

# *Fear Me Out Podcast*

## **Episode 38**

Hosted by Clinical Psychologist - Dana P. Saperstein PhD.

*Guest Speakers*

## **Dave & Marla Yukelson - Keys to a Relationship**

**Kim Fauskee** 00:02

All right, Dana and I are going to start something a little bit different. I think our audience has gotten used to listening to me do the intros. But we're going to do the intros together from now going forward. So our guest in this episode, or gas, I should say in this episode are Dave and Marla up Wilson. We've been doing a series on relationships and how relationships work and what's important relationships and healthy relationships and trying to stay away from the negative side of relationships, since that's prevalent out there already. So it was important for us and to have Dave and Marla On this episode, it's a couple that have been married almost 50 years and have been together for over 50 years. Were high school sweethearts, and really speak eloquently about how their relationship has evolved and continues to evolve and how they're just in much or even more in love with each other now than they were when they got together. A decade. I shouldn't say decade five decades ago, luckily that they were childhood friends of Dana, but I'm gonna let Dana talk about some of the keys that they mentioned in this episode that I think you want to listen to.

**Dr. Dana** 01:27

Well, thanks, Kim. You know, I met Dave and Marla in 1970, which is pretty remarkable. I was 15 years old. And we've been best friends ever since that time. And when you and I were talking about the idea of having somebody with a very long term relationship come in, they popped right into my mind. Part of it they that I think is important for us to talk about and listen to in the episode has to do with how you keep a relationship going over the very long term. And part of what they said was communication, super important. Self and other respect is really important. Having a separate identity, not going to sleep when you're angry. And those sorts of things are really the magic ingredients that have kept them together for so long. And your partner being your best friend and your partner being your best friend. Absolutely. So I hope you guys enjoy the episode. And these people are very, very dear to me. And I'm so glad that they were willing to come and talk about their experience together.

**Kim Fauskee** 02:26

Perfect. Well, without further ado, here's our episode with Dave and Marla you Kosan.

**Dr. Dana** 02:42

There are two basic motivating forces, fear and love. When we're afraid we pull back from life. When we're in love, we open up to all that life has to offer with passion, excitement, and acceptance.

**Fear Me Out 03:01**

Coming to you from our studio in Santa Barbara, California. This is the fear me out podcast. We're not your typical Self Help Program. Our show takes a deep dive into those psychological issues that affect us on a daily basis. We hope to shift your perspective and have you experiencing emotions differently. Now here are your hosts Kim Fauskee. And Dr. Dana Saperstein.

**Kim Fauskee 03:23**

All right, David, Marla, welcome. I heard you came with the keys to what a long term relationship looks like and feels like experience like everything today. And you're going to clue our audience into what the basics of a long term relationship are.

**Marla Yukelson 03:43**

It's a whole key ring.

**Kim Fauskee 03:44**

It's a whole key ring. Okay, perfect. We it's multiple keys for that. So I'm going to let you tell I don't know which one of you wants to start with how you met and and the number of years you've been together and the number of years you've been married and but all that you

**Dr. Dana 04:04**

begin to tell the story. Do you mind if I start just for a moment? Your names on the marquee Go ahead. I just want to make sure that our audience knows that I have known these two lovely people since I was 15 years old. And they were some of my favorite people. How are you an hour?

**Marla Yukelson 04:19**

I was 195. I was wondering if we were going to talk

**Dr. Dana 04:24**

67 So it's quite a long relationship. Yeah. And I first met Dave and you and I became very quick friends and spend a lot of time together having a great time. I won't go into detail about what that looked like but it was really a lot of fun. And he was absolutely one of my dearest friends through high school and college and all that and I still consider him to be like a brother. And Marla took me under her wing when I met her and was always so kind to me when I was actually living as terrified as I was about relating to women as a high schooler

**Kim Fauskee 04:58**

so I its interest Staying after hearing the stories that you've told about each other that you both became psychologists. Yeah, I know Dave has a specialization, specialization in sports. But I mean, still well, I

**Dr. Dana 05:11**

have a specialization in trauma. And I think it's because of where we both come from.

**Marla Yukelson 05:16**

Did you ever play ping pong with Dave?

**Dr. Dana** 05:18

I wouldn't even think about.

**Dave Yukelson** 05:21

You got to look. Yes, high school was the time that we really needed a strong support network. Yeah. And we had a nucleus of friends that helped us offset some of the trauma that we're dealing with in San Fernando Valley. So we got very close. And I really, to this day, we still really value and appreciate long term friends are different than acquaintances.

**Marla Yukelson** 05:47

I think Dana and I helped each other get through high school. Yeah, school is never an easy time. But there were a lot of clicks in that high school, and we kind of hung out together.

