

Ep #7: When You're Married to Your Business Partner with Mark Pike



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With Your Host

Becca Pike

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Hello, hello. This is episode number seven of *The Hell Yes Entrepreneur* podcast. I'm your host Becca Pike, and today I have a very special guest for you. This is our first interview on the show. I truly, not just saying this, can't think of a more valuable person to be the first guest. I want to introduce you guys to my business partner.

He is my husband, my baby daddy, my knight in shining armor. If I'm being completely honest, he has been my life coach since the night I met him at that smoky dive bar down on Limestone and Sixth. He is not only a kickass business brain. He is probably the most emotionally aware person I know. So without further ado, it is time to chat with Mr. Mark Pike. Here we go.

Hey, guys. I'm Becca Pike and welcome to *The Hell Yes Entrepreneur* podcast, the number one show for entrepreneurs looking to create their first six-figure year. If you've got the drive and you know how to hustle but you're not sure where to channel your energy, we've got the answers. Let's dive into today's show.

Becca: Hello, good morning. You're looking awfully handsome this morning.

Mark: Hey, good morning honey. I appreciate that.

Becca: I am so excited to have you on.

Mark: Thanks, I'm happy to be here.

Becca: Can you tell my audience just a little bit about yourself? Maybe even like what you do for work, but also just you. Your hobbies, your likes.

Mark: Yeah, so I usually like to introduce myself as a husband and father first because those are kind of my top priorities. That's what I think of when I really think of my identity. It's to be a badass father and a badass husband. As far as work goes, I'm a big part of Massage Strong. I run Massage Strong right now.

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I'm also a business coach, and I really specialize in backend business management, systems, technology. That's really where my skill set lies the deepest. It's something I enjoy a lot. I appreciate and enjoy some of those nuances of the business that a lot of people find boring and a little bit disgusting, like accounting. That's something that I actually like to do, and it makes me feel good. I think part of it is because I'm good at it, but it also helps me make decisions. I can see a lot of how a business works by its numbers and the systems and things that are in place.

Becca: Yeah, that's awesome. You're exactly the opposite of what I am. Like we joke that we make the perfect duo because I am all front facing, forward facing, client facing. That's my jam. I can't stand any of the numbers, the graphs, the charts. You compliment that perfectly.

Mark: Yep, I totally agree. I think why we originally realized that we would make good partners together. I was kind of searching at some point for a business partner. It hit me one day that I didn't need to look around. You were right there next to me.

Becca: Yeah. So can you tell the audience a little bit about how we came to work together? Because we didn't just go into a relationship as business partners, obviously. We spent years not being business partners. Then sometime around 2015, I remember I was pregnant with our third child Solo. You tell the story. So you had gone off to an event. You were already looking to get into business, right?

Mark: Yeah, exactly. So we were both kind of doing our own things, right? I was working in real estate at the time. I would help out some with Massage Strong. Setting up a website, doing small things here and there, but I didn't really think of myself as working with you as much as just helping you. You had surprised me with a business conference that I could go to to dive deeper into business and hopefully turn around some of the troubles that I was facing in the real estate business.

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Whenever I went there, I learned a lot more about the different roles that you find within a company. There's a manager. There's the artist. There's these different roles. I realized that my skill set lied in the manager role. You were much more the artist entrepreneur role. It just hit me that if I joined forces with you, I would be able to really add my skill set to what you were already doing and what you needed. That we just complimented each other so well. So I remember that night I called you on the phone, and I said, "Becca, will you be partners with me?"

Becca: I was like we've already got three babies. Like yeah, I'll be your partner, Mark. We'd already said our vows. I didn't understand.

Mark: Yeah. I was like well, just real official. So I left there with this idea that I would go back kind of the corporate world, get an accounting job, and use the excess money from that to funnel it into the massage business that you were already working in. Then when the time was right, leave that position and come really join full time with you.

Becca: Well, and that illustrates really well something that I find really respectable of you. Whenever I have an idea, I jump feet first into it. I end up making a huge splash and a huge mess, and I need a lot of people to help clean it up, right. Like I feel like that illustrates me as an entrepreneur. But with you, it's always planned. It's always several steps ahead of the idea that you have.

So the fact that you came back from that business conference, which by the way was the Tony Robbins conference Business Mastery. The audience already knows that I thought that Tony Robbins was your roommate. So you came back from that, and you had a plan to come into Massage Strong with me. To be a business partner with me and go all in on it.

