

# Ep #70: Coaching Through Life's Challenges with Dr. Meivys Garcia



## Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Kristi Angevine

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## Ep #70: Coaching Through Life's Challenges with Dr. Meivys Garcia

Welcome to Episode #70. This is your host, Kristi Angevine.

Do you fancy yourself a fixer, perpetually trying to fix yourself and others in order to feel good? Or maybe happiness seems a little bit elusive? Like something only available after you work really hard and suffer along your way towards a goal. Today, I'm featuring a conversation with one of my dearest coaching clients, Dr. Meivys Garcia. She shares her journey with coaching, and how it's helped her with these very challenges and more.

Welcome to *Habits On Purpose*, a podcast for high-achieving women who want to create lifelong habits that give more than they take. You'll get practical strategies for mindset shifts that will help you finally understand the root causes of why you think, feel, and act as you do. And now, here's your host, Physician, and Master Certified Life Coach, Kristi Angevine.

Hello, hello, everyone. It's almost summer here in Oregon. There's no more snow in town, but there's still snow in the distance, on the mountains, that's really pretty to look at. In the mornings here, they're really cool, maybe in the 40s. It gets cool in the evenings, but the daytime temperatures are starting to flirt with the 70s. It's really sunny and really gorgeous.

And to match the loveliness of this season, is a lovely client of mine who's joining me today for a conversation about life challenges and coaching. Dr. Meivys Garcia is an OB-GYN and fertility specialist, who's not only co-owner of a renowned Ontario fertility clinic, but she's widely known on Instagram for her heartfelt fertility advice and guidance to patients.

Meivys and I began working together a few years ago in the very first round of Habits on Purpose for Physicians. And then, she later became one of my private clients. Today, she shares what's changed in her life as a result of the work she's done with group and private coaching. It's one thing to learn things intellectually, but it's another thing entirely, to apply concepts in your real life. And it's this application that's made all the difference for Meivys. What she shares isn't just interesting, but it's inspirational.

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Now, before we start this conversation, I do want to invite you to two things. First of all, I'd love for you to join my free webinar series that runs for the next four weeks. It's filled with useful concepts and tools, so you can start making real life changes in your habits today, by applying things that will make a real difference. The topics of this series include things like perfectionism, second guessing, rumination, and how to change hidden habits.

The first one is tonight. To join, you just have to register with your email address. And you can do that at [HabitsOnPurpose.com/workshop2023](https://HabitsOnPurpose.com/workshop2023). At the end of each of the teachings, I'll share details about the next round of Habits on Purpose for Physicians, which gets started in July.

Which brings me to the second invitation. Habits on Purpose for Physicians is my six-month small group coaching program for women physicians. Enrollment opens June 5, so if you're listening to this in real time, that's next week. You can learn more at [HabitsOnPurpose.com](https://HabitsOnPurpose.com) and join the waitlist at [HabitsOnPurpose.com/HOPPwaitlist](https://HabitsOnPurpose.com/HOPPwaitlist). The waitlist is important because the group is capped in order to keep the size small for an intimate community feel where everybody gets lots of individual attention.

And as one of my clients said, this is one of the most thoughtfully designed coaching courses ever. And there's a special thing for this round. This round, you also get two private coaching sessions with me. So, as you're listening to this interview with Meivys, imagine what would be possible for you when you have a parallel experience.

Check out the waitlist at [HabitsOnPurpose.com/HOPPwaitlist](https://HabitsOnPurpose.com/HOPPwaitlist). And join the webinar series at [HabitsOnPurpose.com/workshop2023](https://HabitsOnPurpose.com/workshop2023).

So, without further ado, Dr. Meivys Garcia.

Kristi Angevine: All right, everybody. Meivys, welcome to the podcast.

Meivys Garcia: Thank you. Thank you.

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Kristi: For people who don't already know the lovely Meivys Garcia, could you take a second and introduce yourself?

Meivys: My name is Dr. Meivys Garcia. I am an obstetrician gynecologist, like you were in your past life. And I'm also a fertility specialist. I work in Ontario, Canada. I have two boys and a dog and a wonderful husband who is wonderful most of the time.

Kristi: I love it. Can you share maybe a hobby or something that's outside of your work sphere that maybe you're passionate about, that maybe somebody doesn't know, or that somebody might not know when they first meet you?

Meivys: I would say my hobby is learning. I love learning. I have been working with you as a client for many years. And I love it so much because I always learn. So, I like courses and books and conferences and podcasts. So yeah, I would say that the thing that I do the most, and exercise, the thing that I do the most outside of my regular working hours is learning.