**Dr. Dana** 05:59

Very sweet. So thank you both. Yeah, I'm not sure if I ever formally Thank you. But we will get onto your relationship. But I just wanted to make sure everybody knew that. Yeah, the context of how we know each other.

**Dave Yukelson** 06:09

I don't mind starting in the marlington jump in about the beginning of the relationship. But at the time that we had a little nucleus of friends, they were in high school and, and there were three people in particular, Dave and Paul and some others that Marla started dating my closest friend, Dave. And I'll never forget, she didn't want me to say this. But I remember seeing this girl and these white boots up to her knees like Nancy Sinatra

**Marla Yukelson** 06:38

fashion at the time, I was so fashion forward.

**Dave Yukelson** 06:43

You know, so Marla got pretty close with Dave, and then their relationship she was she had feelings for somebody else. And I think, Paul, who was very close at that time, and, and that didn't work out for a variety of reasons, but were part of a circle there. And, and as a result, and I got to know Marla and, and I think when we first started, we're not going to get really invested right now, we will get invested in a friendship like we have. And I think that was the foundation of what helped our relationship grow. We had consistent friends, consistent values, and, and we then became there for each other. I let you

**Marla Yukelson** 07:28

I think you know, starting off as friends is really important. And I think one of the key rings on that one of the keys on that key ring we were just talking about was I mean, we lived together for a while. And we lived in San Diego and you know, had gone to school and then we moved across the country to Florida where Dave was getting his master's. And we removed ourselves, you know, which we thought was just for a short period of time from Southern California, and really had to rely on each other because we

basically to me move to like a foreign land moving to Tallahassee, Florida, and it was and we had a lot of experiences there that we really dependent on each other, you know, from the foundation that we grew up in, you know, in, in with our families and our upbringings and you know just being by ourselves really cemented that the relationship that we had because we had to rely on each other and we had similar upbringings and and things to fall back on. So I think being in Florida really, really cemented and then we moved on.

**Kim Fauskee 08:43**

Were you two married when Dave was in grad school?

**Marla Yukelson 08:46**

Yeah, yes, we

**Kim Fauskee 08:47**

were. I'm guessing Florida State since he's mentioned talent. Yeah.

**Dave Yukelson 08:51**

Adding to Marla's story. I think one of the first things we did, I had a lot of friends growing up, I couldn't live with very close friends, male friends, and we just weren't friends afterwards. And with Marla, I think one of our keys to our relationship was living together. Before going to San Diego. You mean Florida? Well, before we moved down to San Diego before we got married, right. And our family, oh, you know you're living in sin at that time and you can't be living together. But that was probably the most important thing was the two of us knew we were compatible living on Sepulveda Boulevard. And then when I decided that UC San Diego was a place I wanted to study as an undergraduate, Marla said, I'm coming with you as well wait a second. I wasn't thinking of that. But that was dogmatic and we're doing this together.

**Kim Fauskee 09:54**

That wasn't my part of my college experience that I was thinking Right,

**Dave Yukelson 09:57**

right. Right. But it was so that When we moved down to Solana Beach and you guys were living in Ocean Beach area and things like that, that was still Northern California, but that experience of living together, and knowing we were compatible, was a huge part of the process before then we got married. And we did get married, like in my senior year at UC San Diego, which at that time, not many undergraduates were married, but it was just a normal part of the process. And to me, one of the most important keys was our wedding vow, that we are two people who are gonna grow into one. And I think to this day of 47 years together, it's still the same thing.

**Kim Fauskee 10:44**

Was that something that you guys wrote together? Or was that some passage that you found somewhere or? I think

**Marla Yukelson 10:51**

part of it was part of our vows, and we were really in our still our, into the Moody Blues, and we used a lot of music, you know, and yeah, and it was definitely in our, our wedding vows. But But within that, moving into one, there was still a lot of respect for individuality and for developing the people, you know, that we were becoming, we were very young, but still had a lot of growing up to do in many ways. But we did that together,

**Dave Yukelson 11:25**

grew up together. For that when we go camping in tents, we're just sharing with our older son, Adam, you know that we go up to your somebody and even living together with Marla. You know, sometimes when we had tension or problems because everybody has problems being close. And I went up to somebody once with Dave, and just getting on the freeway was enough that I missed Marler. And then we got up to Nevada falls and just having kind of like the scenery, and then you know, the sequoias and and I missed her so much, that I knew there was something real special, there's that we all need space, and we all need our own independence. And, you know, Dave was kind of like my own little shaman there at that time who had found Dave. Yeah, my friend, Dave. But all this is important, I think the foundation is that two people growing into one, Marla had her goals and her passions and her pursuits. And I didn't know I wanted to be a sports psychologist until I took a year off from you know, after I graduated, what are you going to do with a degree in social psychology and we were living together and we had responsibilities. And that that was such an important part of those growing together as is sharing and having a relationship that evolve a long time.

