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JASON'S REALITY CHECK

Hi. It's Bari. Now we're getting into Jason's Reality Check. Jason is 42 years old, and he's been dating on and off for 10 years. He wants to be married by December 2013 and says it hasn't happened yet because he's been so focused on work—his career—and isn't clear about the kind of person he needs to marry.

His longest relationship was nine months, and even right from the very beginning there were issues they didn't examine. He knew in his gut that they weren't a good fit, but he didn't follow that instinct.

When I asked him what happened he said, "She wanted to get married, but we weren't thriving correctly. We were just different. We were like 80, it was like 60/40, 30/70. I can't give an exact proportion, but it just didn't feel like half and rather than just admit it, my tendency is just to work harder. I figured I could just work my way through this by working harder at it but it didn't do anything."

Then we moved into a discussion about his parents who were separated when he was 12 and divorced when he was 18. When they separated, there were a lot of financial difficulties.

Jason shared with me that he felt supported by them up to a point and felt loved when he was younger. But his father never gave him the approval he needed. His dad never gave him the feedback to know that what he was doing was the right thing, and he felt like he could never measure up. And this caused him to develop low-self esteem. His mom was supportive but she couldn't help. She couldn't remedy it. He really lacked a role model. And this lack of approval from his dad affected him very much.

He said he felt very guilty.

Here's how he described it: "I basically had to grovel for things in order to get from my dad because there was an internal agreement that basically they were supposed to pay X amount per person and I basically had to grovel for things, for money, for trips, for clothing and it wasn't until I did it enough he was like, okay, so I just stopped asking. It was not just guilt but there was also a lot of groveling involved."

So there was a lot of groveling, frustration, and guilt, issues we return to later in the Reality Check.

At this point, we turned our attention to what Jason thinks he wants and needs in a relationship. He said he definitely needed "major empathy and support, someone very caring and very generous." He needs "someone who knows how to work as a team" so that you can "work together to build something"—the opposite of his parents who didn't work as a team.

We also discussed another major event in his childhood—when his mom got sick and he had to take care of her.



Here's what Jason told me: "So basically through the eight years of fighting over assets, she developed cancer. She took it inward. She told me later in life, 'I just had to make a decision and I decided to choose my life—to take care of myself—so I can be there for my kids,' and she changed, focused on getting better and it was a true miracle."

Jason was really generous with his mom and helped her a great deal.

As he explained, "I brought her to doctors, carried her where she couldn't walk, stuff like that."

I pointed out that he's such a "good son," and we moved into his personality traits, which include being loyal, communicative, sensitive, and empathetic.

Then we started moving into the kind of women he's been attracting. Jason said that he doesn't see a specific pattern—other than just a huge mix of people.

He said, "It's like the circus. You don't know what act you are going to get. It is just all over the place. Some of them were critical and abusive. Some of them were weak and apathetic or just not present, they were all types of people."

I shared my insight: "So these women were like your childhood all mixed up but basically they never had the qualities that you need. They weren't empathetic, they weren't generous, they weren't working with you as a team and they weren't giving, right?"

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He never got the whole package. They were people he just wouldn't want to marry.

Earlier he'd told me that he attracts people who are "entitled or self-absorbed or weak-willed, willy-nilly, not wanting to say what they want."

He also said he was scared of dating because of his habit of letting himself be vulnerable and then getting hurt.

He said that he never learned how to argue so when girls argue with him, he feels it's really hard to respond without losing faith or losing the idea of being the man in the relationship.

We talked about his blockages are related to fear—fear of getting hurt—and he's really challenged by the issue of getting confused in a relationship—not knowing what things to let go of and where to hold his ground.

In terms of his career, he shared with me these patterns. Jason said, "I had to work hard to get where I am—running a private practice and I have to work hard to maintain it. I don't know how to relax."

He said: "I have become very insular, needing lots of time to relax from a very demanding week. Walking and reading helps me to unwind and become human again. I eat very healthy and train a lot in the gym. I'm really stuck in this conflict between self-needs and being selfless. This is a conflict I have not resolved so I have retreated into my shell."

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He continued: "I have a fear in relationships and tons of anxiety opens up. My fears of being judged and being emasculated by women don't help. I have strong beliefs and try to live up to them as much as I can. I keep my feelings to myself because. . . here we go again. . . I have a critical father and I could not as a child compete with him for feelings to be heard."

We dipped back into the issue of never feeling like he could measure up to his dad, and I asked him "if you couldn't measure up, no matter what you did, what happened? What story started emerging?"

Jason said, "Basically, I started telling myself that I'm no good. . .not worth anything."

I pointed out that he keeps attracting women who support that conversation—that story.

Since he feels like he isn't worthy, he attracts women who make him feel unworthy. That's how it works. I asked him if he can remember an instance where his parents were fighting or he felt like he wanted his dad's approval at any point in time.