Which comes in the form of valuable podcast courses, conferences. And I also love to be in the outdoors and exercise and journal. Which you taught me how to do.

Kristi: I love that you shared that. Because knowing you, because we've known each other for a long time, I know that one of your passions is a lot of things that are related to your work. And so, I was just sort of curious what you would say, and it fits so beautifully. I know so many people who are listening, that resonates with them. Because a lot of us are consummate students, and one of our strengths is just a passion for learning. So, I love that you said that.

Today, we're going to talk about coaching. And like I said, you and I have known each other for a long time. And we met through coaching years ago now. 2020, right? I'm really curious, before you knew about coaching, before you found coaching, what were your thoughts about it?

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Meivys: Before I knew about coaching, I didn't know coaching was a thing. I think if somebody, prior to 2019, which is when I first heard about it, if somebody mentioned that word "coaching", I would have thought of a sports related coach, Like, you're a star athlete, and you get a coach that sort of teaches you how to run faster, jump faster, and things like that.

So, I really learned about coaching, and very quickly hired a coach. I didn't have a lot of time between learning about coaching and not acting on it, which is pretty typical of me.

Kristi: I love it. I do remember that one time, I was just running an errand, and somebody was doing small talk, and "Oh, what do you do?" And I said, "Oh, I'm a coach." They said, "Oh, what sport?" Okay, I need to clarify.

So, when you jumped in and started with coaching, what was the main thing that you wanted to work on?

Meivys: As you know, I'm a fertility specialist. I also went through fertility myself. And those years were very, very difficult as I was trying to build my family. I had lots of ideas about miscarriages. And during that time, I worked with a therapist for the first time in my life. And he was wonderful. I really found a lot of value in working with a therapist at that time.

And then, I had my two children. I knew my family was complete. I knew my journey had successfully come to an end. And then, I was left with being a wife, being a mother of two beautiful humans that I worked so hard to bring into the world, having this fertility practice that I loved, and I wanted to dedicate myself with. I'm having the mostly wonderful husband; I'm kidding, he really is wonderful. And having that husband.

Then I felt like okay, so I don't need a therapist, because I don't have a "problem," right? I did when I was going through fertility. There was grief, there was a lot of sadness, there's a bit of depression. I really had that little vessel that I was working on, so I didn't have that anymore. But I still felt like okay, so I've done all of the things. What do I do with all of this? How

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do I put it together? How am I present for all of that? How do I enjoy it more? How do I maximize it?

And then, having accomplished all those things, I was plagued with questions with insecurity, this dread, with fears of I'm here now, what if I screw it up? What if I don't do wifeing right? What if I don't do mothering right? What if I don't do doctoring right?

I've worked so hard to get there. First it was the long medical career. Then it was the marriage. Then it was a long journey to get to my children. And then to get to the top of the hypothetical mountain. And it's like, okay, now what? How do I maintain all of this? How do I enjoy all of this?

And I realized that I now, at this point, had hopefully 20 more years of my life where I get to enjoy all of the things that I worked hard for. I found myself plagued with so much insecurity and anxiety and worries, that I went into coaching because I wanted to really live my best life, and wanted to give my best self to all of those things that are so important to me.

Kristi: That makes so much sense. So, when you are first experiencing coaching, how was it helpful to you, for those insecurities and anxieties?

Meivys: What I found different, between therapy and coaching... And some people may need both at the same time. But for me, like I said, there wasn't so much the grief anymore, the acute pain and sadness that comes with infertility struggle. It was more like figuring out how to maximize and live my best life.

So, coaching really helped me from that perspective. For example, I had a lot of issues with time management and feeling overwhelmed and feeling like... I remember saying to you, "Why mothering, fertility practice, fitness? I do not want to remove any of that out of my life." It wasn't a problem of crisis. It wasn't that I didn't want to be married.

It wasn't that I didn't want to be a mother, it wasn't that I didn't want to be a doctor, it wasn't that I wanted to be somebody that doesn't prioritize their health. I definitely wanted all of those things, that I never had any thoughts



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about not wanting those. But it was just like, how do I do that? So, I was always in overwhelm.

Having a fertility practice, and having gone through infertility, I also felt that I was really struggling with this notion of caring so much for my patients. But at the same time, needing to figure out how to protect my own mental health. How to be there for them, how I was supposed to be in the mud with them, which wasn't really helpful for anybody.

