

## Ep #20: Our Favorite Us



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With Your Host

Melissa Parsons

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Hey, this is Melissa Parsons, and you are listening to the *Your Favorite You Podcast*. I'm a certified life coach with an advanced certification in deep dive coaching. The purpose of this podcast is to help brilliant women like you with beautiful brains create the life you've been dreaming of with intention.

My goal is to help you find your favorite version of you by teaching you how to treat yourself as your own best friend. If this sounds incredible to you and you want practical tips on changing up how you treat yourself, then you're in the right place. Just so you know, I'm a huge fan of using all of the words available to me in the English language, so please proceed with caution if young ears are around.

Melissa: Hello everybody and welcome back to *Your Favorite You*. I have a very special guest today. He is a real-life superhero. He is one of my very favorite human beings on the planet since 1995, and he is actually my second favorite person in the world. My first favorite person, if you guys have been listening to this podcast at all, is me, but Jon is a close second and he agreed to come on the podcast today. Actually, he really wanted to be on the podcast today, if he's being honest, and I think it's totally apropos that the episode is going to air on Valentine's Day 2023. Exactly one week after this hottie turned fifty-one years young. Would you like to introduce yourself?

Jon: Sure. First of all, I have to give a shout out to my assistant for getting me booked on this world-class podcast. She must know somebody to get me get me in. But yeah, you know, I'm Jon Parsons. I'm a pulmonary critical care physician for almost 25 years now. And I have an executive leadership role at the hospital I work at, and I've been... sort of a willing participant in many of the coaching journeys that Melissa has had. And I'm also a person that has participated personally in coaching myself and got a lot of benefit out of it. So, this is a real treat to be here.

Melissa: Thank you, babe. Do you want to say anything else about you? There's so much more to you than just being a doctor.

Jon: Yeah, I... sure. You know, we have two boys. They're almost 21 and almost 18. And Barney, our Labradoodle. And you know, I love to work out

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and stay fit. I love to garden. I love to cook. I love to read. Yeah, that's, yeah, that's a good start.

Melissa: Okay, well, let's get down to business. I'm going to channel my inner Erin Burnett, so get ready. I've got my papers here and I'm hitting them against the desk. So, okay, given the title of this podcast, you've kind of already said, but please tell me about *Your Favorite You*.

Jon: Wow. That's a heavy opening question there.

Melissa: You're welcome.

Jon: You know? Yeah. So, I'll be honest, I think the reason why I got into coaching or being coached myself was because I wasn't really fond of myself. I was very successful externally. If you looked at what I was doing, I've done amazingly well at my job and, you know, I have a beautiful family and we're not lacking for anything.

But I still, I struggled, you know, valuing who I was as a person and always had some degree of impostor syndrome and self-doubt. And so, through the coaching journey, I've gotten to a place, now, where I actually like what I see and when I think of myself. I still have a lot of work to do, but I'm fairly comfortable in my own skin for the first time in fifty years.

Melissa: Okay. You weren't supposed to make me cry on the first question, but you did. So, bravo. I love you. Okay. A little lighter question. Tell me, what is something about me that you know that other people might not?

Jon: Melissa, you are... everything about you is right there. I mean, there's not... I mean, there's nothing about you that you hide from other people. Everyone. You are very genuine. And what you see is what you get. And there's nothing behind the scenes that is different in my opinion, you know, which is why I think why people gravitate to you and your podcast. And what you've done has resonated with so many people is because it's authentic and there's no bullshit.

Melissa: I receive that. You're making me cry again.

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Jon: Well, let's try to get through a few questions without crying. How's that sound? Okay?

Melissa: I can't promise anything. Okay.

Jon: For the love of God, please.

Melissa: No, no. Make it stop. Okay. What is something about you that not many people know that you're willing to share?

Jon: Wow. You know, my external persona at my job and, not as much as at home, but mostly in my job. And my job is a very busy, you know, position is, I seem to always have it figured out. I know what to do. I make decisions confidently. I seem externally to, you know, go figure it all out really well. But the reality is, when I make decisions, I often, not as much as I used to, but I would second-guess myself and would have regret and worry about what people thought of what I did. And it was consuming. My job is making lots and lots of decisions, not just in direct patient care, but also in managing operations at a very large academic medical center.

And so, I make hundreds of decisions a day. And when you are constantly second-guessing yourself, you get yourself into a rut.

Melissa: So good. Thanks for sharing, babe. Prior to coaching, what would you say was the biggest problem in our relationship, in our marriage?

Jon: How much time do I have?

Melissa: [laughs] Thank you. Shout out to Maggie Reyes.

