

Attracting high quality partners

Guest: Marni Battista

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Alex Howard - [00:00:09]

Welcome everyone to this interview where I'm super excited to be talking with Marni Battista. Firstly, Marni, welcome and thank you for joining me.

Marni Battista

I'm happy to be here. I love it. I love it, I told you I love being in the space of talking about what creates healthy love. And so I'm honored that you have me here, to be honest.

Alex Howard

Well, thank you. Well, we first met a week or two ago when you interviewed me for your podcast, which I really enjoyed, so it's quite fun to have the shoe on the other foot. And you got to ask me questions but I've now got a bunch of questions that I want to ask you.

So just to give people a bit of your background, Marni Battista is known as the Queen of making her clients irresistible to men in today's dating environment. Her program Dating With Dignity teaches successful women a cutting edge process based on neuroscience and authenticity to attract a partner who is an equal on the path to fulfillment. Marni is a certified professional dating and relationships coach and writer and Marni's weekly dating and relationship podcast, *The Dating Den* has more than 25,000 downloads for each episode.

Marni, I want to start at the beginning. I'm going to start throwing back to you the question that you asked me. So how did you get into the world of becoming an expert in relationships?

Marni Battista

Well, I was thinking when I interviewed you and you were talking about that fateful night and you were dating some woman and you had your little friends with benefits relationship moment, you drive off into the sunset and you're like, what was what was I doing? Basically, I was a woman laying in the bed being like, why do I keep sleeping with this guy? He's so not my person. He says he's into me but then I never hear from him. That was me over and over.

Alex Howard

If you want to know what she's talking about, my story, go check out her podcast.

Marni Battista

Exactly. So this is very 2021. It's like interactive, serial story.

So, yeah, I had a bad picker from the time I was in 8th grade. I remember, I am a writer, and I was writing the story about my first boy girl party in the basement in Iowa. And I had a crush on this boy who was a year older. And the music came on it was, remember that song? New York, London, Munich, Paris. Everybody talking about Pop Muzik that one. And so he came up and I was like, oh, my God, I think he's going to ask me to dance. And I was like all a flutter. And he was like, hey, do you want to dance? And I stood up, and then he goes, haha I just wanted your chair.

Alex Howard - [00:02:46]

What a prat.

Marni Battista

I know! Literally that was the beginning of the end. I remember that's the moment where I thought if I could make myself invisible right now, I will. I ran away. I remember him sitting on the chair, he had braces. I remember him laughing, talking to people next to him. I remember the whole moment. And I think that's where I first really decided that I wasn't enough. And as a result, I slept with people because I thought that if I slept with them, they would love me.

I married my first husband because basically he asked me out the next day after I slept with him, our romantic beginning, I was like, shit, this guy just called me. And I was with him for 17 years, and I've never felt like I could be enough. I was the one going to therapy. I was the one going to all the 12 step. What is wrong with me?

And I got divorced. And I just basically met a younger, better looking version of my husband. And I created that same pattern again. He cheated on me with a game show hostess, which was mortifying.

Alex Howard

Am I meant to laugh at that?

Marni Battista

It's so perfect, right? It's like, oh, my God, she's like, the one who turns the thing, not Vanna White.

And then I still would do drive bys. Like, oh, well if he sleeps with me then that means he likes me better. And it was a moment where I had called his ex-wife to catch him in a lie. And it was back in the day of Myspace, and I was trying to message her, and we got on the phone, and I just was really ready to talk about what a jerk he was.

And she just said, you know, I just did this work on myself, and I don't even know you, but I know that you don't deserve this and you're better than this. And this is the work that I did. And I highly recommend it. And I wish you the best. And I was just like...

Alex Howard

That wasn't expected.

Marni Battista

No, not what I wanted. I wanted to be a victim, and I wanted her to agree with me and come up with an evil plan. And that was really the beginning of my personal development journey. And I really realized that I had lost and left myself and the light in myself. And I walked out of there having healed a lot of pieces. And that was the beginning of the healing, it wasn't like, and then I was fixed.