But you didn't just jump right in. You went out and got a pretty high-end accounting job. Like you are an accountant by trade. The audience doesn't know that yet, but you're an accountant by trade. You went out and you

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worked as an accountant specifically to fuel that money into your dream of coming into Massage Strong, right?

Mark: Yeah, exactly.

Becca: It was so planned out. It's very foreign from the way that I do things.

Mark: Sure.

Becca: All right. What I want my audience to walk away with today is a lot of nuggets of what we have learned along the way. We have worked together a lot. I want them to walk away with tangible ideas of how they can work with their marriage partner or their spouse or their life partner.

Also, this is going to be for people who don't necessarily own a business with their partner, but they just live in a house with their partner who owns a business. A lot of times even if the spouse isn't "a business partner", they're still in it. They've still got skin in the game. They're still there. They're still making decisions with their partner, right? Like how do you separate home from state? How do you separate work from spouse? So I know it's going to be really hard for you to talk about that because I have been such a peach to live with.

Mark: I'll just make up problems that never actually happened.

Becca: Aw man, so funny. So can you give a super quick timeline from the time you went to the Tony Robbins event, you came home, you decided you wanted to be a business partner. Then what did that look like on a timeline scale to where we are now? Like we worked together. You ended up taking a much bigger backend role, but I was still there, right, for years. Then I just recently stepped away from CEO. Now you've got that CEO hat on, right?

Mark: Right. You know went to the business conference, came back, got an accounting job, started taking excess money from that and putting it into the massage business. I wasn't there. I was probably there about six

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months, and I ended up leaving that company. I actually got laid off. Whenever I got let go from there, I realized this was my opportunity to go ahead and go in full time into Massage Strong, even though that wasn't the original plan.

I gave us about four months to make up my income. If I didn't, then I would either go back and get another accounting job or I would get a part time job to help supplement income. Yeah, we did it. We went all in. We were able to make that income back. The rest is kind of history.

Becca: Man, can I just intersect on that? That was one of the scariest moments of my life. I will never forget. I was massively pregnant. I was waddling around our neighborhood with you. We were on a walk. We were alone. I don't know where the other kids were, but I remember us walking. I remember you saying, that's when you told me you had gotten laid off that day. You were like, "I got laid off today. I would like to just come on full time at Massage Strong." At the time, Massage Strong wasn't the bread and butter of our family. It was only bringing in like, what, 30% of the income?

Mark: Yeah, probably something like that.

Becca: So I'm pregnant. I'm about to give birth. 70% of our income is gone. Mark is like, "Let's give ourselves six months to make up my old salary as an accountant. In six months if we make up my old salary, I won't go back. If we don't, I'll just go get another accounting job, right?" We made it up. So I remember that that cut off was September. So it must have been like March when we had made this decision, right? So we ended up making our income back like in three months.

Mark: Yeah, it happened pretty fast. Absolutely.

Becca: Because this is what happens when you put fire in your ass. Sometimes I tell people like if you're the type of person that is capable of ripping a Band-Aid off and like jumping off a cliff in order to put fire in your ass. Like if you're willing to quit your full-time job in order to go all in on entrepreneurship. If you're that kind of person that can handle that type of

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pressure, you can use that leverage and that scarcity to your advantage in order to grow your business.

Some people aren't capable of doing that. Some people if they leave their full-time job in order to grow their business can sink right into scarcity mode. They can let their nervousness take over. It can actually hinder their ability to grow their business. For us, scarcity has always kind of put a fire in my ass and yours too.

Mark: Yeah, I agree. There's been many more cases since then. The pandemic is a great example of just being absolutely determined that we will find a way to make this work. That there isn't another option but to succeed. But knowing that along the way, we are going to fail. We are going to make mistakes. Just accepting that and realizing that's a big part of the process.

A big part of our success along the way and into the future is this idea that we're willing to experiment. We're willing to try things out, see what works, see what doesn't work, make adjustments, and then try again.

Becca: Yeah, absolutely. So on my Facebook page Hell Yes: The Entrepreneur's Circle, I asked everyone what they would like to hear. I told everybody that you were going to be on the show today. Most people in that group know that we have owned a business together and do own a business together. I asked them what do you want to know? What do you want to know about marriage and living with your business partner? Do you want to go through those questions with me?

Mark: Sure, sounds great.

Becca: All right, let's do it. First up, Bethany Boils Smith. This is going to be great for you. This is a great question for you. So Bethany, I know Bethany. I think that you're a bit introverted. Mark is also introverted. She says, "How do you get your you time or your alone time when you live together and work together? Or do you?" So Mark, you're an introvert. If it was up to me,

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we would be at each other's hips all day long every day. But you do like to get away and recharge.