**Kim Fauskee 12:50**

Yeah. It's fascinating to me that, being so young, that you are already that much relationship forward, in a way of, kind of already understanding who you were, understanding who you were you guys understanding how you were together? I don't think that happens.

**Marla Yukelson 13:09**

Yeah, well, I think I have to say some of a lot of that comes from we both came from very stable family homes, very loving, stable. Families. And we had that as a model. We both have our parents

**Kim Fauskee 13:25**

with that key on the rink, too. Yeah. Well,

**Marla Yukelson 13:27**

it's another one fortunate. But yeah, we, you know, we had good role models and in what loving relationships, healthy relationships look like. So you take that as in I don't know how, but somehow you infuse that into yourself as a child. And, you know, as you're growing up, and that's what you look for when you're, you know, when you're creating your own life.

**Dr. Dana 13:52**

I have a question for you guys. When my wife and I first got together and realize that our relationship was really serious. I was a barbarian. And she was

**Dave Yukelson 14:03**

an angel, an angel. I was gonna say saint, but you're right.

**Dr. Dana** 14:07

Yeah. And I grew up in a really chaotic, really trauma filled family and you grew up in a very stable environment. So there was the notion that whatever problems we had in a relationship belong to me. And I realized that some of that was probably true. But the person that I was marrying didn't know how to fight because in her family, you could never express anger or never even acknowledge that there was a problem. So part of what I asked her to do is to go into therapy and do some work on learning how to deal with conflict. I learned to not regret that but sort of get really good at it, actually. And I once I remember saying to her, man, he got really good at this. You said, Well, no, you told me that I need to learn how to do this. Anyway, that's an aside. I'm just wondering if ever in the beginning of your relationship, anything came up that required you guys To seek professional counsel, in order to resolve any issue

**Marla Yukelson** 15:06

we never did. I mean, we had a really good friend in San Diego, who was a psychology major. And you know, sometimes when I would get frustrated, you know, about things and, you know, we were, you know, having disagreements about things, you know, I remember I would talk with him, but we never really we never did.

**Dave Yukelson** 15:29

I think part of it goes back to, I mean, everything was not blissful. I was a pretty rebellious guy. I know, you know, growing up.

**Dr. Dana** 15:37

I can attest to that, you know, because I

**Dave Yukelson** 15:39

was independent. And there was some things I saw on my own family structure. I didn't want to be like, right, you know, so oftentimes, you know, I was rebellious, one, independent, but also stupid. When I look back on it, you know, it's out of my house, because it's 16, because of very selfish reasons. When I look back at it, my dad was a sweetheart, and I always have a big part of Bernie and me. My mom was an educator, and she was the one I clash with oftentimes, and, but I loved her. And my brother is a total opposite of me, but I love him. You know? So all these things, who do we talk to you? I relied on friends. And then as Marlin I kind of grew in a relationship with we had so many common values and common interests, that so much independence, you know, is how we kind of grew together. There was not really kinda like that aspect looking for therapy at that time.

**Marla Yukelson** 16:34

Yeah, I have to make one correction. You did not move out of your parents house when you were 1617.

**Dave Yukelson** 16:38

Okay, okay.

**Marla Yukelson** 16:43

Well, I mean, that sounds really, yeah, like he was still in high school. But he didn't ask two

**Dave Yukelson** 16:48

blocks away. Yeah. Quite a growth experience at that time.

**Dr. Dana** 16:53

Absolutely.

**Dave Yukelson** 16:53

So the answer, you know,

**Dr. Dana** 16:55

okay. Thank you.

**Kim Fauskee** 16:57

So Marlo, I want to ask you, because it seems like just in the sequential order of events, Dave went to undergrad at UC San Diego. You followed him there. He went on to get a master's degree at Florida State. You followed him there.

**Marla Yukelson** 17:15

We went together,

**Kim Fauskee** 17:16

you went together. Okay. So the question was, you didn't feel that you were giving up part of yourself being a young person still trying to figure life out at that point,

**Marla Yukelson** 17:26

right. I didn't know what I wanted to do. I didn't. I didn't really feel like I wanted to go to college at that point, because I didn't feel like I had a direction of what I wanted to do. And I didn't want to be just going to school just for No, you know, just floundering. And so I worked for a while. And I worked well, we're in San Diego, I worked at a place that it's kind of interesting how things come around. But I worked at a regional center, which is a place that evaluates children that have disabilities in some way, which is actually what I ended up doing. And I found I spent more time out in the waiting room, I'd get all my work done. It was a very fast typist and very kinesthetically oriented, and then very fast typist, I would get all my work done because back then we typed everything up. And I'd go out in the waiting room and play with the kids and a psychologist who was part of the team because they would have medical doctors and psychologists and OTs and PTs and that would evaluate the children. She noticed me doing that and she encouraged me she said you really need to go to school and be a teacher, you know, and, and I always thought about being a teacher but I never really was crystallized in my head and with her encouragement, I started to go back to school. So we went to Palomar College, and I got my AAA in child development. And then I started to realize that's really what I wanted to do. So when I moved to Florida, then I went to Florida State so I could get my undergraduate degree but I didn't finish there because he finished and went on so I always say that everywhere I went I lost a few

credits here and there. But when we got to Texas, I did get my degree in early childhood education in Texas.