Jon: You know, I've got to be honest. You know, I felt like our marriage was great. And it was! But now, where we are now as a couple and as a team, and as a partnership, I look back and I realize that we had a lot of room to improve. We would get into each other's lanes a lot. We would expect the other to live their lives according to the manual that we had written for them.

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And we would fight. Nothing worrisome kind of thing. But there were our constant bickering and arguments to the point where sometimes once we made up, we would say like, "Oh my God. Our kids are never going to want to come home and spend any time with this bullshit." So, I think those are the big ones. We also... it was amplified a lot of times by drinking and, you know, we just weren't thinking clearly.

And so, that would accelerate and amplify our arguments to the point where, you know, a lot of times we would sleep separately and then it would spill into the next day where there was never any kind of resolution. So, you know, there were periods of time where we were constantly butting heads.

Melissa: Mm-hmm. In a rut. Yeah. And I would say, just so everybody knows what he's talking about. As you know, and I've shared on the podcast before, you know, I am a control enthusiast, recovering, and, you know, we both had jobs where, you know, we would go to work and for the most part, you know, we were the ones giving the orders, and people were looking to us for the answers, and you know, and then we would come home and both have that persona at home and expect for the people to fall in line, the people, each other, and our kids, and that type of thing.

And my marriage coach, Maggie Reyes, who I've talked about ad nauseam before on the podcast, and who is still my mindset coach to this day, said to me one day, "You know, Melissa, it seems like you're not, like, you're in one lane driving your car and Jon is in another lane driving his car." And she's like, "And you're not just like shouting instructions about him, how to drive the car. You're, like, reaching over the lane trying to grab the wheel, hitting the brake for him."

You know that type of thing. So, you know, we have this system now where whenever we're getting into one another's lane,

Jon: Boop! Boop!

Melissa: Yeah, we're like, "Beep, beep. You're in my lane." And "Get out of my lane." And instead of it making it into an argument, you know, we now

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laugh about it. And for the most part, I mean, still there are times—I don't want anyone to get the idea that we don't get into arguments and that we don't have shitty days with each other because we do, because we're human.

But we laugh about things that we used to fight about way more often. The fights that we used to have that would last for days of, you know, being hurt and silent with each other, and that type of thing. You know, they just, they don't even last for hours anymore. Like, it's remarkable how much time we have getting along instead of how much time we used to spend trying to, you know, make up, and get better, and that type of thing.

Jon: So, yeah, I would add one thing, you know. We don't really yell at each other anymore.

Melissa: I know!

Jon: In a case—what's that?

Melissa: I said, I know, right? Isn't it crazy?

Jon: I mean, in the very, very rare times where I find myself yelling, I'm like, "What the fuck am I doing?" Like, I don't even recognize. Why am I yelling at her? I just.. we just stop. And then, you know, we apologize very much more readily than we used to. And there's no blame or, you know, there's no, like, book that we owe. "I got you for next time when you piss me off. I got this to use. Remember that on time January 14th when you said this? Well, go fuck yourself."

Yeah. We don't have that book anymore.

Melissa: Yeah. We kind of burned that book, and we're not keeping score. And I would add that we apologize more readily, and we forgive each other more readily, too.

Jon: Mm-hmm.

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Melissa: Like, it's just, like, "Oh yeah, sorry, I wasn't being my favorite me. That isn't how I want to handle this going forward."

Jon: And one additional point on that, just I think, is when you said that, I never really was very good at forgiving myself about anything.

Melissa: Mm-hmm.

Jon: And through coaching, I've learned to accept that I'm not perfect. And I'm going to fuck things up sometimes and that might result in me making a mistake in the way I handle something at work or at home. And then I need to forgive myself and then apologize and not be afraid of what that person's going to think. "Oh, this guy's an asshole."

Melissa: Mm-hmm.

Jon: So, I know when I'm not on my game at home that you don't hold it against me any anymore. In my brain. Like, and I was worried. So, it's just another skill that I've acquired. I'm not perfect at it by any stretch, but I'm much better at it than I used to be.

Melissa: I agree, babe. I'll give you all the props in the world. So much better. Thank you for doing the work with me, and on yourself too. Okay. Be honest. You've said, "I'll be honest" this whole, like, three times already. So, I'm giving you permission to be honest with this one.

Jon: Oh boy.

Melissa: What did you initially think when I started signing up for coaching? What were your thoughts?

Jon: Signing up to be coached or be a coach?

Melissa: Be coached. Like when I first signed up with Katrina Ubell for weight loss, for doctors only.

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Jon: I was happy for you. I, you know, you were in a place where you weren't happy about yourself; you didn't like the way you looked. You didn't like the way you felt, and it spilled into everything you did.