Mark: Yeah. I mean it's a really good question. It's something that you have to be intentional about. One of the first principles about working with your spouse or significant other is to be very intentional about what you're doing and how you're doing it. So one of those areas is definitely giving space to each individual. So part of that can be if you all share an office, taking time to go work somewhere else whether it be a coffee shop or just another location so that every once in a while, you have space apart from each other.

Then beyond that, I would say the simplest thing is to really communicate your needs. One spouse might not understand that you need to take time away to be alone to recharge. So literally reminding them of that and letting them know, "Hey, you know I really need to step away for 30 minutes just to be alone not with anyone else around me so that I can recharge and refill."

For me, I really tried to build me time into my work schedule. So that way whenever I come home from work, I am fully recharged, and I don't have to retreat at that time. So for me, that might look like taking a walk in the park, making sure that I'm giving myself time to go to the gym and work out because that's kind of a refueling time for me as well. You really need to figure out what it is for you individually and just making sure that you're scheduling that time in.

Because if you're not, what will happen is you're going to all of a sudden feel like everyone is taking, taking, taking from me, and I don't have any time for myself. Now I'm feeling burnt out. I'm not going to feel as motivated to do the work. At the end of the day, it's going to end up hurting the people around you. As opposed to if you actually set that time aside on purpose, you'll get more work done. You'll be a better partner to those around you.

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Becca: Well, and I think that this is a great question to go into delegation. I'm going to be talking to you guys all the time about delegating your tasks and hiring people. You know whenever I see clients that are working together and they're married or their partners, and they do have a really hard time getting away from each other. A lot of times the deeper problem here is the lack of delegation.

Mark and I are capable of not seeing each other almost all day. So when we say that we work together, like I have an office here in my house. Mark often goes to Massage Strong, or he goes to a coffee shop. Sometimes I go to coffee shops, and he has the office.

The only reason that we're capable of not being in Massage Strong at all times is because we have people there that are answering the phones. We have people there that are managing the teams. Like we have people that are helping us. We're not just stuck at Massage Strong together doing all of the things because we have delegated properly.

Also delegating at home. A lot of people that work online business, they're trying to take care of their kids and their home and their business at the same time. We are fortunate enough to have someone that comes in from 8:30 to 1:30 every day, and they watch our kids while we hammer away at work. So proper delegation will allow you space from your partner so that you don't have to be making every single teeny tiny decision and move together, right?

Mark: Absolutely, I agree.

Becca: Yeah. So one more thing on that note. I think that really understanding and respecting why your partner does need alone time and need to get away from you. I think that comes with maturing in relationships, but at the very beginning of our relationship, I don't have an introverted bone in my body. So I didn't really understand why Mark needed space so much.

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The more that I have learned about relationships, and the more that I've learned about Mark, I understand it now so much better. I am happy to give him that space because he always comes back recharged. My understanding of why he needs that is just on such a deeper level.

Mark: Yeah. One thing that I really wanted to talk about that's related to this question is creating space between work and your personal life. One of the biggest problems whenever you have an entrepreneur in the family or just that A-type personality is that we tend to be on all the time. So workflows into every area of our lives.

So the next thing you know, you're laying in bed and getting ready to go to sleep then you all start talking about work. Well, that can cause a lot of problems because you're not in the right mindset. You don't have the right hat on to do that. So then all of a sudden you run into conflict with each other where you might not have.

So some of the tools that me and Becca use. One that we implemented really early on when we started working together was that we stopped texting each other work related things. Because it would be like, "Hey, you want to go to the park with the kids later tonight?" Then right after it would be like, "Something's on fire at the office." It just really took apart the personal side.

So what we did is we just created a second chat. We did it through Google Hangouts. So anything work related came through Google Hangouts. Then we were able to keep our personal texts still personal. It was really easy for us to put on the different hats whenever we were looking at these different forms of communication.

That was just a really simple basic one that's helped us a lot. We still use it today. Then we started to set up times where maybe after 5:00 p.m., we wouldn't talk about work. Or these would be our office hours that we would really communicate work issues. Then after that, we would just focus on our personal lives and then save those work problems for the next day.

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Becca: Yeah. I think if you don't separate your personal text messages from your work text messages, I think what you're doing is you're forcing your partner to switch hats if they don't want to or if they don't need to. So like if I send him a personal message and a work message, he might be in personal hat. He might be frisbee golfing with his friends. In order for him to answer my personal message, he has to acknowledge that I sent him a work message. Now he has to put that hat on, and he has to respond.