Jason said: "His birthday. I bought him a book, I know he liked, he was into history and battles. I bought him a Civil War book and, I said, 'I hope you enjoy it,' and he said, 'Oh yeah, thank you very much,' and he threw it in his trunk and it sat there for about two and a half years. That made me feel terrible."

Now I had him switch it around. I shared with him how the reason his dad was that way is because he never learned how to love. He never learned. He probably never got the love he needed so he couldn't give it, he could not ... he couldn't give it to you. That's the thing with parents is that basically they are screwed up. They are screwed up because they never got their needs met so this is about changing the pattern. This is about ending the patterns and starting new ones. New generations of what you want to have. What would you have said? Let's turn it around. Was it a wonderful sweet thing that you did? And what would you have liked him to say?

Jason agreed that it was a sweet thing and said he would have loved to hear something like: "Hey, great book. I really appreciate it and I'm going to read it".

I said, "You see, what happens is you were a little kid, and your dad reacted a certain way. That's all that happened. You gave him the book. He threw it in the trunk, and he acted a certain way. Here is where the problem comes in with human beings. You made it mean something. You turned experiences like this into ones that meant that you were somehow unworthy. We are meaning-making machines. You made it mean that there is something wrong with you. That if he would have picked it up and had a different reaction, then it would have felt like, "Oh, I'm a good person. I'm okay," but instead it was demoralizing and you made it mean something about you like if you were lovable or if you were different or if you were good enough then he would have reacted differently. The truth is, it was his problem, right?"

Jason agreed.

Then, I said, "I know that you know that. Intellectually, you know that, but it makes no difference that we know it intellectually. You have a great career, you are really smart, you have a practice, but the reason you are not meeting women who love you is because you don't deep down love yourself. Deep down, you believe you are not good enough. That's unconscious and so you cover it up with being this overachiever, with being busy, with all this confusion."



Jason totally agreed.

I continued, "Because of your experience, that was the lens through which you formed relationships. Now just because that was your lens, doesn't mean that there wasn't another alternative, alternate reality going on. That's the thing is that just because we went through what we went through, doesn't mean that there weren't other possibilities but we couldn't see it with our limited awareness and then we create it because that is what you know. We only know the dysfunction but the good news is, you will totally get rid of that fear because we are going to move into a powerful reality." Into choosing a different way of seeing himself, a healthier one. A different attitude.

At this point, we moved back into adulthood, and we talked about Victor Frankel who was in the Holocaust. He was tortured. He went through what no human being should ever have to go through and he was marching in the snow with no shoes, sick, tortured but with his attitude he transcended. They couldn't take away his attitude. Now he could have made himself into, 'I'm a piece of crap. The Nazi's are right. It's terrible, I want to die. I don't deserve to live.' He didn't have that reaction. What was his reaction? His reaction was that with his mind he thought about his wife. He thought about love. He visualized his parents. He visualized reality because they couldn't touch his soul. Through our ability to transcend, we can create anything. You have to transcend the, 'I'm not good enough story' because it's not real, you made it up.

Let's talk reality."

Now I had Jason tell me about his personality. . .who he really is in his soul.

Here's how Jason described himself: "Super loyal, spiritual, warm, empathetic, sensitive, strong, giver, funny. Philosopher. Tough."

Then I asked him to finish this line: "I'm an attraction magnet for a woman who. . ."

And he said "for a woman who is very empathetic, understanding, a giver, a person who can be supportive."

Then he said, "Together, we will build a harmonious family or harmonious relationship and then from that family and a good life experience together."

I told him that he's opening up that space—clearing that channel for new love to grow.

His next step was to write his completion letters. I said, "I want you to write a completion letter to your dad. I want you to let him have it. I want you to thank him for giving you life and I want you to let him have it. What you didn't get, what you wished you could have gotten, how bad it felt to not get it, for not taking that birthday gift and saying how, 'Oh, thank you so much, Jason, you are such a sweet little, you are such a sweet kid, you are so thoughtful.' You now have to give yourself what he didn't give you, which is love and acceptance. All the things you want, it's time to start giving it to yourself. You too have to get that book, *Healing the Child Within*. You can get it for a buck on Amazon and it will just be a few dollars shipping."

"There is another book you can put on your list after that. It's called *Healing the Shame that Binds Us* by John Bradshaw and that's another goody.

You are going to get this book, you are going to start to, you are going to write the letter to your dad. You are going to start to forgive yourself and realize you've been really like knifing yourself. You have been beating yourself to a pulp and rejecting life, hiding from life, hiding from women.



There are so many women out there who are sweet and loving and there is one for you that you are just going to have this amazing life with. That's what you want to do so it's the completion letters, forgive yourself. Affirmations, I'm lovable, I deserve love, I attract loving, sweet. I attract, I'm an attraction magnet for my loving, sweet wife."

"When you've finished your completion letter, you're going to write your empowering statement. That is who you are. I want you to look at it two, three, four, five times a day. That will keep you in reality in fact."

"Jason that was great work."

"Thank you so much."