Alex Howard - [00:05:37]

But it was when it sounds like healing became more important than just short term feeling better.

Marni Battista

100%. It's really been the guide post. I dated for 5 years, and the reason why I started my company is because, and I have an amazing husband now, we've been together for 13 years. But my mission is if I can help one person shave off 1 minute of the 42 years or whatever it was, not thinking I was enough, then my purpose here is fulfilled.

And it takes courage, really. It takes courage and a plan. And that's why I'm here. I think that's why I was put here.

Alex Howard

It takes courage and sometimes it also takes enough pain associated with the path that ones on to just go, I don't want to do that anymore.

Marni Battista

Yeah. And it makes me sad, it's true. I'm sure you all have this, and people who are listening, I just wish you wouldn't have to suffer so much to get better because you don't have to. That's the thing, don't wait until it gets so bad that you can't look at yourself in the mirror. It's so fixable, it's so solvable. It doesn't have to be hard. It actually can be, I mean, you meet amazing people. You pivot to the path that you're meant to be on. It's an alignment with who you really are. So don't fight it.

Alex Howard

Yeah. Yeah. You've done a lot of work over the years with women in the same situation that you were in. And I'm interested that, particularly, what are some of the patterns that you see that keep women stuck? That stop them from finding love? But in a sense, also making the changes they need to make to become the person they need to become to be able to find that lasting love.

Marni Battista

You know, the biggest pattern that I see is, can I curse on this show?

Alex Howard

I mean, I don't see why not.

Marni Battista

Okay. My pattern that I see the most is, well, I'm not as fucked up as I used to be. Because I think that people have that massive pain, like that big divorce or that big health scare or that big, whatever it is. And they go to therapy and they figure out where it came from and they understand everything. And they finally get right with themselves. And they're just, like, okay.

And then they start to delve into, now I want a partner. And it's so terrifying because that very thing they fought so hard for themselves becomes at risk, their safety, which is now in their own control, it's my little world, my little cozy condo.

And they don't go to the next level because they're too afraid. Because they're not as fucked up as they used to be, they're not isn't as much pain. And they convince themselves, maybe I don't need a partner, maybe I'm not meant for a partner, I'm happier this way anyway, all I need is this. And to me that, and the reason I point to that one, is because that is the pattern of very, very smart people who

are very much able to rationalize and intellectualize a way to get out of finding a life of fulfillment and meaning just because they're afraid of going back to where they were. And that limbo, that liminal space when you're conscious, is hell.

Alex Howard - [00:09:21]

What comes to mind, Marni, as you're talking is, it's almost like the breakthrough at one stage becomes the limitation at the next stage. And what I mean by that is, it's like, I'm thinking of an example of, it could be a man or a woman, but I think particularly example of women because that's what we're talking about, who has lacked strength and independence. And so has worked to cultivate these qualities of being able to be solid and be independent. But almost that pendulum swings so far that now it becomes the block to intimacy. Is that something that you see?

Marni Battista

Yeah. I know I did that in my own life. I got out of that first marriage, where I was the queen of codependent no more and I turned into a dude, basically. And I was like, I don't want to sleep over with this guy, I want to wake up in my own bed and I don't need no stinkin' man. And I created the shell around myself.

And so I think what happens is that a lot of women do that because you had to, to survive. And I totally get it. But one of my clients many years ago described it this way. She said, I feel like I'm a Tootsie Roll. Everyone sees this very hard shell. It's like I'm tantalizing, but I never stay with anyone long enough so they can get to the soft part in the middle because I'll never expose that. I'm too scared to do that. And that's the pain, that's the new pain, because when you don't really feel known or seen for who you really are, that's very, very lonely.

And also what she had said, and I think I hear this a lot too, is you feel like you're not in your own skin, like you're hiding from yourself. And that pain, yeah you're not as messed up as you used to be but over time, that pain of shutting yourself down just becomes a new pain. And we used to get used to it. And that's so tragic to me.