So by telling him work things in a separate chat, he can leave that unread until he is in work mode. The same way and the same expectations that we would have of any coworker. If we had a coworker that we didn't live with and we sent them messages about work, we wouldn't expect them to answer all those messages on a Sunday while they're at a cookout, right? Does that make sense?

Sometimes we forget that, and we blur the lines with our spouse. We force them to go into that work hat when they don't want to or when they're trying to relax or at a time that just isn't beneficial.

Mark: Yeah, that's right. We try to just find other areas of our life where we can apply this as well. So if I get a call in the afternoon from Becca and I answer it, sometimes she'll say, "Hey, this is your business partner" as opposed to saying, "Hey, this is your wife." It just sets the tone for how we're going to be communicating. Because I am going to be talking to my business partner differently than I talk to my wife.

We're talking business and then you'll be like, "Oh, I can't wait to give you a kiss later," or something like that. I'll be like, "Whoa, I'm your partner." You know? I've got a wife. You need to back it up a little bit.

Becca: But it's sexy too, right?

Mark: As long as you're okay with it.

Becca: Listen, Mark Pike is the number one human that keeps me humble. In a world that I live in where I have to be the alpha in so many ways and I

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have to be the CEO and the boss to so many people, Mark is always the number one person to like keep me on my A-game. He's always making fun of me. I love it. It is home. It is one of the reasons that our relationship works.

Mark: It's really easy to keep the work hat on all the time. If you don't take it off and get back to that relationship with each other then it's just not going to be sustainable.

Becca: All right so next question. Lynsi Perraut, she's one of my clients. She said, "How do you turn off your business side? So like if a business idea pops into your head at 8:00 p.m. at night, do you just wait until the next day?"

Mark: Well, there you go. I think that goes right in line with what we were just talking about. I have a couple different ways that I will take. So I really try to shut off my business brain usually around 5:00 or 6:00 p.m. If something comes up that can be handled later, then I actually like to send myself an email because my email's a bit like my to do list. Then you have a different way as well to take ideas to get them out of your head so that way you don't forget them, and you can address them later.

Becca: Yeah. So something that we came up with a long time ago, and it's just a big part of our life now. We don't even have to think about it. If Mark is not in work mode and I need to tell him something, I will drop it in Google Hangouts or I'll send it to him in an email. I'll send it to him in some way other than breaking the family hat that we're in and breaking up that bond that we're in at that moment to talk about work stuff.

So the answer, Lynsi, is yeah. We don't talk about it. But to get it off of our chest so that we don't forget about it, we do put it somewhere. We put it in an email, or we put it in hangouts. We kind of have to have this unwritten rule that we will get back to each other one those things. That if I'm going to not bother Mark with something that I want to talk about, that I know that sending it to his email is a safe place that he will return and respond.

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Mark: Yeah. Sometimes too it will be late at night, and we do want to talk about something work related. So we'll literally ask the other person, "Hey, can I ask you a work question?"

Becca: Yeah. Are you in the headspace to do this?

Mark: That's right.

Becca: Sometimes the answer is hell yeah, let's talk about work. Sometimes it's like you know what? No. No. Can't do it. Already smoked the weed. All right, next question. Brittany McKnight. Okay, so Brittany is asking a phenomenal question, and I want you to talk on this. So this gets brought up constantly. She says, "What do you do when you have super mega big goals, and your partner doesn't?"

Mark: Ooh that's a tough one. Yeah, I think that the first thing is to really sit down undisturbed and have a conversation with your partner. Let them know how you feel. Tell them that you want to go after this dream, that you want to go after these goals. Help them understand why it's important to you. Why does it matter? Let them know what it is that you need from them.

You know, your partner doesn't have to be a millionaire in their business or their work life in order for you to be a millionaire in your business and your work life. But they do need to be supportive of you. They do need to be understanding when you might have to work a late night or do something that's out of the normal routine.

A lot of times spouses, they don't talk to each other about this in a clear way. Instead of really having a good discussion, they end up just arguing. Right? It's just little criticisms here, little criticisms there. "Why don't you support me? You don't understand." These kinds of things. So part of your job is to help them understand.

I like to think about my family a little bit the same way that I think about a business. So if one of my kids or my spouse doesn't understand something, just like if they were an employee, I wouldn't just yell at them or

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criticize them. I would take the time to explain it to them, help them to understand, and really try to bring them on board to teach. Because at the end of the day, you do need their support.