So yeah, coaching really helped me with all of those things. It helped me sort of see how you see the world. And when you decide how you see the world, like what you think, what you believe, is what you create. So, coaching taught me, you showed me that. It helped me with different tools to manage overwhelm, to manage my time, which time management is really mind management. That's all there is to it.

It helped me pause and find joy in the moment. It helped me sort of understand that I struggled with always wanting to accomplish all the things. And I used to believe that once you accomplish the things that's when you get to be happy. But you and I working together really showed me that happiness, it's the way. It's not the thing you get at the end of the journey. It's the thing that you cultivate along your journey.

Kristi: Oh, my goodness me, Meivys. I think people need to go back and listen to all of those things. Because you said some big things there; that you decide how you see the world, the way you think creates what you live, happiness isn't this place, it's along the way, it's the process. I mean, that's enough right there. We can just say be like, "Okay, that's what you got. And we could end, right this moment."

But as I'm thinking about that, are there other takeaways or any other lessons that really impacted you? Either the way you see yourself, the way you parent, the way you have your relationships, that really sort of came from the work that you did with coaching?

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Meivys: Yeah, absolutely. Besides the things that I've said, I used to really believe... Nobody ever taught me these things growing up. I had wonderful parents; I had a beautiful childhood. But I always really thought that you work hard to get something, you get it, and then you get to be happy. Then you go hard to get something else, you get it, then you get to be happy. I really lived my life like that.

I know trying to get into medical school and achieve my career goals, and achieve my personal goals of family and marriage, I think I lived like that. Suffer, suffer, suffer, then you have a baby, happy, suffer, suffer, suffer, have another baby, happy... Like, that's really what you're supposed to do. Which is why at some point, I was like, "Well, I really kind of want to be happy now, every day if I could."

Kristi: This is perfect. What you said right there is so good, though. That for so many of us and so many people listening to this, we've developed this pattern of saying, 'once I do X, Y and Z. Once I accomplish this, once I get into this program, once I lose this weight, once I'm more fit, once I sleep better, once I stop yelling at my kids... Once I, once I, once I... Then, later on, then I'll be happy.'

And so, it's that arrival fallacy of, 'later on, I'll have that emotion that I'm looking for. And along the way I can kind of suck it up, because later, then I'll have arrived.' And then what we find out is that later we have our same thought patterns, our same emotional responses. And so, we might feel transiently, that sense of joy and accomplishment because we graduated, but then we're back to our baseline.

Meivys: Yeah. So, because of that thought that I had, which is, "You suffer until you get what you want, and then you get to be happy," I was always in a mode of trying to fix everything. Trying to fix the husband to be a certain way, so I get to be happy. Trying to get the kids to eat and sleep and behave in a certain way, so I get to feel good about motherhood.

Trying to get my patients to have certain outcomes and say the right thing, so I get to feel good about my patient care. Trying to get my body to be a



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certain size and look a certain way, so I get to feel good about myself, about my fitness. So, I was in that sort of mindset that applies to every aspect of your life.

And I think coaching really impacted every single one of those areas of my life, because it allowed me to understand that you get to decide when you're happy. You get to decide when it's good enough. And that also, all those external things, what your patients say about you, what your kids eat, it's what your husband does or doesn't do, all of those things are external circumstances that don't have to define who you are or how you get to feel about things.

Kristi: Can I glom on to that for a second? Because many people who are listening to this, they've done lots of coaching or they're coaches themselves, and instantly they hear what you're saying, they're like, "Okay, external circumstances don't define me." That's not a new concept for them. But can you just break it down just a little bit more?

When you've got these external circumstances, that so many of us just grew up experiencing, as those are the things that dictate our experience. When you have those, and now you're saying that, "Okay, I actually get to decide to be happy." Can you explain a little bit about that? So, that somebody when they hear that, and they're like, "What are you talking about? What do you mean, you just get to decide?"

Meivys: I want to sort of explain what being happy means. Being happy doesn't mean, 'when my patients are suffering, I don't feel joy, because they're suffering. I don't feel happy because they're suffering.' I feel at peace and able to handle their suffering. I'm able to appreciate that that is a circumstance that doesn't say anything about who I am as a doctor. I'm able to hold space for them.

And I think that the ability to be able to hold space for them, and not wanting to rush into change them so I feel better about myself, it actually makes me a pretty great doctor.

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Kristi: Totally. And that distinction, I think, is so good. I'm really glad you brought that up, the difference between happy versus content versus just feeling capable and peaceful versus joy. It's so important.

So, what is it about, when you're with a patient who's suffering, or it's a situation with your kid where maybe your kid is upset, what is it that helps you handle that differently? So that you're not trying to just constantly fix the things outside to feel better?