Alex Howard

It's almost like the harder the shell on the outside, the more tender the bit on the inside that one's trying to protect, right?

Marni Battista

Yeah. Totally 100%. I'm moving out of my house and I found this piece of paper where when I got a divorce my daughter went to this therapist, and I don't know how it ended up, but she interviewed my parents. And the question to my mom was like, what was Marni like when she was young? And my mom said, too emotional and aggressive. And I was like, and that's it. I was so emotional and I was holding it all in, I had all these feelings and I just learned to hold them all in that I just became aggressive. I was bitchy. I was selfish. I lashed out at people.

And that's the thing of we have all these feelings and there's so much that we just develop this. And we think we're hiding it, you all think you're hiding it because you look good on the outside and you present well. But when you're going on these dates, and I'm sure you can totally speak to this, and there's just a vibe. And it sets people away from you.

Alex Howard

Yeah. I think there's something that's super important about feeling that someone is emotionally available. Like you can reach someone on a heart level. And it's almost like the more layers of defense that we build up, the harder it is to reach that person.

And then it might be that one is sexually attracted and there's chemistry, but in terms of depth of relationship there has to be something that's softer that one can reach.

Marni Battista - [00:13:05]

Well, yeah. And then what happens, that's great, and then what happens is, that woman, the old version of me, finds the old version of you who's unavailable.

Alex Howard

We'd have got on great.

Marni Battista

Exactly.

Alex Howard

For about a month.

Marni Battista

For about a month. Exactly.

And so then what happens is that's why your storyline becomes, I can't get past the second or third date. Why is that when I really like someone they disappear? I can't meet any guys who meet my standards. Because you are unavailable and then you're meeting people who are unavailable, so they're not your person, so you're right. You get to be right. But that's not the limit.

When I became emotionally available, when I did that work, when I tore down the walls, I started to meet really amazing people who were flawed humans, they weren't perfect, but there was an ability to welcome that mirror. And I'm sure this is why you and your partner have this amazing marriage because you're with this person who when that mirror reflects something back, you're taking responsibility and you have these conversations, and then you grow. It's not that finding your person is like, oh, and it was butterflies and unicorns, and we never fought again.

Alex Howard

I never got the butterflies and unicorns. I feel a bit robbed.

Marni Battista

Well, I had butterflies and unicorns. But I said to my husband yesterday, because we're moving and it's so stressful, we have not been pretty with each other. And I said, I wish sometimes I didn't like you so much, because sometimes I just don't like you. But I like him, and I love him and that's the relationship that we have. And that requires vulnerability.

And so it's like, don't get stuck in settling for being better than you used to be. And that's the big lie you tell yourself, I'm not going to settle. I'm not going to settle for some guy. You are, you're settling for not having the life you know you're meant to live.

Alex Howard

We've been touching on it a little bit, but I'd love to open up a little bit more this idea of authenticity. The place that we are relating from. What we're actually showing of ourselves. How important do you think that is?

Marni Battista - [00:15:20]

Everything.

Alex Howard

So like a 5 out of 10?

Marni Battista

Yeah. Exactly. I believe that it's even deeper than authenticity. I think that our authenticity comes from this, I call it your essential self. It's like your core soul, the energetic part of you that is beyond your skin and bone. It's like your ethereal light, your vibe, your energy, this unique, beautiful thing that was put on this planet for a reason.

And when you look at, and you all know it, and I know it, we have that feeling where this feels right. And then we have that feeling where we feel off, we feel triggered, we feel annoyed, we feel like it's not right. We're living a life of should. And so the more in tune we can get with that compass of our essential self, then our behavior will be authentic. And then that is what creates that irresistible vibe that attracts that same sort of energy. So that's what people are interested in.

I do on my show an episode where we look at reality dating shows as the lab. And there's this dude, and he's like, this big, buff, super hot guy, very intimidating and very guarded. And he's having a conversation with this woman because she's saying, I'm looking for something real, and I'm really scared because I don't know if I can break through that for you. I don't know if you're that guy who wants that.