And I was very happy for you. And you know, quite frankly, I didn't know anything about coaching at that point in time. And you worked with Katrina and you lost a lot of weight, and you did it on your own. And you know, I participated by figuring out what I was going to make you for dinner. But you basically did that.

So, I didn't really have any idea what it meant to be coached at that point in time. All I did was watch you feel better about yourself and so to me, I'm like, "I don't know what these fucking people are doing and coaching, but my wife has lost all this way and she feels great. So, whatever it is, I'm all in."

Melissa: Yeah. Which kind of led me to spending the next time in coaching with Maggie, which was... you and I had talked and you were not so excited about us going to marriage therapy.

Jon: No, I was not.

Melissa: Why not? Do you mind sharing?

Jon: Because I've viewed that, in my brain at the time, as I was a failure, and I didn't want to admit. And so, a compromise was, at the time, was to work with Maggie. And you know, I love Maggie, too. I mean, she's never coached me directly. She coached, I mean, you, and we had assignments that we worked on through her initial coaching with us, but I love her. And she really was the one that I finally realized that made a difference in my brain about what coaching is about.

Melissa: Mm. She's going to love to hear that because she is definitely #TeamJon and she loves you, too. So, yeah. But I mean, I think making that other investment initially, do you remember you were like, "Oh my God. Another five thousand, Melissa? This is ridiculous."

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Jon: I don't think I said it quite like that. I think there were other words involved. But yeah. And I remember sitting on the bed and, and it was like, and you came with this assignment and I was like, "What the fuck am I doing here?"

Melissa: Yeah. But I want to give you huge props and appreciation because you were willing to do that. I have so many friends and clients, and that type of thing, whose husbands are like, "No, I don't want to do this."

And you know, Maggie asked me, you know, she told me—the first book that you and I read together was called *Making Marriage Simple*, and we'll link it in the show notes. It's by a married couple Hendrix and La Kelly Hunt, and it's a little bit hokey. But the readings and the assignments, like, really brought us closer together. And Maggie invited me to invite you to participate, and you were all in.

Jon: Well, I was used to being told what to do, so...

Melissa: [Laughs] No, that is true. Okay. So, prior to me inviting Jon, Maggie gave me the coaching of this "cannot be a demand. You cannot say to him, 'you must read this book with me or else.'" It must be a request." So, it would delight me *if* we could read this book together and try the exercises and, you know, let's just see if it helps. And he delighted me by saying yes.

Jon: I saw how much it meant to you. And most, I want to say, I can't say every guy, but most guys or most partners, when they see that their partner is something very, very important to them, we're going to do it? I would, I hope that would be the case, but maybe it's not, but that was my thought process. Like I could see in your eyes how much this meant to you. And so, I'm like, "Okay, fine. Yeah, let's try it."

Melissa: And it was so fun... you can't see his face, but he is like—

Jon: It was necessary work. And I say, hey, I was... you know, it wasn't arduous. It wasn't painful; it wasn't fun. And when you're working on something to make it better, like, if you're in the gym, you're trying to get

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stronger. You're trying to lose weight and you're trying to get more fit, sometimes it's a little bit tough.

And you've got to go through that process to better yourself. And I think that's what happened. And then I wasn't dreading, like, we would get into it and I wouldn't dread it as much as I did initially. And then it became pretty, "All right, we got to do our thing today, okay."

Melissa: Mm-hmm. Yeah. And we actually looked forward to the appreciations. I can remember one of the assignments that Maggie gave us was to start sharing three appreciations that we had about each other, and that they had to be three different appreciations every day. And, I can remember you coming home from work, you know, taking a shower and you know, getting ready to cook dinner, or after dinner or whatever, and you saying, "I'm ready for my appreciations now."

So, it got to the point where you were excited.

Jon: Appreciate me. Now.

Melissa: That's not how it goes. That's not how it went, but anyway. Okay. What do you think has been the biggest change that you've seen in me because of coaching?

Jon: Wow. Um... I mean, you, and this is sort of a meme or, you know, you'd see on an Instagram reel or something, but like your ability to make a decision is so much better than it used to be. I would just like, "Oh my God, where do you want, what do you want for dinner? Where do you want to go out to eat? Do you want the... what color do you...?"

I mean, this was, like, this never-ending ordeal about making decisions and now, and this is my experience, is you're much more confident. You just, you figure out what you think you want, and you just, "Okay, we're going to do it." And then if it doesn't work out, it doesn't work out. Or if it isn't, what, the perfect way you thought it was going to be, then it's okay. And your curiosity and your courage to do things that you might never have done after, like, "Hey, do you want to go do, do this?"