Meivys: Well, it started with coaching and working with you. And every time I had whatever problems; sometimes it was internal, sometimes it was external. It was learning to process the emotion, right? And then we talked, we worked on that together, and learning that emotions are a feeling that are not going to kill you, and that you can sit with that. And to completely process it.

So, I started with not being afraid to feel things. Because sometimes you go through life trying to avoid everything. I always talk about the fire and your hand; the closer you get to the fire, it gets warmer and warmer and warmer. Which means that you pull away. And you really shouldn't put your hand in the fire. That's maybe not the right analogy.

But my point is, that when you go through life trying to avoid everything, then you're always controlling everything, so that you don't get to feel anything. What coaching really helped me appreciate, is that you can actually feel the emotion and process it and be at peace with it. And then, that takes some of that power away.

I used to be like, if my kids for example, weren't eating right, having sort of a problem, weren't behaving right, or whatever, I would immediately think, "I'm a problem. I'm a bad parent. I'm failing." And that obviously, is a horrible emotion because you're human, right? And you don't want to feel that.

So, I would want to control their behavior, so that I could feel like a good parent again, so I could get away from that emotion. But the moment that I,

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again, go back to the kids, they did the thing that made me feel the emotion and the moment I was able to say, "Okay, this doesn't say anything about the kind of parent that I am. And it feels awful, but let's process it, let's feel it, let's get past it." Then all of a sudden, I was able to hold space for my kids to be who they wanted to be in that moment.

And that, I think, is beautiful. As a parent to be able to do that, to allow your kids to be who they want to be, who they need to be. Have the meltdown, have the thing, not eat, and still feel able to show up for them with love, with compassion, for them and for yourself.

Ironically, I went to coaching so that I could do that for patients. Patients were the thing that was triggering for me. Because in the fertility world, sometimes you get people pregnant and they call you on a pedestal, and they say, "Thanks to you, I have my family. You are the most amazing thing in the world," and other things. And to be honest, back in the day, I was like, "This is awesome. Oh, my god, bring it on! Best job in the world! What a feeling!"

But then, sometimes patients were not happy, for whatever reason. Sometimes they don't get what they want. But they still tell you, "Thank you, you are amazing. I appreciate it." And sometimes they don't get what they want, and they blame you for that. And then, if you believe that you were completely responsible for the success, then you have to believe that you're completely responsible for their sadness and the lack of success.

And that roller coaster was very hard for me to handle. Going online and seeing a negative comment would destroy me for days, if not weeks. And I realized, early on in my career, that I had 20 years left. That I wanted to show up for my patients, and to lead in the fertility world. I had so many other aspirations at that time, that there is no way I was going to survive if I was going to be up and down and waiting for other people to validate me.

Really, that was the thing that led me to coaching in the first place. Is being able to say, "Okay, how can I continue to be so empathetic, and so caring for my patients, so that I could be there for them." Because I love that about

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me. I love loving my patients and caring for them. I'm thinking about them constantly. I didn't want to change that. I didn't want to turn into some robotic doctor with a sort of a metal barrier or anything like that.

But at the same time, I needed to first be able to be there for them. And then, be there for the next person and the next person and the next person, without really robbing my family or robbing myself out of that, empty my pockets completely. Right? So, that was the first thing that I worked on with you, as the coach. And it totally, totally helped me so much.

And now, I feel like I can still be really empathetic, because that's who I am. But I can actually give them space and show up for them and be like a safe vessel, container, for them where they get to swear. Sometimes I say, "Let's say a couple of swear words together, because this is friction, it really sucks."

So, allowing them to cry and swear and be upset and be disappointed. And I can be a witness and a safe space for them, where they don't have to feel like they're taking away from my from my mental health in any way. Because I get to protect that for myself.

Kristi: Just hearing you talk about this, it makes me think about how when you go and work so hard on one aspect of your life, like your relationship with your patients, it becomes a transferable skill set. And it just ripples out to a relationship with your children, your relationship with your super wonderful husband, your relationship with colleagues, and random people at the kids' playground. And ultimately your relationship and your thoughts about yourself.

When you were doing coaching, were there any things that you really didn't think you needed to work on, there just weren't issues, but you were kind of surprised that you ended up working on?

Meivys: Interestingly, I was say the husband and the children. Because I was able to see that with the patients clearly. But then, I thought, "No, but

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my children really do need to eat better for me to... My husband really needs to do this in a certain way.