**Dave Yukelson** 19:26

We graduated together, celebrated graduation,

**Marla Yukelson** 19:30

we did PhD, PhD, and I got my undergraduate Where are you at Texas a&m

**Dave Yukelson** 19:35

University in North Texas. Green.

**Marla Yukelson** 19:39

Yes. University of North Texas Back then it was called North Texas State

**Kim Fauskee** 19:42

in Denton. Right? Yes. Very snarky puppy. Yeah, yeah,

**Dave Yukelson** 19:46

very good. But he has musical interest.

**Marla Yukelson** 19:48

Yeah. So yeah. So we lived. So we both graduated at the same time and then he got his PhD and then we moved to Houston where he got his first job. And, and then we decided we were, it's time to start my camera years, it was a great time to start a family too. So yeah,

**Dave Yukelson** 20:07

and that's another big part of if we can, you know, jail off this another key to the kingdom is we always wanted kids. And we kept talking about what great parents we would be because of our experiences and whatever. But we held off until I was done with graduate school, probably didn't take more than one weekend. But then when we are set to have kids, we're totally ready and invested at 28 years old, to wanting to raise kids and share and, and I think, too, is that we waited for a

**Marla Yukelson** 20:40

while waited until we, our schooling was done, and we achieved what we wanted to do. And we're on a professional path. And then we had kids, and then you know, kids to change things. And so, yeah,

**Kim Fauskee** 20:53

so you guys were in agreement with life's plan together, then.

**Marla Yukelson** 20:58

Yeah, we Yeah, yeah. Well, I think I really wanted kids a little bit sooner than he did. But we definitely knew we had to finish. You know, we



**Dave Yukelson 21:07**

had \$1,000 graduate research assistantship

**Kim Fauskee 21:11**

wasn't wasn't gonna find children. Well,

**Dave Yukelson 21:14**

no. But yeah. But along the way, I think just your path of, you know, how would you like to raise kids and share with the kids. And I think as we move forward, you know, one of the issues I think, is a success. Reason for us having a successful relationship is our ability to communicate, you know, and there's nothing that we can't talk to each other about. And I think that's an important part of raising kids is that we've seen a lot, there's nothing that you can't share it with us in your own journey. And the worst thing you could do is hold it in and not share something, kids he's talking about, we'd get phone calls at 230. In the morning, we don't do anything, nothing good is gonna come about a phone call at 230 There was a willingness to communicate, which was a huge part of, I think, our relationship growth as relationships. So

**Kim Fauskee 22:11**

that comes from you guys as people not from you having a psychology education, right, that you guys were always communicators built your relationship on, on a foundation of Friendship first, and really had that solid core before he moved on. I think there's like

**Dave Yukelson 22:29**

an interaction there, you know, it just our own growth as our relationship kind of develops, you know, going from independence and, you know, rebellion to partnership. I was a social psychologist and social psychologist of sport. So I think my philosophies of this kind of education grew out of, you know, personal competencies and autonomy, and need fulfillment and, and groups. So communication was always an important part, how do you get teams to be successful, you have a vision, but you have to communicate those kinds of foundational skills added as part of the education into our own relationship, the importance of talking and, and we're a team. So I don't know if that makes you

**Marla Yukelson 23:21**

think, absolutely, yeah, I think we, you know, our child rearing practices were very much in line with each other. I mean, in my background in child development, and early childhood education. And so it was, it was just a natural progression. I mean, and then I put my, I stopped working for a while, because I really felt it was important to stay home, and, and raise the kids I didn't, we didn't have kids to have, you know, to send them off. So we at that time, we could do that. We sacrificed quite a bit. But I always knew that education would be there for me when I was ready to go back. And so we had a lot of conversations about that about, you know, it was really a drive for me, I wanted to stay home and raise our kids at you know, at that time, and there were a series of events that happened that really drove home to me that life is too short not to be doing exactly what you want to be doing in that moment. And we had this discussion, I remember it and I said what I really want to do is our oldest son Adam at the time, and I said I just want to stay home and raise this child you know, and so then we did so important.