It might not look like them actually working in your business, but it is going to look like them giving you some grace every now and then. Giving you some forgiveness every now and then. And really supporting you. So you've gotta figure out what you need from them and really try to help explain it. It's not just going to be a onetime conversation. This is a process. Me and Becca take the time to sit down and discuss whenever we're having issues with each other.

Becca: It's always very pleasant. It is always rainbows and butterflies.

Mark: That's right. Never one time have we just yelled at each and then cried.

Becca: Never once have I ripped a bag of chips out of your hands and threw them across the room.

Mark: That was a long time ago.

Becca: That was a super long time ago. So let me ask you this. Okay. Your answer might be the same of what you just said, but I want you to speak to these people as well. So Brittany just asked what do you do if your partner is just content. What she didn't ask is what I'm about to ask. So I have a class, and it enrolls every eight weeks. You know this. It's called Three More. We teach people sales, organic sales. How to sell your product or your service without being a sleazeball basically.

In those eight weeks, the students get a series of videos. They go through a massive drastic change on the way that they look at money and look at sales. So by the time they pop out of this class, they have gone through an entire new birthing. I have seen students who come through and they're like, "I do not look at money or sales the same way. I have drastically

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changed how I feel about investing in my business, how I feel about growth." Like they come out of this class on fire, right?

Brittany asks what do you do if your partner is content? I want to ask you what do you do if your partner downright refuses to be on the same boat as you? So I have students how they have their own business. They want to continue to invest in it. They want to get a coach. They want to continue to go through their classes. Their spouse just says no. They're just not riding that same train of growth. They don't have a fire in their ass. What do you do?

Mark: Yeah. I mean I have seen this many times, absolutely. Sometimes what it looks like is that the business mind and spouse, they want to go after their dream. They want to take some risks. They want to maybe get a business loan. They want to take the savings that the family has and put it into the business. The other spouse is much more content. They're much more security based. So they're really afraid.

Part of what they're doing, if you look at it from a loving standpoint, their fear is out of love. They want to try to keep the family safe. They want to keep the businessperson, the business spouse from making a mistake that will hurt them, that will hurt the family. So this really comes back to that idea of communicating with them and letting them know why you want that thing so that they can better understand why you're going after it.

So the more that they can understand your why and understand that yeah, it might not work out. But if I don't try, that's going to be even more painful than it failing. It's going to be a lot of conversations, but it's got to be intentional conversations. These can't be conversations that you have while you're watching TV on the couch or while you're taking your kids to the park. It's got to be, "Let's sit down. Let's be undisturbed. Let's really hash out and really try to understand each other so that we can make some progress."

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Becca: You know what one of the perks is about having those conversations is allowing your kids to see it. You know, I read a statistic one time. It said that I don't even remember what the number was. But a large amount of people allow their kids to watch them fight or argue, but they never allow their kids to watch them make up. They go behind closed doors to make up, right? Which is so interesting because then we raise kids that see the fighting, but they don't see the makeup, right? You can imagine what that does.

With business discussions, I like for my kids—This goes into actually Tyler Dorsey left us a question as well in the group. She was asking, "How do you involve your kids in your business? Do you allow them to see your day-to-day work? Do you talk to them about business?"

This is one of those things where I like for our kids to be floating around the house. They're not allowed to talk to us. We have to be undisturbed, right, but they get to see us having deep conversations about supporting each other, the needs that we have for each other and from each other. I like them to be able to see that, and to think that they are growing up with a bit of advanced communication and problem-solving skills for their future partners.

Mark: Yeah absolutely. It's very important.

Becca: Yeah. All right so here's a question. This is from Denise Vernieri. We would like to discuss how do you, I'm going to tweak her question a little bit. But how do you look at me all day as a business partner and then be able to see me still romantically and passionately and sexy at home? You know like if we spend all day problem solving together, how is it that you can still be as romantic with me as you are in the evenings or on the weekends?

Mark: Yeah. I mean I hate to just keep pounding in the same points over and over again, but it's this very intentional hat removal and hate replacement. We do it all throughout our lives, right? So the difference is

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just being intentional about it. Whenever you go and visit your grandma, you put on a different hat.

Becca: Yeah, then when you're with your girls clubbing.

Mark: Exactly. Then whenever you've got your high heels on and you're out at the club with the girls.

Becca: Unless your grandma's cool as shit, or your friends are like grandmas.