And this guy starts talking about his fears, about his own dad and about how he didn't show up for him as a kid and his mom, and he's so terrified of being that person. And he starts crying and it's just like. And they start having this deep, deep connection. And it's like that guard is down and there's this authentic moment of connection.

And so what I'm saying is, and I think, let me know what you think about this, but that's way more attractive and interesting than all his muscles and his bravado and all of that stuff, because now I'm like, wow, I really see you. And that's someone speaking from their truth. And that's what's super sexy and hot.

Alex Howard

I think there's also such a difference between the more physical chemistry which we can have with someone we don't even like, we can just have chemistry with someone. But does that mean we want to spend our life with that person? Of course, in the ideal world, we have some chemistry, and we have that deeper connection.

Marni Battista

Yes. I think I'm going to be quoting Logan Ury. I had her on my show and she wrote a book, and I'm sorry, Logan, I can't remember the name, but I know she has a chapter called *Fuck The Spark*. And she basically says, if that's how you're dating, if that's all you're looking for is the spark, especially when you're grown ass woman, you need to get over that because, I always say love is necessary, but not sufficient. And the spark is necessary, but not sufficient.

Because 13 years later, I love my husband, he's super attractive, but what I've realized, I think you and I talked about this, is someone can be a freaking supermodel, and if they're not emotionally available, they will become the most unattractive, annoying human and you will leave them. It does not matter how hot they are. We've all been in situations like that. In *How I Met Your Mother* he calls it the hot vs annoying scale. If someone becomes so annoying then doesn't matter how hot they are.

And that's the mindset is we're looking for that, we're looking for the spark. So it's like, you need to reset your compass.

Alex Howard - [00:19:23]

Yeah. Yeah. What, in your experience, helps people be more authentic? Because it takes, I guess, awareness. It also takes courage to, particularly dating, when for most people it's one of the most uncomfortable things they do. Meeting someone like, are they gonna like me? Am I going to like them? Are we going to know what to say? It's almost the most likely experience to trigger all of those masks and barriers to being authentic.

Marni Battista

So how do you be authentic? I mean, that's the bazillion dollar question.

Alex Howard

I think you have an answer.

Marni Battista

Well, I do have an answer in that way and I'm going to make it really simple. Because when someone asks me, they tell me the whole story about, he did this, and then he did that and I'm like, and they're like, no, no, but there's a story, as if the story, if I hear all the facts then I will change my mind. And I don't. Because really all I'm trying to ask is, what do you want to say?

And they're like, well, what I want to say is that I don't want to waste my time, and I really like you and I'm really scared of getting hurt. And I'm like, why don't we figure out a way to say that? But you don't understand. And I'm like, ah.

So the fastest way to your essence or your authenticity is, communication is a great laboratory for that. Write out what is it that you really, really want to say. And then write down all the reasons why you think you can't. And then ask yourself the question, how true is that really? Because most people will say, I already know what he's going to say. And that's literally impossible.

And if you're going to be intimate with someone, especially if you let him put the ding dang in the wing wang, then this verbal intimacy is, make that be okay for yourself. And then figure out a way to say that from the soft inside spot, from a place of love, not fear, a place of creation, not protection. And try it out.

And even if you're too afraid to say it, just write it out, because that will give you a clue to what that vulnerable place looks like. And then ask for help to break through all the fears and limitations that are keeping you from speaking your truth.

Alex Howard

Because we have all these, I think you're really pointing out, all these stories about what we think is going to happen. But also one of the things that's crazy is, if we do show our authentic self and that person rejects us, that's quite important to know. Because at some point we're going to have to be our authentic self.

Marni Battista

Exactly. And that's amazing. That's when you actually get to see if this person is your match. So if you're avoiding that, then your delaying, that's when you get to, I spent 6 months with this guy, then that's when you're avoiding actually a real connection. And it's not a waste of time but you're learning this lesson over and over and over and over again. You're almost retraumatizing yourself.