Kristi: I think it's so important you're saying that, because we want to make things really real, right? When you go through coaching, it's not like all of a sudden, your life changes and people start behaving differently, or you start thinking differently so that everything is this Nirvana, Shangri La.

Meivys: "I really need to be a size 6." Like, come on. Even at the time I was working on that, I really didn't think that those things were separate. But you're exactly right. Once I started doing that work with a patient, that I started doing that work, then it sort of translated into every other aspect of my life.

I still remember the moment, learning in coaching, about there are circumstances that you get to decide how you feel about the circumstances. And at the time, I still felt like whatever people said about me is the truth.

And I remembered I was in a clinic; I was running really late. And I would go into a patient room, and I would say, "I'm really sorry, I'm late." And patient, I would say, "Oh, I don't mind. I would wait for you for as long as... You're the best doctor in the world. And I'm sure if you're late, it's because you're very busy and caring for everybody. Not a problem." I would be like, "Oh, thank you."

And then I would go to the next room, and I would say exactly the same thing, "I'm sorry, I'm late." And the person waited exactly the same amount of time that the other person did, and they would like, "Well, that's really upsetting and very inappropriate. I don't know why you're late, but I don't like this." Clearly, it's the same circumstance, and two different people have different opinions about it.

That was the first time my worldview almost shifted, because it was so obvious, right there. That is a central concern, and there were two different opinions about it. And I needed to decide which one of these two opinions I

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was going to take with me, and let it define me. So, that was the first moment when I started to sort of see that.

And then, over time, every time you have an encounter, a positive encounter, you feel that positive emotion where you get to say, "I'm amazing," I would step down and be like, "This person thinks I'm amazing. Good for them. Wonderful." I get decide. Then the next person will say, "You're not amazing." And you get to say the same thing again, and again and again. Yeah.

Once I felt like I was doing that consistently with myself and my patients, then I started noticing things with my kids and my husband. Where they would do things that will make me feel great. And then they will do things that would not make me feel so great. And I started sort of making that shift, as well. And I feel like it has really, really so much improved my relationship with my husband and my children, and my parenting journey, and how I get to show up for them.

I was telling you the other day about the meltdown that my son had because he wanted to have candy. We were talking about how he wanted to have candy at 8:30, and not just one candy, he wanted the entire thing of candy, right at that moment. And of course, I said no.

So, he had a meltdown about it, got really upset. I mean, in the old days, I would be upset and telling him it's wrong to have the candy, why are you saying you can have candy at 8:30? We don't do that. Feeling terrible about myself. We probably would have ended up with him going upstairs really mad.

But because of all the coaching, in that moment I was able to have empathy for him for wanting the candy. I was able to just be present without overreacting, letting me have a little moment. I told him, "I understand that you want to have candy. We don't eat candy this late. You can have one, and you can have more tomorrow. But you cannot have the whole bag this late. And you can have a few minutes to yourself to process that and calm down."



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So, he went behind the couch and sat there and had this moment. When it was over, he came to me, we talked about the candy, we talked, we went upstairs, went to sleep, and he was happy.

I really do think that coaching helped me process, be at peace, with that uncomfortable emotion of your kid having a meltdown, without making it mean something bigger than it is. And give him the space to do that. Which ironically, it's what, in my mind, allowed me to "fix" the problem.

Because I didn't want to give him the candy. I wasn't going to just give him the candy. And I also didn't want it to end and be like, "I said, go to bed and go to sleep. We're done talking." And I really wanted it to be a partnership, where we can come together and appreciate each other.

It feels so wonderful, as a parent, to be in that place where you feel like you're a partner with your child, you can hold your boundaries, but at the same time, show up with compassion, and see them process their own emotion and their own discomfort right in front of your eyes.

Kristi: It reminds me of when you said, a moment ago, when you saw like similar circumstance to different patients having two different sets of thoughts, different experiences. We can sometimes see, in other people, how things go. And similarly with your child. Or you can notice that your relationship turns into a partnership where you can hold space for him to have big emotions that, in the past maybe, you would have scurried to either fix or talk him out of having or something like that.

But when you develop this sort of collaboration, it's almost like an external version of this parallel process that you're doing with yourself. Where you have like a partnership with yourself, partnership with your emotions, instead of a let me fix this, let me stop, change my thoughts, so I can think differently and feel better where it's more adversarial.

Meivys: Yeah, in the past, it would be like, you need to change your mind about the candy so that I can feel better. So, I would be like, no, you don't really want candy. No, that's not true.

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Kristi: Love it.

