm and learned that I could loan it out to people if I could figure it out myself. It was just a beautiful thing.

Dr Marni Feuerman

Yeah. There's a ton of good research on this that it is factual. We're not just talking about a theory, this is fact that people do much better when they have somebody by their side that is helping them when they're doing something alone, whether that's something stressful or they had something bad happen to them.

I think there's some research about in the aftermath of 9/11, people who had family members there for them felt the effects so much differently than people who were by themselves or had nobody. We know that this is a really important piece of things.

[00:29:11] - Meagen Gibson

Absolutely. Assuming we're in safe relationship, how do we communicate our needs effectively? How can we be heard and seen in our relationships?

Dr Marni Feuerman

I would say that people's emotions and their feelings are the compass. Your feelings tell you what you need or they inform your needs. I'll give like a really basic example so people can conceptualize this. It's like when you feel a hunger pain and you then know I'm hungry. You name it, you go and you get something to eat and it soothes and calms that feeling down.

The hunger helped you know, all right, I need food and then it helped you take action. It motivated you to do something about it. And then when you did that thing, it calmed that feeling down. It's the same thing with a lot of emotions. The first step certainly is to have more self-awareness about how you're feeling and develop an emotional vocabulary for that. If you don't have it, there's a lot of great resources out there and apps and things to help you with that.

And then I also tell people to focus inward on their body. They got to get out of their heads when they're thinking emotionally. I want them to tell me what's coming up for them inside their body. Do they feel it somewhere? Do they feel tension? How's their breathing? How's their heart rate? What are they noticing? Because we know that there are certain patterns that are pretty typical physiologically that go along with a lot of emotions. And then there's also an energy to emotion.

Anger is often a high-energy escalated emotion that is very visual, people can really see and know when somebody's angry. And then there's some emotions that get very down-regulated. Sometimes when you're sad, you may hide it easier or you don't let someone see that. That's a little bit of a lower energy. All of these feelings have a different energy level to them. Certainly the way they appear on our face though, is often very common, where if you spoke to ten people and you looked at ten faces, people would pretty much name the same thing, anger, disgust, sadness and happiness and so on.

I think the thing to ask once you can identify that feeling is what are you hoping for? What are you expecting to happen? What's the action urge? What is it that you feel like doing once you recognize what the emotion is? That's a good way just to get started with this. And then as far as needs go, I want to define that a little bit more because I think people get very confused as to what needs are. Needs are, not what I say but what I think is defined in psychology, deeper emotional or attachment needs is what I'm talking about here.

These are things like you need attention, time to be seen, to be considered, to feel significant and important to somebody. Affection, to feel physical closeness, to be affirmed, supported, encouraged, accepted. To feel supported and cared for, that you get empathy, understanding. Those are some of the words that I think of when I think of deep emotional or attachment-related needs. In other words, you're human and there's a way another human can respond to you that makes you feel that sense of safety and security in life and the relationship.

Meagen Gibson

I was just going to say that that's an entire interview in and of itself because the way that we identify what our attachment needs are and then the way that the people we're in partnership and relationship with respond is a whole puzzle.

Dr Marni Feuerman

We can talk about attachment, it's a whole other discussion.

[00:33:55] - Meagen Gibson

I just recently learned that somebody who I'm in relationship with. For years and years, when I would share with this person what I perceived was an apathetic boredom. That was not what was going on at all with that person.

They were having a huge emotional experience that was so overwhelming that it came across and looked like apathy and boredom. When that breakthrough happened between the two of us that was a key to our entire relationship. I was like, oh my gosh, now I feel more connected and more understood.

Now I know what this is when I see it if I have to share. Now I know how to lean into that and get curious about it. Instead of feeling completely alone after I share, now I know what is actually going on.

Dr Marni Feuerman

Well, that person gave you the code. They said here's what this means. That when my face goes like this, this is what's really happening for me. A lot of times, the way we're reacting is because it was a coping strategy or a survival strategy. We've learned these things, especially to have, like, a poker face or something like that, or to be the squeaky wheel. We don't know how to quietly say, here's what I need. We have to scream.