Mark: It's true. It's true. Some people don't have that. But we do this. If you go to church, there's a different hat that you put on. You have different mannerisms. Slightly different thoughts. Learning this skill within your relationship is very important. It honestly doesn't just go with you've got your business hat on with your partner, and then you've got your home spouse hat on with your partner.

Whenever I'm with Becca and we're alone on a date, she's going to see a slightly different side of me than if we're together with our kids at a playground, and we're coordinating a bunch of different things. Right? These are all slightly different personalities that we have.

So it's practicing putting away personalities and bringing out other personalities at the time that we want them. Part of the way that happens is protecting your communication with each other, and not letting business conversation come up whenever you're sitting at the dinner table with your family. Trying to protect your work time from your family as well. So whenever you're working, focus on work. If there's not an emergency around family, try to save that until you're not working.

Becca: Yeah, I love that. Yep. If it sounds like the same theme is being pounded into the ground, it's because it is. We're getting our message across. Separate your business from your home. You guys are in charge of that. You guys are the ones that are responsible for that. Your partner isn't responsible for that. If your partner is having a hard time separating, you

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have to lead by example. You have to be the one that makes sure that you're separating. You have to be the one that gracefully reminds them.

Let's talk about grace for a second. Guys, we give grace to people and forgiveness to people all over the place except for our partners sometimes. You know, think about if you have a staff member and they are making a mistake. You are going to train them and teach them. You're going to forgive them. You're going to hope that they can get it. If you think about your kids, if your kids continue to make mistakes, you guys are going to continue to train them and forgive them and help them, right?

Why is it that so many people lose sight of this when it comes to their partner and their spouse? It's like they make one mistake in 1984, and they have to live with it for the next 40 years. What do you think about that Mark? I talked about this in the intro, but you have been almost like a full on life coach to me. Before I met you, I didn't know about self-improvement and human development and any of this emotional awareness that I do now. You're the one that taught me more than anything how to give continual grace over and over again. Do you have any advice on that?

Mark: It's definitely a trained skill. So it's something that you can learn over time. It's not like you were born with the ability to forgive people and give them something that they don't deserve. The way I view it, especially in our relationship, but just in general is that there is never a time where you deserve to be treated badly because of something that you did.

So if I find myself getting angry at you, frustrated towards you, or any kind of negative emotion towards you, once I finally cool down and I get back to who I really am, that's whenever I think to myself okay. I need to either A, apologize, or B, I need to do some more reflection within myself. Because at the end of the day, she didn't deserve that. Maybe I haven't explained something to you good enough. Maybe I haven't taken enough time to talk to you about how I really feel or how that affects me.

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So I almost look at it as I'm not doing you justice if I haven't taken the time to explain something to you yet. You know? Because you probably just don't know. I can't imagine that you are purposely hurting me. Just having that mindset, I think, is a really big important part of it.

Becca: Just a reminder guys. People often tell me and Mark that we have this relationship that they wish that they had. Or that we have this communication skills that they wish that they had. I want you guys to understand that Mark and I are no different from you guys. We just took our tools, and we used them every day. We still get mad. We still get frustrated. We still do things that aren't in alignment with what we know is best for our relationship. The difference is that we've read some books, and we've applied the tools. We try to do it every day to the best of our ability, yeah?

Mark: Yeah, that's right. We fall short all the time, but just like any skill that you learn, the more that you practice it the easier it becomes. You learn new distinctions all along the way. So the next time that you run into that similar issue, it's much easier to deal with it.

What you can't do is get into fights, get into disagreements, and then not bring it up again. That is a recipe for disaster. Because it festers and it builds up inside until one day, your partner puts the toilet paper upside down or whatever and you blow your top, and they don't have any clue why. That's not fair to them because it's our job to take the time to explain that.

Becca: While we're here and we're talking about relationships, this doesn't necessarily have to do with business. But can I just throw this out there? Y'all, please don't passively aggressively make jokes about your partner to them or in front of them to other people with a backhand slap. You know what I'm saying?

I think that this used to be a part of my life before I knew any better. I think I had seen this growing up. I don't know where it came from, but I remember when I started learning about this whole people will say what they want to

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say to their partner. But instead of actually just saying it to them clearly, they will turn it into like a passive joke. Then they'll say it to their partner, or they'll say it to other people in front of their partner like poking fun at them. It is atrocious now whenever I see it.

When we're at parties and we're with like other couples, I just want you to know that if you're tearing your partner down like in a joke manner in front of other people, I think that that's awful.