Meivys: I somehow would expect them to be like, "Oh, dear Mother, thank you very much for that insight. You were right. Sugar at 8pm is a terrible idea. I so appreciate you." Which of course, never happens when they're six.

The next thing that would happen when I couldn't change his mind, is to just say, "That's it! Done! Go to your room. You're terrible." And then everybody will feel bad about it. So, it's that idea of not having to change what somebody else thinks about you, for you to feel good about yourself, that allows you to hold the space.

Kristi: Yes. Oh, gosh. There's something I want to mention. And this is might feel like a little bit of a 90° turn, but it's related to this. And I think you'll see how so many clients who come to coaching, when they come, they come because they just understandably, genuinely, want to feel better.

And I remember something that you said, and I can't remember when you said it, but it always stuck with me. You said, coaching does not make you feel better. And you and I share sort of this belief that coaching, it's not the thing that makes you feel better. But can you elaborate on that?

Meivys: Yeah, it's this notion that I used to think also. I remember going back when I was going through the fertility struggle, I would be like, "Why do I need a counselor? I need a baby. I need the thing that gives me a baby. I don't need to talk about having a baby, I need to have the baby. That's how I'm going to feel better."

But of course, at the time, counseling sort of allowed me to process that grief that I was having, that I didn't know how to process. So similarly, coaching is not to make you happy. Coaching, it's not about 'I work with a coach now, therefore, I'm happy all the time.' It's not about 'working with a coach, now nothing bothers me.' Gosh, I am bothered every day, all day, 100 times a day.

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It's not like I'm the coach, and I have no stress. I'm the coach and I have no overwhelm, I have no sadness, I have no grief, I have no negative emotions. It's just more the process of processing those negative emotions. It's more the process of learning to be at peace with yourself, trust in yourself.

And it's not something that you have, and that works 100% perfectly all the time. If that was the case, I wouldn't still be working with you. I'd be like, "I worked with Kristi, I'm fixed now forever. That's it. See you later." I still need you every single week, mostly, right? And every time we do, I have some things that I bring to the table that I need to work on, that you help me with. Because it's a constant process.

And sometimes you become overwhelmed, and you are possessed by all the emotions, that you're not able to see outside of that. And I would describe coaching more as an awareness, that even if you are still in the mud, you have the awareness that there is the place that exists outside of the mind. Even if you're not really quite sure how to get there. Well, I think that before coaching, I didn't even have that awareness at all.

Kristi: Oh, gosh, that's such a beautiful way to put it. I, for sure, didn't have that awareness either. Nobody, despite all the wonderful resources I had, nobody taught me that either. Right? One of the things that you and I have done together, as coaching and client, is as I learned about Internal Family Systems and realized what a powerful adjunct it was for coaching, I started bringing it in and working with my clients in situations where it seemed applicable. So, I'm curious for you, what's your experience been with that incorporation of IFS into your exploration?

Meivys: Oh, it's been amazing. I'm so glad that you brought it up. I never even heard about it until you brought it up. I think, at the very beginning of my coaching journey, just the thought that things are an external circumstance. And then you get to have a thought about it, and the thought that you have about it determines how you feel about it. And that feeling

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determines your actions. I think that was really revolutionary for me at the time.

I got a lot a lot out of that concept. And we worked a lot with that concept. But as we continue to work together, and as I continue to reach sort of a point where you, like I said, you develop that awareness, there's still a gap. And the gap is, yes, you can get to decide how you feel about certain things. But how do you decide? And what is consistent with who you are as a person? And why is there all of this conflict?

So, I think the Internal Family System has been really amazing. And understanding the coaching model, but learning for me to sort of make decisions that are not just choosing, but that are aligned with what we call "the witness;" who you are in your soul.

Which is different, because the coaching model in abstract is like, you get to decide. You get to decide that you are here today and that you love talking to me. Or you get to decide that you're actually just doing this for a podcast, and you don't actually love talking to me. You can make that decision.

But at the end of the day, one of those decisions feels really good to who I am as a person, and the connection that we have together, and the other one doesn't. And you're right, I could decide either. And whatever I decide will cause an emotion that will cause an action; one of them to continue to be friends, and another one is no longer friends. And either way, my life will go on and everything will be fine. But one of them actually really feels good.

And is I think the Internal Family System has really showed me how to choose, and how to develop that trust with myself, and how to sort of understand that there is "the witness;" which is the essence of who you are. And then there is all of these parts.