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Like, I mean, you're not afraid to do anything at this point in time. I mean, you just, it's in admirable. I mean, sometimes I'm jealous of how curious and courageous you can be when you think about doing stuff. So.

Melissa: That's awesome. And I mean, I think that it comes from, you know, before I used to think that there was a right answer, and if I didn't get the right answer, I would spend so much time beating myself up for having gotten it wrong.

Jon: Well, you were looking for the perfect solution to everything because you're a perfectionist.

Melissa: Mm-hmm.

Jon: And if you didn't have the playbook with a perfect outcome, you oftentimes struggled to get off the block and do anything.

Melissa: Mm-hmm. So true. Okay. Awesome. Tell me why you decided to per pursue getting a coach and being coached.

Jon: Yeah, well, some of that I've talked about already. I wasn't really... I realized after watching you go through your transformation, and then working with Maggie, that I had a lot of, how am I going to say it.. I had a lot of issues—I still have a lot of issues—but I had a lot of challenges in my brain that I needed to work through.

You know, then Covid hit. And in my job, you know, I was in charge of basically running a lot of the covid operations and a covid response for our academic medical center. And I was working seven days a week. Seven sixteen to eighteen hours a day. Never stopped and seeing some terrible things. So, I became burned out and depressed and was probably... I was buffering with alcohol too much, and eating shitty food, and I felt terrible. And you know I just realized that this is not sustainable for me.

So, we found Dex. Melissa helped me find Dex. Dex Randalls was my coach for, and still is, and will always be, so I started working with him a couple years ago and here I am.

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Melissa: Yes, thank you Dex. We will link to Dex's website in the show notes, too. He's helped so many of our physician friends and colleagues beat burnout, too. So, we'll forever be grateful to him, too. Okay. Awesome. One of our listeners, who knows and loves both of us, would like your thoughts about what you might share with other doctor dads, or dads in high-stress jobs, about how to better handle the pressure of all the competing, rather, demands for your attention.

Jon: Yeah, that's really, it still remains a challenge, but I decided that I'm whatever I'm going to do, I'm going to do whatever is in my best interest first. I take care of myself first, and if I don't take care of myself, all the rest of it doesn't matter. And so, if I feel myself being stressed out or overextended, I need to take some time to myself.

And learned some strategies to do that. And then I would also say that when you're in those types of jobs, that a lot of times you're looking ahead and wondering what's going to come next, and then you're looking behind you about what you did, and you can't control any of that shit. What happened, happened, and what's going to happen, you have no control over to some degree. All you really have is right now. And to keep your brain in the present is what I've really tried to do much more readily and not worry about what's coming next or what happened last week, or.... And I think that those two approaches for me have helped quite a bit to manage the stress.

And then I was a people pleaser as well. And when you're a people pleaser, you say yes and you never say no. So, I've been asked to do lots of things in the last eighteen months and I've said no to a lot of them. Because I'm like, "I don't have time for that. Sorry, I'm not going to do that."

Melissa: Yes. Like, every yes that you say to someone else is a no that you're saying to yourself.

Jon: Yeah, because you get to a place where there isn't enough time in the day to do the things that you need to do to keep yourself healthy. That's physical, fitness, mental work, meditation, rest, sleep, all of it. And if you continue to say yes to other people, there's no expansion of twenty-four hours a day. Something gets lost.

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Melissa: Mm-hmm.

Jon: You know, and ninety-nine times out of a hundred, it's something that you're supposed to be doing for yourself to make yourself the best you can be and that's what happens to people. So, I stopped doing that. And you know, I've got invited to go to different conferences and give, you know, talks. And I didn't tell Melissa this, but I got invited to go to Hawaii this fall to give a—

Melissa: WHAT?!

Jon: Yeah. and I said no.

Melissa: You hear that? He's denying me a trip to Hawaii, folks.

Jon: Oh. Oh, I don't have time for that right now.

Melissa: I love you. Even if we don't go to Hawaii, although I do—

Jon: Hey, you're basically on a two-month vacation schedule or trip schedule, so, I don't want to hear anything outta you.

Melissa: I'm teasing you, babe. Yeah, that's so good. And then I want to point out something that you said that I think is interesting, because you know, staying in the present moment and not worrying about the future while also still having goals that for the future that you're working toward. Like those are two different things and I think people get tripped up when they think that they have to stay in the present moment.

It's like, no, we're not saying that you can't have goals and aspirations for yourself. That's not it at all, but...

Jon: Well, if I said that then I certainly did not mean that. Because I have a lot of goals. And you know, Dex would tell you that when I, he and I would talk about what my goals were and when I would look at them, I would be terrified of them. Like, "Well, I can't do that. Oh, that's too hard."