So we call them on our campus, box three moves because there's a whole paradigm that we use. But a box three move is, the pain or the discomfort it takes to get to your vision. There is no express bus from your pain to your vision. You're going to always have to stop in this little box three and be uncomfortable, because it's new and it's scary. I'll say it again, there is no express bus. So you're going to have to do something uncomfortable and scary and you might fall down and it's going to be messy.

When a little baby or little a toddler is learning how to walk and they pull themselves up on that coffee table and they take those first few steps and they crash, nobody goes, you suck, you should never walk again. What do we do? We go, yay good job. And the baby crawls back and starts up. And so that's what I want to say to you. It's like, do it, say it. It's messy. Maybe he doesn't want to be your person. That's awesome. You practiced with someone who it didn't matter anyway.

There's more, and the more comfortable you get, I want you to imagine everyone who's speaking on this conference going, yay good job. And crawl back and stand up and then do it again. And you're not gonna die, I promise, from speaking your truth. What you'll do is you learn the next thing you need to learn.

Alex Howard - [00:24:06]

One of the things that I found, and I think it's part of what you're speaking to here as well is that, when I changed the place from which I was dating, the place from which I was meeting women, I started to, A, meet a different type of person, but I also brought out something different in the people that I was meeting. It was almost like the more that I went into my idealized images and masks, the more they almost felt they had to do the same.

So I'm interested, in a sense, the potential that as we change ourselves, it also has an impact on others.

Marni Battista

Oh, my gosh, so much so. It sounds so try it, I wish I didn't have to say it, but it's really like, what you put out there is what you're going to get back, be the person you want to attract, all that stuff.

Look, you've all been on the bad date with the guy who shows up kind of rushed, talking about, like, oh, my God, I couldn't get a parking spot and that jerk at the thing, and I'm so sorry and oh, my God. The music is so loud. You've been on that date, right, and you're just like, whoa. You get guarded. You're like, if he's unconscious that he's judging all this, what's he thinking? We shrink.

And then you've been with people, male or female, just in a room, and you're like, wow, that person has such great energy. And you feel warm and you feel comfortable and you feel seen. And so when you're on the date, while you're in the process, you don't need to wait until you're done to go on a date, I always like to say, pick one or two small things that you can do differently and set yourself up for small wins.

So on this date what I'm going to do is I'm just going to make eye contact every once in a while. That's all I'm gonna do, I just want to go on this date and I'm gonna make eye contact. Or I'm gonna go on this date and my whole focus is, when he shares something I'm not gonna go in the future and I'm not gonna go in the past. I'm just gonna really be present in this moment, as if I'm just wanting to know the soul of this person. That's all I care about. I'm just not gonna be like, he told me that he has a lake house. Maybe one day I'll go to the lake house. No. And he tells me about and his mother. I'm like, oh, is he going to treat me that way? No, no. You're just going to be present.

So if you pick small things that you can create for yourself to practice on, it's less overwhelming and you can start to notice things and build skills. And then every date will be great because you've controlled the one thing you can control, which is yourself.

And my guess is if you pick those things, you're probably going to make the other person feel super comfortable anyway. You're going to be less worried about the outcome if they ask you out again, if he's your person forever, you're just doing your thing. And it'll shift the energy.

And I think when I tell clients to do this, they're like, oh, my God, that was just so much easier. I actually had fun.

Alex Howard - [00:27:31]

And, yet it takes, I think, almost particularly those initial steps when we've been used to doing it a certain way for a long time, it takes courage. What do you find helps someone take that little leap? What resources someone to do that, do you find?

Marni Battista

Well, you know, look, you can be motivated by pain or you could be motivated by opportunity. So you can think, really, I know this is not a fun question, but, when I have my last breath, do I want to think of all the things I didn't do because I was too afraid. If you have kids or someone that you want to be a role model to, often I talked to parents who are like, I want to model for my kids, courage. Or there's something that they value that they want a model. Find your why that really speaks to you.