Yeah, I mean, we ate a lot of fish tacos and he didn't we didn't take fancy vacations but that was what was important to us. And so that

**Dave Yukelson 24:46**

that was our monetary experience was that you know, we valued raising the kids and being there and reading to them and and at that time, there are so many stayed not stay at home, moms and people didn't need to incomes. And we just find a way, you know, because that is what we value I and I do have to say this, and listen to your podcast about Susan. And bringing in kind of relationships there. Marla was just so talented with her education of child development, applying the research to, you know, your own kids to reading was important being there. And being there at home when the kids come home from school was just an angel of things that she was able to do. I wasn't as skilled as I was along for the ride to be able to help and shape in a way that I could, but we could never give that part of the journey up. And that started when you talked about Palomar as this was early on, you know, before you even had your AAA.

**Marla Yukelson 25:48**

Yeah, you realize I really, I would never, never would make a judgment on what other people need to do. Because nowadays, I think it does require two incomes. And you know, especially living in California. But I think that at the time where we were living, we were able to do that. And that was important. And we made the sacrifices to make that happen. I don't say that's the right choice for everybody. But it was certainly the right choice for us.

**Dr. Dana 26:16**

You know, kind of curious, you had three boys? Yes. So a lot of testosterone in your Yes. I'm kind of curious about how that was for you being the woman amongst you. Well,

**Marla Yukelson 26:26**

I grew up in I grew up with two brothers, I have two brothers. So I mean, that's sort of all I never all I ever knew. And you know, knowing Dave's history, and it's the male that determines this x, I knew that and so it was his fault. So yeah, so I looked at his family. His dad was one of five brothers, I could see the cards, you know. And so when we finally had our granddaughter, Ellie, oh my gosh, I literally you could have scraped me off the floor. I was so sure that it was pink. It was I was so sure there was going to be a boy. And we have we do have another grandson who's aboard to and I mean, he's he's just our joy as well. But

**Kim Fauskee 27:11**

it's gonna say the universe only conspires against you for so long. For genetics, conspiring,

**Marla Yukelson 27:17**

yes, you know, but I, you know, I love having the boys, I was so involved in everything they did, of course, they're very sport minded, you know, that just sort of just happened. And, you know, just I, as they grew older, and grew out of like little league, I just, I miss that so much. I just missed, you know, that that connection and, and just, you know, watching their journey as they develop has just been absolutely the joy of our lives. For sure. I know, I can speak for him too. But

**Dr. Dana** 27:52

when how old? Are they? No.

**Marla Yukelson** 27:54

So Adam is 38. And Josh is 36. And Drew is 33. For sure. Hope I got that. Right. We'll be

**Kim Fauskee** 28:04

thinking December. I was gonna say you sequentially had those almost perfect intervals. Yeah.

**Marla Yukelson** 28:10

Yeah. Yeah. Well, Adam and Josh were born in Texas. And then we moved to Pennsylvania.

**Kim Fauskee** 28:17

And we're through we're and I hate to say this, because it's not a facetious question. But were were you planning to have three? I mean, no, well, she

**Dave Yukelson** 28:26

kind of wanted three. Okay. And then even, you know, for us then to go to Pennsylvania and Penn State. And so I'll go and you know, but I want to have a third say, Okay, here we go. In fact, she had his book about how to have a girl. So was

**Kim Fauskee** 28:42

that was that really a conversation that you got the job at Penn State? And you said, Well, I want to have another kid.

**Dave Yukelson** 28:48

Yeah. So it was just trading? No problem.

**Marla Yukelson** 28:50

I think it was an amazing, wonderful trade off. Yeah. Because we have our son Drew, and, you know, it's, but each one is a joy. But I think that also, I came from a family of three, he came from a family of two. So having three kids for him was kind of like, wow, like, you know, that's not in my DNA. That's not kind of how I grew up. My brothers. Yeah. But for me, it was really, you know, it was like, Yeah, of course, let's have three. And,

**Dave Yukelson** 29:19

you know, another part of this too, if I can just, you know, family has always been important to us. You know, and you talked earlier about maybe dysfunctional growth in the family. But, you know, we have dysfunctional families to and parents and grandparents, but family was always an important thing. And we valued friendship. And those two things have always been a core part of our own existence. Marley just talked about shared interest. Yeah, I was invested in an athletic department, and I love what I do. You know, but I was fortunate that I had, you know, a partner that loves sports too, and she loved watching Dodger games growing up and your family was like that and Music was always an important

part of our life. And, you know, just thinking kind of outside the lines a little bit and we had commonalities there. There's that path that even when he got to Pennsylvania, and we didn't know many people, a huge part of our success, there's we had relationships with friends of family that ended up being our closest friends, and are still close friends today. So the role that family plays rural, that friendship, long term friends, we all can have acquaintances. It was just wonderful to look in your blue eyes and see you and it's like yesterday, you know, but what's happening

**Marla Yukelson 30:38**

to me, just so everyone's audience is clear, he's talking about data. Right? Right, right.