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And it's so much safer for you to stay where you are because you know what you're doing, but it also doesn't allow you to explore new things. So, yes. I think the anxiety of the future is what I was talking about.

Melissa: Right.

Jon: About like, "What if I go do, try to do something, and it doesn't work out? What's going to happen to me?" So, people oftentimes stay where they are.

Melissa: Right. Yeah, I definitely understood what you were saying, but I think a lot of the people that listen to the podcast who haven't had coaching might not. So I just wanted to clarify that, and you did so beautifully. So, thank you.

Jon: You've always clarified things for me. Thank you, honey. So.

Melissa: Just in case he wasn't clear, let me tell you what he really meant.

Jon: Yeah.

Melissa: All right. All right. Okay. What do you think has changed most about our marriage? I know we tapped into it a bunch, but is there anything else you want to share with the listeners of *Your Favorite You* that's changed about our marriage?

Jon: Sure. I mean, I think we're much better friends. I mean, we've always been great friends, but I think I respect you and... I've always respected you, but what you're doing and your life, and I respect that you have your own path, and I'm a, you know, a co-pilot on your path and you're a co-pilot on mine. And we are together because we love each other, and, but we also know that we're humans that have our own thoughts. And it's okay for us to have our own lives and do our own thing.

So you're off traveling a bunch at these, you know, masterminds and coaching conferences, and I'm doing my thing and it's very nice to know that we can have that. Not a boundary. It sounds like... it's not an active

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boundary, but we just respect each other's life path a little bit better than we did before.

Melissa: Mm-hmm. Yeah. So, good. Okay. What do you think has changed about our parenting of our lovely young adult children?

Jon: You know, that's a good question. You know, when your kids are young, you worry about them. About everything in the world that could happen to them. And as they get older, you realize that you have no fucking control over 99 percent of what's going to happen to them.

Melissa: Mm-hmm.

Jon: So, you can spend all your life trying to be the snowplow in front of them, you know, plowing the road so they can drive up in a much more safe, you know, journey. Or you can give them the skill set. To say, "This is how you do it, and go for it."

So, you know, Jack is going to be twenty-one years old and he'll be going into his senior year in college, and I don't worry about him at all. He's a good human being. He's an empathetic human being and a fantastic person. And Owen is the same. And so, but they're totally different. But they are... that core foundation of who they are really is strong. And so, that's all that really matters to me. Whatever they end up doing. That core foundation of being empathetic, sensitive, and giving to others, generous is really what is important.

I will say that I watch, you know this very well. I can't stand to watch how other parents parent their children. I will tell you, you know, and this became, you know, when Jack was playing competitive sports, I could not even be around these people in the stands because their entire existence, of their identity as adults, as parents, were wrapped up in the successes of their children.

And it wasn't really about the kids' experience. It was about how the kids, what they were doing, made their parents look or feel. It was gross. And so, you know, that I have zero technological skills, but I volunteered to be the

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video guy on the top of the bleachers where there was—I was the only guy up there so I didn't have to listen to that bullshit of how their kids are going to get a scholarship and play for the, you know, World Cup team.

That was a long answer, but you can see I've got a lot more there if you want it.

Melissa: I just want to point out how, like, when you ask our boys what they want to be, you know, who they want to be, they both say dads. And I think that is a huge shout out to you for what an awesome dad you are to them. So, thank you for being an awesome dad to them.

Jon: Thank you.

Melissa: All right. Let's see. Okay. Is there anything that is scaring you right now about our lives?

Jon: Holy shit. Yeah. I mean, I would say, if I want to be perfectly transparent, the curiosity and the courage and the adventurous spirit that you have... now you think you're, like, a fucking real estate developer. And so we're talking, you know, about equity in our house to buy another house. And we've got Alyssa, who is Melissa's coach that's working with her in terms of this aspect of her life.

And I just, I told you both, Melissa and Alyssa, that I can't be involved in this. Because I would lose taking care of myself. I can't watch this happen because I don't want to be anxious about the details, and all the stuff that requires that you're going to have to do to make this work. You come and let me know what's going on when there's a large decision to be made. But I was self-protecting. Like, I can't... I don't want to hear the details. You just, I trust you. If I end up living on the street, that's your fault, but that's okay. That's probably the biggest one, to be honest with you.

Oh, and then you're so adventurous, and you want to go a lot of places. And you've, fortunately, unfortunately, you've passed that trade on to my children who now want to go to, like, "Hey, let's go to Bora Bora. Let's go to, you know, Thailand. Let's go to—let's take a European vacation."

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And I'm like, "Okay, well let me go to sell and plasma to pay for this." So...