We've learned some things sometimes that just don't work anymore. It's almost like that strategy has outlived itself but we didn't get the memo, like, okay, I don't have to do that anymore. But sometimes learning just that about yourself, what did I have to do to get by and to get my needs met?

If I had parents who weren't very emotionally responsive or weren't available, I might have learned some pretty unhealthy or dysfunctional things, like even lying, manipulating. That's usually how it comes about, but I want people to certainly be willing to say, I can give that up. I can learn a new way because it's not working or it's driving away the person that I'm wanting to bring close to me.

There's a lot of help out there, whether it's people watching videos like this or reading or going to therapy. That's what that's for, is that we can make those interpersonal changes. We can develop more self-awareness so that we're not sabotaging ourselves with this.

Meagen Gibson

Absolutely. You inferred this earlier just how honestly we come about all of this. I think about my relationship with my kids and how often when they were little, before I was in the midst of all of this and learning so rapidly because of the benefit of everybody I get to talk to every day, but how many times I unintentionally lied to them.

Let's say they spill a glass of orange juice. That literally happened this morning. They spill a glass of orange juice and my face is saying, oh, no. My face is very reactive. My mouth is saying, no big deal, but my face is saying, this is the end of the world.

I've had to shift my thinking into acknowledging that knee-jerk reaction that I can't help because we really can't. Our knee-jerk reactions are just automatic. We can't help it. It's in our programming. We could cry. But just acknowledge to them, hey, that feels like a really big deal, but it's not.

[00:37:38] - Meagen Gibson

I'm going to tell you the thing that I know is true, but I'm also going to acknowledge that part of me thinks that this is a huge deal and that at this age, you should not be spilling juice. Both things are true. I'm overreacting and it's not that big of a deal at all.

Dr Marni Feuerman

I think things like that happen a lot, and sometimes we're not even aware that we're doing that. Sometimes we're even putting someone else in a bind with that too, because we're not really being honest about all those things. It could be multiple things.

Meagen Gibson

Absolutely.

Dr Marni Feuerman

A lot of feelings aren't pure.

Meagen Gibson

Yes.

Dr Marni Feuerman

We have broad categories like angry, but I can think of 20 words that are under the umbrella. Maybe I'm just annoyed, frustrated, pissed. We can go on and on, irked. But the more granular you can be, the more effective you're going to communicate and the more effective you are at sensing here's what I need, and I can regulate this.

I can do this on my own or I'm not doing so good, and I need to go talk to somebody, whether it's my partner or a friend or someone in my support system, because I can't seem to regulate this too well. All of those things are really helpful to figure that out.

Meagen Gibson

I know it's incredibly overwhelming to do and to start doing that. Those first steps and the first weeks, months, years, depending on how long it takes you to get curious about that feels really overwhelming. Because it feels like there's just a floodgate you've been holding up all this time, all of these bricks and all of this mortar that you've been like, no, I will stay on the surface. I will not investigate anything deeper. So it can feel like some pretty heavy lifting, but it's really worth it.

Dr Marni Feuerman

It is, I think, to really get to that transformational place. Yes, you have to go through that. I feel for anybody who goes and starts that process, because I'm not going to lie and say that it's easy, but it is freeing. You're going to thrive both in so many ways in your life. I think if people are brave or they're brave enough to take that risk, if they don't, again, I get it.

But you're right, I think not examining that and trying to figure that out, it's just going to keep you constrained. You may have much better relationships as a result of doing it. You may find it changes so many ways. Even in a work situation, we hear about bosses trying to teach empathy to people who are in high-power CEO positions and things like that. I think that's where a lot of growth is going to happen for people, probably in so many more ways than they realize.

[00:40:42] - Meagen Gibson

Absolutely. Well, everybody needs help along the way. Where can people find out more about you and your work?

Dr Marni Feuerman

Sure. I've got a psychotherapy practice, and that's [TheTalkingSolution.com](https://www.thetalkingsolution.com). And then I also have another website called [DrMarniOnline](https://www.drMarniOnline.com) where I have some online resources, and that's where people can find me.

Meagen Gibson

Dr Marni, thank you so much for being with us today.

Dr Marni Feuerman

Sure, thank you. It's been great.