Mark: Yeah. I mean at the end of the day, anytime your partner is in pain, or they have their feelings hurt, especially if you're the one doing it, you're hurting yourself. Because they are a part of your life. Even if you all try to separate your lives as much as you can, your spouse, your boyfriend, your girlfriend. Anyone that you are in business with, they are an important part of your lives. You need them to succeed as much or more than you are.

Becca: Okay. So let's hop back into business real quick. So let me ask you this. You have a really good way of explaining this. In the beginning we were talking about how you focus on the backend, and I focus on the frontend.

We have learned a lot that these roles are really important, and that some of the most successful businesses have this frontend person and this backend person. We've seen it with Henry Ford. We've seen it with Walt Disney. Can you explain to my audience what that looks like? Even if you have any stories, they don't even know the Henry Ford story maybe or the Walt Disney story. Can you give us a little piece of that?

Mark: Yes. So I think the Walt Disney is a perfect example. So what a lot of people don't know is that Walt Disney also had a brother. Walt Disney has been quoted saying several times that if it weren't for his brother, his business would have gone bankrupt and failed and there would be no Walt Disney. Even though most people had never heard of Walt Disney's brother.

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So one thing that I've found really important for me and Becca when we're working together is appreciating what each of us do, and not nitpicking the other person's work. Because it's really easy whenever you're running a business tighter for you to want to put your hands into every piece of the pie. But the sooner that you can separate out the roles within the business.

So one partner does these specific tasks. They're over top of it. They're in charge of those. The other spouse, they do these specific tasks. They're over top of it. They're in charge of it. Then you've kind of set up a managerial leadership tier where you can still cross into each other's spaces because you need to share each other's skill sets. You need to share each other's wisdom.

But at the end of the day, you're not just constantly butting heads against each other and not just constantly thinking, "What are they doing over there? Their stuff doesn't matter. They need to be doing more like me." You really want to appreciate the differences.

Even going back to Brittany's question about what do you do if your spouse isn't motivated or they don't dream big. Well, it may be the case of they have another really good skillset which is they're really good at bringing you back down to earth. They're really good at bringing peace and calm into the business. They're really good at making sure you're still focusing on your family. So finding out what are their skill sets and appreciating them and really trying to build that skill set up more so you guys balance each other out.

Becca: Well, yeah. What I want to talk about most is the importance of having that front face and that back face. What is it that we were taught that these were called? The front-facing person usually is front of house. They are the imagination. They are the dreamers. A lot of times they are the face of the company. This is the Walt Disney. This is the Henry Ford.

Then a lot of times what people don't know is there's this second person behind the scenes that is cleaning up all the messes. There's the numbers

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brain, the person that is doing the backend stuff that doesn't necessarily always get the limelight. Both of these roles are insanely important. We have some business partners that have four people in their business ownership. Two of them are front facing and they are salesy. They are the imaginers. Is that a word?

Mark: It is now.

Becca: It is now. They're the imaginers. I think that that's like a Disney word, isn't it? Like they are in the imagination station. Then there's two of them that do the backend, and they're very quiet. For a long time, I felt like they didn't know how important each role was, right? But the backend is just as important as the frontend. Like Mark was saying, Walt Disney would have been bankrupt if it wasn't for his backend person.

If you're that frontend, don't ever underestimate if your spouse is that backend the importance of their role. If you do have this dynamic, you have the recipe to one of the most successful ways to grow a business.

Mark: Yeah, absolutely.

Becca: Yep.

Mark: So maybe we could end this by kind of taking what we've been talking about and giving some really simple actionable steps.

Becca: Yep, let's do it.

Mark: Right? So step one is to create specific channels that you can communicate with your partner. One's for personal, and one's for business.

Becca: Yeah.

Mark: It can be simple. Get a Google Hangouts account. Use Slack. Whatever it is that you want. Maybe you only talk about business through email.

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Becca: Yeah.

Mark: Whatever it is, set up that specific system.

Becca: Yeah. I'll say if you're in person with your spouse, ask permission if they're wanting to talk for work, right? Like if you're having a glass of wine over dinner and your partner seems really relaxed, maybe you should ask them before you start telling them that your business needs to take out a loan, you know?

Mark: Yep, yep. Absolutely. Set up specific times and be very specific about if you're talking about business. So are you talking to your business partner or are you talking to your spouse?

Becca: Yep. Give your partner grace, forgiveness. I mean it sounds so cliché but treat them well. Why do we give so much grace and forgiveness to our kids and not to our business partners, right?