Melissa: You're welcome, babe. All right. Couple more questions. Are you ready?

Jon: Sure.

Melissa: What are you super excited about going forward now that we're almost empty nesters?

Jon: I think some calm and peace in the house, to be honest. More quiet for me. It's never, it's always, you know, the boys are big, and they have got a lot, a large friend group, and it's like a herd of bull elephants running around the house a lot of the time. Which is great. It's awesome. It's great, but it's a lot.

And I'm looking forward to a period of some tranquility and peace where I can come home, and it's quiet. And then I'd like to travel with you to go do some things that might not be, you know, family trips. Like, where the kids are not going to go. And maybe just the two of us do a few more things on our own that we haven't done as much because our kids want to be with us, so.

Melissa: Okay. Sounds good. I'm all in, babe. Let's do it.

Jon: I knew you would be.

Melissa: All right. What are you most proud of about yourself?

Jon: Wow. I'm proud of myself because now I'm comfortable in my own skin. And I don't look back very often and judge myself for what I was before, or decisions I've made, or things I've said, or situations that I've experienced in the past where I regret handling it the way I did. And I'm not as courageously excited about the future as you are, but I am exponentially more than I used to be, and so, I'm looking at some other opportunities at my workplace for some additional, you know, jobs and things. And I'm

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excited about maybe trying some new hobbies. I'd like to buy some kayaks. I would like to fish more. Some things for myself.

Melissa: I love it. I love it. I love it. Okay. I know that several people have reached out to you about your experience with coaching. What would you tell someone if they were considering it? I know you've already talked to people, and they've listened to you and hired coaches, and have been exponentially, you know, grateful to you. But if someone's listening now, what would you tell them if they were considering it.

Jon: Yeah, I mean, I think that's, I mean, I could talk about this for a while. The irony of this is striking. When I first was going through coaching with you, you know, I have a very healthy cynicism gene, and I was like, "What the fuck am I doing here?" And then I fast forward and then I was selling coaching to a lot of my partners at work that were a mess.

That no one wouldn't, like—and I would freely say, "Hey, listen. I've got a coach." And I wouldn't hide the appointments on my calendar from my assistant. And she would say like, "What is this burnout?" I'm like, "It's my coach." And I would tell my boss, "I have a coach." And he'd be like, "You have a coach?"

Melissa: Mm-hmm.

Jon: Yeah. And so, I would start to sell this idea to people at work, and then some of them signed up for coaching and gleaned a lot of benefits. And I think the biggest thing for me to pass on, and then I'm going to talk to the guys out there, is there's this stigma for guys to ask for help, you know.

It's hard when you first consult for the first time. You're talking to your coach and you're learning what they're going to, what they're proposing, how they can work with you. But, it's anxiety provoking and scary, and it's a little bit emasculating and humiliating, potentially, but there are so many guys out there that could benefit from signing up with a coach.

So, I think that's what I would say is that, you know, it's nothing to be afraid of. And once you get into it, you realize how beneficial it is and then you

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sort of pay it forward to others. And I think that's what I've done, which makes me proud that I've been able to. You know, in my profession, I help people all the time, but that in that way, it's a little different kind of help that you give people.

Melissa: Mm-hmm.

Jon: And then they're, you know, they're eternally grateful most of the time for getting them plugged in.

Melissa: Yeah. What I'm hearing you say is that everyone deserves a coach.

Jon: Yeah, I think that's right. I mean, I think there's always aspects of yourself that... so having someone else take a look at it and helping you work through some of those things is a zero-lose proposition and it can be of amazing benefit.

Melissa: Mm-hmm. And then, I'm also hearing you say that the ripple effects of me signing up for coaching, and then you signing up for coaching, and, like, all the people.

Jon: Owen is signing up for coaching.

Melissa: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. I mean, it's been an incredible opportunity for everybody in our family and so grateful that I was the one who went first. But you know, everybody else has been willing to ask for coaching. And it's funny because, although Jack hasn't been formally coached by anyone, he will text me and say, "I need coaching," or "My friend needs coaching," or "My girlfriend needs coaching." You know, that type of thing.

So, the whole family has bought in on this idea that it's helpful to help to have another human see you for who you are in your amazingness, and also help you point out your blind spots, because we all have 'em. Like, it's like, nothing wrong with that.

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Jon: I'll ask really quickly add that, I mean, there's not, when you say you need coaching, there's so much that it could mean. Like, you worked with Katrina for your body image and then we worked with Maggie for our relationship. And then I work with Dex about being burned out. And you work with Maggie for, you're still working with Maggie, and then I'm working with Jess Jonson. Now she's going to help me with my, you know, I still struggle with sometimes getting stuck in the mud with my anxious thoughts and I need to be able to figure out ways to manage those in the short, like, in the moment a little bit better.