And if you're a person motivated by pain, that's it. If you're the person who's, like I know I'm going to be with somebody, and I just see there's this moment, I don't see his face but this is what I need to do. And this is a step along the pathway.

Whatever it is, find it. I wish there was a shortcut. If you and I had the shortcut, we would, you know,

Alex Howard

It would be a lot easier.

Marni Battista

But really, in the end I think everything comes down to being courageous.

Alex Howard

It strikes me as you're talking as well that it comes down to a level of radical honesty. A kind of willingness to just get real with one self, rather to see it the ways that feel safe or feel convenient. Yeah. Just getting honest.

Marni Battista

That's it. And it's funny, what we do is we teach people to date with dignity and our company's Institute for Living Courageously, we're all about living courageously. And what I realized in my own journey, and you said this word radical, and that's my new word. It's like, what would it look like to be involved in a radical living challenge? That's what I'm on right now. I'm just going to do stuff that feel so radically outside my comfort zone. It's radical to my preconceived norms. I'm going to be that person.

I interviewed this guy named Rabbi Steve Leder about a book he wrote called *The Beauty of What Remains*. And it's a gorgeous book. And what he says is for most people, what they really want is when they round that last corner into their casket, they want to arrive there battered and bruised and sown back together because they lived life to the fullest. Because you are going to have wounds and heartaches and breaks and all of those things, but you will have lived your full life. And that's really it, it's like be radical. I live it so that when you do that, that last run into home base, when you slide in, you go, you know what? I did it all. And I left no stone left unturned. And to me that's a meaningful life.

Alex Howard - [00:31:07]

How important is dating strategy? Like online dating vs creating opportunity of going to events, or blind dates. How important is the strategy one uses to meet someone?

Marni Battista

That is such a fun question. Strategy is everything. But without authenticity, strategy is nothing. Because I can teach you my strategy and you show up like the Tootsie Roll it doesn't matter. Because it just won't work.

But what I really want to share is that there is 100% a strategy to online dating. It's basically marketing and branding, but it's doing it 2021 style, which means that you have ethics and you have to be in integrity because we want to be the brands that we trust. And there's a way to write your profile that will make it stand out. And you want to have photographs that evoke a certain truth and reflection of who you really are, because so many people, their photos are not.

Alex Howard

Often their photos are the way they want everyone to see them, as opposed to who they actually are.

Marni Battista

Yes. Or also your best friend told you she loves that flower dress. No, not online.

Also, most people's photos, their eyes are dead. Like they're not in their authentic self. They're like, right or whatever. So we see ladies who have amazing photos that they took, they paid the most expensive photographer, they have beautiful clothes and they're like, right. And then we do work with them, and then we work with them to get the photos taken and all these things. And it's like, oh, my gosh, she looks 20 years younger and 10lbs lighter and nothing changed. You're not wearing a print top.

Alex Howard

But also you can over produce as well. If a dating profile looks so slick, it lacks the vulnerability that often makes us attractive.

Marni Battista

Well, absolutely. And I think, yes. I recommend professional photos, but there is a totally different vibe of that really stilted, false, over made up, dressed in something that you think men really want to look at. It's like a pet peeve. Because I look at people's profiles and I'm just like, you wonder why it's not working for you, it's obvious.

Or your profile, so dating strategy, your profile is a reflection of everything you don't want, all your hurts. I bet if you and I sat down and we looked at three profiles, we could just say the dating history of each person.

Alex Howard

That would be fun. We should totally do that one evening.

Marni Battista

Yeah, exactly. They dated a rich guy. They dated a broke guy. They dated this guy. They're really busy. They're very career driven. They care what other people think. It's just so obvious. I call it leaking.

And so you want to write your profile in a way that paints a picture for a guy to be like, wow, this person, being with this person would be like, amazing. We have the same things in common.

I think the other thing that people do, which is a huge mistake in their strategy, is they're trying to get everybody so they get nobody. Because if you're a guy and you dated online, how many of you said, I love to dress up and I also like to go for walks on the beach, freaking everybody. And who cares?