Mark: Yep, absolutely. Set specific roles that you guys have within the company and be respectful of those roles for each other. Still overlap your work with one another, but not in such a way that you're nitpicking the other person's work or helicoptering over them all the time.

Becca: Yeah. Really separate these roles. What I mean by that is like if you went to work at an office, it would be very clear who is supposed to file the files. Who is supposed to write back to the emails? There wouldn't be this overlap of, "Hey, did you write back to that email? Hey, did you call that customer?"

You know like you can eliminate all of these conversations of trying to cross each other's T's and dot each other's I's. If one of the partner's duty is to handle the email, then you guys set that up so that the other partner doesn't have to consistently ask, "Hey, did you write back to that email? Did you get back to that person?" Right?

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So sit down with a pen and paper and decide. Like, "Hey, you're in charge of managing the staff members, and having all of the meetings with the staff members. I'm going to be in charge of inventory. I'm going to make sure that we have everything we need, and I'm in charge of the budget." Like know your roles. It will save you guys so much friction in your relationship.

Mark: That's right. With that in mind, just know that if the other person needs something that they will ask for help. Make that clear. Like, "Hey I'm going to let you handle this. If you need help, ask me. Otherwise, I'm going to assume that you're just kicking ass. You don't need anything."

Becca: Yes, actually assume it. Don't nitpick. "Hey, you told me you're going to write back to that email. I'm going to ask you every day until next week."

Mark: Oh god. That's such pressure.

Becca: Yeah exactly. Like if your partner says they're going to do something, you have to trust that they're going to do it until they don't. Then that can be a different conversation.

Mark: Set up specific times to have meetings. So I think in the beginning, one of the things that me and Becca didn't do was have meetings. Because at any point we wanted to talk to each other about work, we could just do it. That was fine whenever we were smaller, right? We could get a lot done. But as we got bigger, it became more important for us to have meetings.

I'm not a big fan of meetings. I think they can be a big waste of time. But we keep ours very efficient. We do one general meeting a week. We cover a lot of different things in that meeting within our company finances, what's going on, these types of things. We just go over what we need to, and then we separate after that.

Having that specific meeting time, sometimes it makes it a lot easier to keep it from overflowing into our day to day lives because I can say, "You

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know what? I'm going to cover that issue in our meeting." Sometimes that issue may be hey I don't like the way that you're talking to me about this thing. Could we try it a different way? That kind of stuff.

Becca: Yeah. For every moment of the day that we're not in our meeting, I have a notepad in my phone that I can take notes of if I need to talk to Mark about something. Instead of just interjecting into his day 30 times a day, I put it on my notepad. That gives me the peace of mind that it will be talked about. Then I bring it to the meeting. A lot of times what I find is that by the time we get to the meeting, I don't even need to talk about it anymore. Because it was just a measly little anxiety rearing its head over something that wasn't that important.

Guys, never stop dating your business partner if you're married to them. Stop dating your business partner if that's not who you're married to. Advice 101. Never stop dating you guys. Mark and I try really hard. We've got two companies, and we've got four kids. Between all the companies and the house and everything, we have like 40 something contractors. It can get crazy. If we let it, we would allow it to engulf us, but we don't.

We play volleyball on a volleyball league every Friday night. We still have friends over for cookouts and barbeques. We still try really hard to date each other and to go on coffee dates and to take that hat off. If you're not intentional about it, it's so easy to slide into a business partnership where you wake up 20 years later and you're like, "What the fuck? I've been married to my business partner, and there's been no passion here for so long."

Mark: Yep absolutely.

Becca: Yeah. So go make out with your husband and your wife and your life partner and your boyfriend, your girlfriend, whoever it is that you're doing business with. Maybe one last piece of advice from me, and if you've got anything else.

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My last piece of advice would be stop taking it so seriously. Okay? Like your business is a serious entity and your marriage is a serious entity, but if you had to choose between the two, which one would you choose? For me, it's marriage all day long. So it wouldn't make any sense to allow my business to massively come in between me and my marriage, right?

Mark: Yep, absolutely. Couldn't agree more. If your relationship isn't working, it doesn't matter how good the rest of your life is. You'll feel the pain in every area of your life.

Becca: Absolutely. 1,000%. All right guys. Thank you so much for joining us today. I will see you here next Wednesday on *The Hell Yes Entrepreneur* podcast. Bye.

Mark: Bye, bye.

Hey, thanks for taking the time to listen to today's episode. If you're looking to get more clarity and momentum for your business, visit hellyescoachingonline.com. See you next week here on *The Hell Yes Entrepreneur* podcast.