So there's little aspects of your life that you could find someone that could help you.

Melissa: Mm-hmm. Yeah, and I mean, we haven't even talked about business coaching. I mean, my business coaching through 2K and 200K with Stacey Boehman has, like, helped me exponentially grow my business way faster than I think I would've been able to do without some guidance from someone who had done it before me. So—

Jon: Your show notes are going to be real long here, lemme tell you. Like twelve shoutouts here.

Melissa: It's all right. We want to give props to all the people. It's nothing wrong with it. This is how the ripple effect keeps going, babes.

Jon: You need to start selling ad space in your show notes.

Melissa: No. Okay. One of the objections that I get about coaching is when a woman says that she wants to ask her husband about investing in coaching, which I completely understand, because initially I asked you if I could spend money on myself for coaching. Do you mind if I share that story real quick of hiring Katrina? Do you remember it?

Jon: Yeah, go. I thought this was like no-holds barred. I mean, go ahead.

Melissa: Katrina was doing a webinar and, when you do a webinar, you know, to teach something and then you talk about the coaching. And then

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the last part is to try to sell people to belong to the group. And it was a night where you were in the ICU, I think, and you were exhausted. And she was teaching still, and you were like, "I'm going to go to bed."

And I said, "Well, you know, I'm really excited about this. If it's not crazy pricing, then I'm going to go for it." And, you know, she gets to the price, and it was \$5,000 for six months. And I was, you know, for a pediatrician, \$5,000, and really for anyone, is a lot of money. And so, you were already asleep, and I went in and poked you, and I said, "It's \$5,000." And you were like, "Whatever. It's fine." And you rolled over, and I was like, "Oh, that was easier than I thought." Whatever. It's fine.

So, I go, and I put my numbers of our Visa in there, and then the next morning, you woke up, and you saw the alert on your phone. And you were like, "Five thousand dollars!" And I was like, "I told you. You were asleep!" And you didn't remember me waking you up at all?

Jon: No, I think I remembered. I think, when you see the, when you see the alert from Chase Bank on your phone and it's \$5,000, it's a little, you know, it was a little.... Uh... you don't know... A lot of people don't know what coaching costs, like the investment.

Melissa: Right.

Jon: So, you don't know. It's like when you ask, you know, someone to come remodel your house. "Well, how much is it going to cost me?"

Melissa: Mm-hmm.

Jon: And so there's no frame of reference for a lot of people what the market is and what it does cost. Right? So, that was my first experience with it. Now, \$5,000 sounds like a fucking bargain.

Melissa: It is a fucking bargain. So, yeah, I always tell this to people on the consult when they say, you know, "I'm worried, you know, I didn't have that much budgeted for this." And I'm like, "Listen, the only people who have money budgeted for coaching are people who have reaped the benefits of

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coaching. So, no harm, no foul. If you don't have the money budgeted, like figure it out and, you know, learn how to budget it for next time."

Anyway, I think it was a few weeks into my second experience with coaching, which was with Maggie, as we've said. Marvelous Maggie. And initially you were hesitant for me to spend another \$5,000 on the marriage coaching, even though you saw all the progress, like you said, that you had made, that I had made in my work with Katrina and in that group.

Anyway, a few weeks into coaching with Maggie, she was thrilled when you said, "We need to give Maggie more money." You were like, "I'm not sure what voodoo she's working on you, but we owe her more than 5k." And she was so delighted when she heard that you were delighted with the changes. So, what would you tell the husband of a woman or the spouse? I guess we can be inclusive here, of a woman, who is considering coaching

Jon: For marriage coaching or partnership coaching?

Melissa: Any coaching!

Jon: Well, I would say a couple of things. One is the person who's being coached has to be willing. They can't do it against their will. I mean, they have to be invested to some degree. And they can be cynical, and may be hesitant and doubtful, all those things, but they have to be.. they can be pushed off the cliff to go do it. Number one.

For like, I'm going to talk to the guys out there again, and please, it's not that, I mean, just because, in my experience, they're the ones that are much more hesitant in these situations. How much, if I said to you, "Give me five grand and most of the bullshit that's going to go on in your marriage, the micromanagement, the nagging, the getting into your lane, telling you how to do shit, would go away. And that would be, that's a six-month investment, and it's going to cost you five grand." I mean, I can't frame it that way, but a lot of guys are, like, "Fucking sign me up."

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And that doesn't magically make it go away, like we've talked about, but it gets a lot better. And so, you know, some of the guys you like, you pay four or 500 bucks a month on your golf membership.