So what I love is that when you narrow, have your profile be a reflection of your top five core values. And don't be afraid, but then what if a guy isn't into the environment? Well, environment is your top deal breaker, then you don't care about the guy who drives the Mercedes. You want the guy who is really into a green life. And those things sound silly, but they're not if that's something you really, really care about, that's important.

What I don't want you to care about, which I've heard is how many books does he read? Because I had someone who said, if a guy doesn't know how to properly set the table, I would not date him. We talked about this on an episode the other day about ways sabotage happens online. Like, oh, he has a typo on his profile, I would never date him.

So there's just a bunch of things that y'all are doing that is making it harder than it needs to be. And what I will say is if you have the authenticity and strategy, dating is easy and fun and efficient.

Alex Howard - [00:36:03]

It's so funny as you were talking about the kind of narrowing I was like, putting in business terms, you're talking niche, aren't you, or niching, as you call it in the States. It's like, you've got to pick a niche. And it makes sense.

Marni Battista

It does. I had someone I interviewed once, oh, God, I love her, she was so naïve. She was like, I have three kids and I keep dating these men that get turned off by the fact that I'm busy with my kids or they don't want to come watch soccer games or whatever. And I was like, well, do you have it in your profile that you have kids, that family is really important to you? And she was like, well, no, that would obviously turn off a bunch of men. I'm trying to cast a wide net. And I was like, okay, honey, well, that's why you're meeting people who aren't family guys. You need to redo your profile so that it's about family. Whether you have kids or not we both love being able to spend our time going to the soccer game and then getting a babysitter and, you know, blah, blah, blah, blah, whatever. Or whatever it's going to be.

Don't try and get everyone, you just want your one. You only need one, for the context of this conversation, you're only looking for one.

Alex Howard

Yeah. It's so interesting, isn't it? I love what you're saying that it's awareness and its strategy. Sorry, its authenticity and its strategy. Because you can see how people would be all about strategy and not have the authenticity, or people would do all that inner work but they have a crap strategy. You've got to have those two pieces together.

Marni Battista

You do. And it's amazing when people come to me and they're like, I already did the inner work, and I'm like, great, I'm not your coach. Go hire the online dating coach or go hire someone to write your profile. I think you're wrong, but go for it. I'm not here to argue.

And I talked to those people that have done all these things and they're like it's not working. I'm like, well, come into my office.

Alex Howard - [00:38:00]

So, Marni, I love the idea of looking at the dating profiles and working out, it really appeals to my inquisitive, curious nature.

If you were to leave people with a couple of really simple places to start, we'll talk in a minute how people can find out more about you and your work, and that's obviously a place they can get deeper in, but a couple of simple starting points. What would you say?

Marni Battista

Okay, two things. One is, I call it the judgment journal, and it doesn't have to be a journal, you can do it on your phone, but I want you, just for 7 days, keep track of every time you have a judgmental thought about yourself or others and note it. And within probably 48 hours, you'll be like, oh, my goodness, I'm so judgmental for myself and others. And that's the awareness.

So if you do that for 7 days you will have the answer to why things aren't working for you because you're not loving yourself and you're judging other people. And that, hopefully, we'll give you enough pain or the ability to see the possibility, because when you get out of that, then you could imagine how your whole life will be different. So that's number one.

And number two is, I call it the the 30 interaction challenge, which means put your phone down and start interacting with people and flirt with life, as my friend Kim says. Talk to the barista, have a conversation with the guy at the gas station when you're paying for your gas. Start practicing being you, authentically you, interacting with people without any attachment to outcomes or rejection or any of those things. Do that 30 times and see how much more joy you have in your day.

Alex Howard

That's awesome. I love that.

Marni, for people that want to find out more about you and your work, what's the best way to do that? And what can they find?

Marni Battista

They can go to datingwithdignity.com and they will find our podcast, they will find a lot of very specific and juicy blogs with some tips and some tricks, as they say, and more about how we could work together.

Alex Howard

Awesome. Marni, this has been so much fun. Thank you so much for your time.