**Dr. Dana 30:44**

You know, a few minutes ago, Dave said that we're rebellion, and he looks free to go, Wait a minute. What are you looking for? So you are the blue eyed beauty? Not me.

**Dave Yukelson 30:56**

We were kids in the 60s. Right. So that's hard to rebellion, to stand up for causes. You know, so there's some good things there. But it's all tied to friendship, and, and maybe the the circle of friends that we had in the circle of interest and being outspoken on certain things, being independent, but still respectful of other people's rights and views or religious views and developing

**Marla Yukelson 31:18**

a sense of family wherever we were like we didn't raise our kids near our extended family because we did move to Pennsylvania, which I will say to this day was only supposed to be for two years, and ended up being 29.

**Kim Fauskee 31:38**

And I don't mean to I don't mean to interrupt your train of thought that was going to be one of my questions because Dave became a career man, right in athletics. Especially in the university system, and, and maybe not so much back then. But today that seems that you kind of stay in one place you move on to the next year, you keep moving on to the next and following athletic directors or university presidents or whoever liked you and wants to keep you in their in their good graces. How much discussion or negotiation happened between you two in terms of Dave's job opportunities, and now we're in Denton, Texas, but we're gonna move to, you know, State College, Pennsylvania now.

**Marla Yukelson 32:24**

Well, we were just to give the timeline, okay, I actually came back to California, which is what I always wanted to do. So we moved from San Diego, we went to Florida, and then we moved to Texas. And then we had our two oldest sons. And but the draw was really strong to move back to California. And really, this is where both of our extended families were. And so, so we did move back. Dave took, well, you want me to tell your story. But Dave took a break from his profession and tried a different path for a while. And it was clear that that wasn't working out. And so we were back here for two years when the opportunity came in Pennsylvania. And so I encouraged him, I knew he wasn't happy, and

**Kim Fauskee 33:12**

He didn't try psychotherapy, you?

**Dave Yukelson 33:14**

Know, no. We got drawn out Newport Beach tracking. And I took a job for the right reasons, but it was the wrong job. And I knew as soon as I got here, we were actually separated for a little bit while we're selling our house in Houston. But it wasn't, it wasn't the right kind of situation. But things happen. Karma happens. We ended up having an international sports site conference in Newport Beach at that time, and I was unhappy, and I talked to my mentor and that's when the Penn State job kind of opened up. And it was one of a kind thing. I was trained as a research theoretician, you know, but applied practice. And that job opened up and you know, I just did well in the interview and I have fit within the community of what the coaches were looking for and what the Senator was looking for. But bringing it back to what the question was, is that we've always been educators at heart and while Marlo maybe was staying at home and then she decided that special education was something that she wanted to be involved in well that's when she went back to school that's jumping ahead a little bit it's part of being comfortable in Pennsylvania then you when you decided to go back to school and study something then you got your masters in an area and special ed and you know Now here you're in

**Marla Yukelson 34:39**

they were really good schools and we were just really happy with you know,

**Dave Yukelson 34:44**

I have to share a story if I can absolutely you know, that goes kind of like you know the thing you know, Beaver Stadium and Happy Valley and and so then they kind of flew us out to be able to look for housing and things. And to this day, Marla can't stand In the cold snow of Pennsylvania, she was so glad to be home. Her family but she, she never got used to. So, on that trip, I thought, Okay, we'll take a red eye and whatever I have to negotiate for salary, you know, they'll see that, you know, I'm kind of motivated. So we fly from LAX into Pittsburgh. And that afternoon I had an interview with Coach Paterno in State College. So here I am in kind of like jeans, hiking boots, red eye, and who's the first person we see in the Pittsburgh airport getting ready to fly into State College. But Coach Paterno. Wow. And there were flurries. And Marla, you know, was scared to get on the airplane. You

**Marla Yukelson 35:51**

know, it was snowing. Yeah, it

**Dave Yukelson 35:53**

was like the Spruce Goose that's gonna fly in a commuter. And I

**Kim Fauskee 35:56**

do want to remind listeners who don't know who Joe Paterno is that they should probably Google him and then they'll understand more about

**Dave Yukelson 36:03**

football legend is one of the best coaches I've ever known values based. But the story went like Marley, what do I do here and I look like a slump. And I'm his appointment in a couple hours, and he's going to

see us so you know, I got to be able to just go up to him and say, you know, Coach Paterno. I'm Dave Nicholson on the sports psychologist have an appointment with you at one o'clock. And she was just anxious as can be to get on the plane. And Joe cuz I let me tell you these are the safest things on the world. Yeah, his

**Marla Yukelson 36:38**

voice sounded

**Dave Yukelson 36:40**

just like, you know, she was so nervous. He calmed her down completely in that moment.