And I think the other thing that Internal Family Systems has done that coaching hasn't done, a couple of things. One of them, I think it was the first time that I actually was able to heal from my infertility journey, when we

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started working on Internal Family Systems. We talked about this, right? I don't think I had healed before, until there was Internal Family Systems.

And going back to that part of me that went through infertility. And then all of a sudden, there's another part of me who gave birth to babies, and as a mother. And that other part was just like, well, now you're no longer in the equation. You're done with that. Nobody ever really went back to her and talked to her. And in turn, with the family system, you really helped me do that.

I didn't know that I needed it. I kept getting triggered, and I thought, well, yeah, it is what it is. But it's only when I was able to go back to that part and talk to her that I really felt like I had healed. And healing doesn't mean forgetting. Good healing doesn't mean it no longer happened. Healing just means being at peace with it and acknowledging that part of you.

So that that has been Internal Family Systems; healing from other things, and also making decisions that are aligned with who you are in your soul. Which coaching, on the abstract, with the model, doesn't do that. And also, I think it's just a great way that our brain, our minds, work, like whenever there are any decisions or any circumstance it's usually the part of me that says this, the part of me that says that, the part of me that says that.

And I think coaching alone doesn't really put other things together. But Internal Family System that's so... I am so grateful that you've brought it up and that we're working together, because I find that an incredibly powerful tool to help me understand myself and help me process the world. When you sort of realize that they're all of your parts. And all of the parts have something to bring to the table.

And then you get to be the witness of all of them. And you get to listen to all of them. And again, it's a transferable skill, as well. When you are like, "I am in a leadership position where there's lots of people that have lots of different opinions about things." It's really helped me with that, as well.

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Kristi: I love how you put that. Coaching is a very broad umbrella, right? There's cognitive coaching, there's somatic coaching, there's Internal Family Systems coaching, there's executive coaching, there's so many different ways to go about it. Just like there's so many therapy modalities. And I think that you said it so nicely, when you said that, when you use the paradigm of Internal Family Systems, you can not only make space for all the different parts, but you can understand yourself better.

And when there are parts that really are yearning for healing, that model provides for that. The IFS model able to essentially, basically, time travel back to a part of you that might be burdened with something that's really tender, it oftentimes gets triggered, and then to be able to offer a repair.

We know with neuroplasticity, this is how we can actually feel better, as opposed to just putting something in a big locked tight box and never looking at it. But we can actually go back, process a lot of those older emotions, and then offer a transformation that really feels truly settled in our systems.

So, for the people who are listening to this, who maybe haven't gotten into coaching, one of the things that will cross their mind, even just listening to you, is it sounds like there's a component of time and there's an investment that you've put in. In terms of time with doing your own exploration, time with meeting with me, there's a financial investment.

What do you say to people who are thinking about the time, and the money, component of coaching?

Meivys: Well, I think for me, it has been one of the best investments; investments in time and money. Because my husband doesn't listen to podcasts, he's not going to listen to this; divorces are way more expensive than coaching. We've been married for 13 years now, and I truly love my marriage, and I truly love him. And I truly love him in all of his imperfections. And I've truly managed to get to the point where he can be his own way, and I don't have to react to it. That is priceless.



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I did it for me. But he's also been able to be who he wants to be and grow as a person, without needing to feel like he needs to be a certain way to make me happy. And then because he gets to be a certain way, and then I also get to be a certain way, I also don't need to change for him to be happy. So, I really think that in my marriage, mostly because of the work that I have done in not wanting to change him, or not wanting to having to try to change him, he gets to be who he is. But I also get to be who I am.

Because it goes both ways. If I'm always trying to change him, then I'm always going to try to change myself to please him, as well. Right. And I don't think there is enough money in the world that you could put a prize in truly being happily married. And I think I'm happily married. Yes, I've married a good man. I didn't marry a narcissist man, an abusive man, of course you can't fix that. I married good man.

With that good man, coaching has helped me show up in my marriage lovingly, and with space, and emotionally available. And I really think that that has been the key to what I consider to be today, a wonderful, successful marriage. And the same for my relationship with my children. Like, I can't put enough money on that. I mean, these precious humans I brought into the world, they're only little for so long, and then they get to be in the world and be who they are.

And I used to believe that, we've talked about it, every line, I say as a mother, has some big impact on their lives, I have to be a certain way to make sure they're successful. And coaching has given me the freedom to know that they're going to get to choose who they are, and they get to be who they are.

But I can just show up lovingly, and give them the space to be who they're going to be. And that who they're going to be, it's independent of who I am. But I can still love them madly. That we get to each have that space for each other. Where I get to be myself, and they get to grow up to be themselves, without me having to be a certain way to ensure they're a

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certain way. And having to be a certain way to ensure I'm happy about how they're who they are. It's very convoluted, I'm sure you might get it.