Melissa: Mm-hmm. Yeah. Low, low balling it.

Jon: Whatever.

Melissa: Yeah.

Jon: So, you know, and so if you frame it that way, I think a lot of guys would be, more excited to do it. I think a lot of guys think that they're going to have to sit there and say, like, you know, "What are your inner feelings?" And you know, be vulnerable and transparent, and you do have to be that way to some degree, but it's not like you're standing up in a circle at some group meeting and having to tell people all your personal secrets. That's not how it works.

Melissa: Mm-hmm.

Jon: So, to me, for a lot of guys, the investments are very much worth the rewards you get.

Melissa: Yeah. Is there any amount of money that your coach could give you to, like, take back everything that you've learned from him?

Jon: No.

Melissa: Right. So cool to think about it that way. Like he couldn't give you a number and say, "I'll give you a hundred thousand dollars, let's say, but you have to give back all the skills that you've learned."

Jon: No, because I was miserable. And... I was miserable. And you know—

Melissa: Even married to me, folks, he was miserable. That tells you how miserable he was.

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Jon: Just think how bad it would've been if I hadn't had you. I mean, oh, exponentially more miserable.

Melissa: Oh, I love that baby. I'm glad I have you too. Okay, is there anything else you want the listeners of *Your Favorite You* to know about? Any stone I've left unturned here?

Jon: I don't think so. I mean, I think again, the ability to stay in the present and be comfortable in your own skin is an invaluable gift that I've gotten from coaching. And I don't worry as much about what people think of me as I used to. I don't get nervous about doing things I would use to get nervous about: public speaking, going on television. I would sweat those for...

I did, and this is who I am. And take it or leave it. And then the future, I'm much more curious and, and sort of excited about what might come next instead of dreading it like I used to. So that, to me, is the biggest gift I've gotten from coaching. And one of the biggest things I forgot to mention is you don't have to go anywhere.

Like in the past, you know, like, before you might have to drive somewhere and, like, I'm not thinking, like, a therapist, but you can sit in your... I sit in my unfinished basement with sweatpants on, and get coached, and I don't have to go in. And so, it's amazing. Yeah. The convenience and the accessibility is just unbelievable.

Melissa: Mm-hmm. so good. Do you want to speak at all to., like how much you've stopped buffering? Yeah, I mean, I'm not perfect, but I, I, I used to use, you know, I used to al use alcohol to buffer my anxiety and you know, I don't, I mean, you know, I'm not perfect, but I don't do, I mean, wasn't like, it was, I mean, you know, where I was coming home and, you know, I would do, I would spend time with the family, but then I would, you know, check out.

Early in the evening or late in the evening because I had already had drinks and then I would go to sleep and I wasn't really present for a lot of the things. Mm-hmm.. so that's, that's certainly a, a gift because that wasn't healthy. obviously so, and I want to speak to the fact that you said there's

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only twenty-four hours in a day, but stopping doing that has honestly given both of us back so much more time.

Yeah. And I would feel better in the, I mean, you know, all the things you don't feel be terrible in the morning and you know, weight, you know your skin, your how you feel. Yeah. And it's, I think it's perpetuated and I can remember, I, I meant to say this on the episode where I said the shitty advice that I gave you as a pediatrician, like I used to tell parents.

like when they were going through a hard situation with their kids, like sleep training or something like that, that, you know, drinking an extra glass of wine was part of the solution. And like now I just can't imagine giving that advice anymore because it, there isn't much about over drinking that makes your life any better.

It just makes it worse in my.

Melissa: Okay. Anything else you want to share, babe, before I let you go? So, that you can come home, and so you can go to the grocery store so that you can get us ministrations for meals for the week, and then come home and cook for me?

Jon: No. I think that you've covered it broadly and very well. And I will say, I'm not a coach, but if anybody listening to this call or this podcast wants to reach out to me and talk to me more about it, Melissa can make me available.

Melissa: Oh, thank you babe. That's so generous because we have covered how you don't have a lot of time. So, thank you for being willing to do that and say yes to that. So, all right. I love—

Jon: Will I be invited back to this podcast?

Melissa: I don't know. It depends on the listener reaction, babe. We got to do everything I can.

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Jon: Can I be like Tom Hanks on like The Tonight Show, like, every six months I get, like, an invite back?

Melissa: What do you think? Maybe every Valentine's Day we could do it.

Jon: Okay, I like it.

Melissa: Sound good?

Jon: Sure. All right.

Melissa: I love you.

Jon: I love you too.

Melissa: Happy Valentine's Day.

Jon: You too.

Melissa: Thank you for coming on the podcast. I hope the listeners enjoyed our playful banter.

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