**Marla Yukelson 36:46**

He did except when we went to you walked up the to get into the plane. You know, I had two small children in California and, and, you know, maybe I thought being really still a Southern California girl that maybe they have to be told to de ice planes. Maybe they don't know this on there, you know that? So I'm like, what kind of person would I be if I didn't speak up and these flurries are coming down. And so we get up and I said to the stewardess, you are going to de ice this plane, right? And she's like, she looks around and she's like, uh, no, we're okay. You're like, Okay, you say, so? I got on the plane. And obviously, we were but yeah, I never really got used to the snow. I'm just a Southern California girl at heart. And I really I couldn't stand the winters. But bringing a lot of fun things there that,

**Dave Yukelson 37:43**

you know, we stayed so long, not only because of the job, but because it was such a wonderful department to work for and work in. But the education was really good. And you'd have to pay for private school. And we just wanted the sense of community and that's what kind of hunkered down

**Kim Fauskee 38:00**

was part of those. Were your kids old enough to go to school there?

**Marla Yukelson 38:04**

They went to elementary school. And and yeah, they went right. All the way from elementary through high

**Dave Yukelson 38:09**

school. Okay. Yeah. And then there's 29 years. So

**Marla Yukelson 38:13**

yeah, it was public school. But I was wondering

**Kim Fauskee 38:17**

if they actually went to Penn State while you're there.

**Marla Yukelson 38:20**

Yeah, yeah. So our oldest son, Adam went to Bucknell, which was about an hour away. And then the other two went to Penn State and had a wonderful experience. And you know, we wouldn't trade any of that for the world. But then when it was, you know, I mean, Dave always knew. I mean, we both knew that we wanted to come back to California that that was always a drive. Being your family. Yeah. To be in your family.

**Dave Yukelson** 38:50

You can't see you on the podcast, but there's a beautiful ocean, right. Right outside the window.

**Kim Fauskee** 38:57

Was there ever in the 29 years being a pen? Say, was there ever a moment that you thought that you wanted to come back before? Maybe the career or the the length of tenure was ever Yeah, I

**Marla Yukelson** 39:12

always had him looking. Yeah, he was always, you know, he'd say, oh, you know, there's a job here. There's a job there. And, and sometimes it was like, Ah, this isn't the right time. You know, one of our sons may be starting high school, and I just didn't want to uproot them, if we, you know, didn't really have to vote if it wasn't the right situation. So we always had discussions about that. And I think our boys always grew up knowing that we were going to eventually come back here and so and even our friends there always knew you know, that we were going to come back here we were always told you have California accents, which to this day, I don't really know what that means. You don't know

**Kim Fauskee** 39:49

what that is. From California. We didn't either I didn't know everybody else has an accent on me.

**Dave Yukelson** 39:56

I think live sweat you make it you know, I teach athletes that you know the Being in the present moment, but, you know, life we've lived a very good life full of memories full of experiences, being in the present moment doesn't mean everything's perfect. But we wouldn't think like that about looking for another place until it was about the right time.

**Kim Fauskee** 40:18

Has that been your both of your mindsets, the view, embrace the moments, wherever you've been, and kind of valued that, you know, be happy, happy, where you live, be happy, where you I think

**Marla Yukelson** 40:29

each place has been that we've lived has been an experience, you know, then and a growth experience in many ways. I mean, I never envisioned myself leaving Southern California. But we were a family unit. I mean, just even when it was the two of us it was it was a unit. So we were going there was a while there were we were moving, like every two years. So when I said we were moving to Pennsylvania, we're gonna stay there for two years. Okay. Yeah, that was sort of our Mo. That's what we had been doing so.

**Dave Yukelson** 40:58

So I think I think also just if I can, in my profession, you know, that's kind of how it worked with athletes and coaches is that you have to be committed, but you have to be invested. And your heart has to lead the way. So part of being present is just, you know, you're going to deal with adverse situations. You may be from California, and you're a freshman at Penn State, it may be an adjustment, but how do you make the best of your situation? And there are options that if it's not the right place, then we'll explore that. But part of that is not looking to try to be elsewhere unless an opportunity presented itself.

**Kim Fauskee** 41:37

So that was a perfect segue into the question I was going to ask both of you. As listeners of the podcast, and now guests on the podcast, you've heard Dana and I talk about this quite often about intuition. Yes. And about trusting your intuition and not letting your conscious mind override what your gut is telling you? Do you both trust your intuition? I mean, it seems so in the in the 40 minutes that we've talked about your relationship and having kids and jobs, and it just seemed like everything's been a perfect fit for you in that way. So I'm interested, how much you do trust your intuition and how far that goes back?