But there is no money that I can put a price on having that sense of joy in parenting. Coaching has brought back the joy in parenting. You're still getting up in the morning, you're still doing the laundry, you're still taking them to activities, all the things.

But just the pure joy in knowing that you don't have to change them to feel good about yourself. And learning to hold the space and becoming a witness to their wonder and their growing up. And they're getting a C in math, and getting an A sometimes, and all of the things. It's just been really, really powerful. I cannot put a value on that.

And then medicine; I love, love my job. Now, not only am I am fertility specialist, but I'm also a clinic owner and I'm a leader. And that's my next level. Now, I still need to work. I still need to transfer this going into the leadership. But when it comes to the leadership, I still think people need to be a certain way for me to feel like a good leader. So, I'm working on that.

Kristi: It's like the onion that we keep peeling, and maybe a garlic clove is better. Like you peel one and there's another, there's another. And you solve for something in one aspect of your life. And then life happens, and you realize, oh, there's still more layers here.

Meivys: Right. Exactly. So, that goes to the point, that it's not like you get to this Nirvana place where everything is perfect. Now, in my role as a leader, I'll be very honest, I still need a lot of coaching in that. Into sort of separating who I am as a person, on my worth as a leader, not related to how people feel about certain things. So, that's still a work in progress.

But I know I'm going to get there because I've done it before. So, I could see what that feels like, even though I'm not quite there yet. I'm still like be certain way so I feel good about myself. I still have that there, but I know I will get there. And again, I think that's the key to being good leaders, to be able to give people space.

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And I'm getting there through the coaching because I've done it before. To me, it has been such a positive force in my life. I had to spend a lot of money on it. And it has been an incredible investment because the return of investment is just being able to have joy and to be at peace with who you are and to be excited for life. As opposed to overwhelmed, as opposed to having to control everything all the time so you get to feel good about yourself. There's so much freedom in that.

Kristi: I feel like the theme, in everything you've said, comes back to a sense of freedom with unlinking your experience from other people's experience or expectations or words. And also, I hear this sense of deep self-trust, that seems like you have developed over the years. With just trusting that you can figure it out. Trusting that you can learn from and process emotions that maybe don't feel the best. Trusting that you are going to be able to approach the next level.

I'm so grateful that you spent so much time with me and shared this glimpse, because it really does put a nice human face to the coaching experience, which can be kind of a black box if you don't know what coaching is. Or you think coaching and therapy are kind of the same thing. And maybe you did therapy at one point in time, but don't know what coaching is.

So, it's super helpful to hear all these things. And your descriptions are so beautiful. I'm curious, where, if people want to learn more about the work that you're doing, personally or professionally, how can people find you?

Meivys: Well, I'm not a life coach myself. I did go to the Life Coach School, and I did get this certification because I wanted to bring a little bit of a coaching approach to my patient care. But I am not a life coach. I'm not a practicing life coach. But what I do is, I'm a fertility specialist. So, I am the medical director and owner of Markham Fertility Center. Instagram @Dr.Meivys.Garcia. On Instagram, I mostly talk about fertility care. But every once in a while, I talk about these things as well. About time management, about different life philosophies.

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Kristi: That's great. We will put all of that in our show notes so people can go. Because there are many people who listen to this, who either are physicians who really like connecting with other physicians and seeing how they connect with their patients, or they just have a personal interest in fertility. And I think hearing it from you is amazing.

Thank you so much for coming on the podcast. I know this so valuable for everybody who's listening.

Meivys: I hope so. It's my pleasure. And thank you so much for being my coach. You have really helped me tremendously, and I really, really value our relationship.

Kristi: I felt the same.

I hope you loved that conversation as much as I did. If you're interested in applying the things that you're learning here on the podcast, I can help. If you're listening to this when this podcast comes out in real time, enrollment for the Habits on Purpose for Physicians Small Group Coaching Program is opening soon.

You can check out all the details and get on the waitlist at [HabitsOnPurpose.com/HOPPwaitlist](https://HabitsOnPurpose.com/HOPPwaitlist). HOPP Small Group Coaching is one of the best places if you want to get to the heart of why you think, feel, and act as you do. Not only can you use your CME funds, but you can join a small group of other women physicians who are working on the same things right alongside you.

HOPP will help you stop feeling reactionary, and start being more consistently intentional in your life. Enjoy your week and I'll see you next week.

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