**Marla Yukelson** 42:14

Well, you know, I don't think you go into it, knowing this is going to be the perfect situation, but you make it that situation with, you know, where you are, and what you have an I think, the first time when I really followed a path, and I don't know if I would have called it intuition at the time. But at that, but the path of after Adam was born, and I went back to work for for, for three. Well, I went back to work for three months, but he was like three months old at the time. And I worked in a daycare center at the University of Houston. And he was at the daycare center, I was literally a football field away from his room. And all I could do is just go over there all the time. And then there was, we had a very, very close friend of ours who passed away from cancer. And as it was that moment. And I don't know if it's, you know, intuition is the right word. But I was a path that I just felt calling that I, like I said earlier, that I really, life is just too short not to do exactly what you want to be doing. And at that point, I knew what I wanted to be doing. I knew I wanted to raise that child and any subsequent children. I knew that it that that was something that was really important.

**Dave Yukelson** 43:29

I think life's experiences, teacher resilience, and what situation you just brought up, that was one of the most inspiring situations was our friend's process of how she dealt with cancer to there during the day she died. Two days beforehand, she's our son got bit by our dog. And we had to rush down to Hershey hospital for a cosmetic surgeon and not told him, you think about how this kid is gonna lose like 343 He's gonna look at 15 and, and Denise just, I look after your son, I look after both your sons when you go, and the inspiration and just hear how she viewed kind of deaths and how she approached it is something I I still to this day, I approach it the same way in some adverse situations. Yeah,

**Marla Yukelson** 44:16

it was a different story. Other than right, the first one I was saying, but yes, that also feeds into life

**Dave Yukelson** 44:22



cycles. Yeah. And I think from my response, if I can about trust, he said, you know, in athletics, you have to trust your instinct, you have to trust your, your preparation, and you focus in the present moment. And I think we've lived life in you know, we trust each other, we respect one another. We are ready to approach any kind of situation. So instinctive decision making, is what I try helping athletes in the face of adversity. How can you really trust what do you trust? What's the foundation of trust your preparation Shouldn't your confidence your focus, Adversity is going to happen? How do you get back into the rhythm and reset quickly? That I am always working on the concept of trust professionally. Personally, I do my best to try and live in the moment. But we all have hotspots. But, you know, you try not to allow that to interfere with your kids, your wife the next day, you have strategies that Marla always lived life by, we're not going to go to sleep angry.

**Marla Yukelson** 45:30

I was thinking that last night when we went to veterans in anticipation of that, and I was wondering. Yeah, so that was one of our industry, you don't go to bed angry? would be like

**Dave Yukelson** 45:41

a fortune cookie, as well, you know, I'm not going to be angry. But sometimes you are angry. Yeah.

**Kim Fauskee** 45:46

I mean, do you have other strategies? I mean, that's a great strategy, right? I mean, I think we've heard that or, or books have probably talked about that, that you when you have a partner, you never go to bed angry. I, I think in concept, that's a great thing, but in theory may not work as well. Yeah, but apparently you guys applied it. And and it's worked.

**Marla Yukelson** 46:05

I think, you know, going, you know, not going to bed angry or just not going to bed without, you know, expressing what it is that you're really feeling what your, what your emotion is at the time, so that there's an understanding, yeah, you might still be angry, but at least you're not going, you know, to sleep, you know, holding on to, you know, something adverse inside yourself.

**Dave Yukelson** 46:30

I think one of those keys going back to the beginning of the podcast is communication. And I've written on communication. And I think a lot of it is, you know, to me, my definition is mutual sharing leads to mutual understanding. And sometimes couples get caught into, you know, whatever is the roadblock right there, that they're not really sharing, and then listening to what the partner is really trying to say. And then only by sharing, am I in a position to better understand. So we might not come to the resolution, we'll go to bed and respect that. But we'll try an ongoing communication about what's the hotspot? And then how can you work together to try and resolve it?

**Dr. Dana** 47:15

Does faith play a role in your life?

**Marla Yukelson** 47:18

faith faith? Yes.

**Dr. Dana 47:21**

It kind of goes along with the question that Kim was asking you, which is the intuition, but I'm just wondering, if or your version of faith, it doesn't have to be secular. I'm not necessarily talking about religion, or it could be religion, because I know that you guys are raised as Jewish like me, but I don't know whether that tradition has carried on in your family or how faith works in your lives. And whether you believe that it's played a role in your, in your marriage and in your family, and all that sort of stuff?

**Marla Yukelson 47:47**

And that's a good question. Because I think when we were younger, we had different views of it than we do after we had kids. And then after we do now, and then also our experiences, shaped, you know, how we felt about our Judaism, when we moved to Pennsylvania. We were there was a very active, Ku Klux Klan cell, close to where we lived. And that first year, for Hanukkah, I was a little worried about putting decorations up in my window. And that really kind of made me have a lot of reflection on who I am and where I come from. And what's important to me, in terms of my faith. Growing up, our kids were one of very few Jewish kids in their schools. So it was very important for me to go in and educate their classes about what it means not to celebrate Christmas, I can say what it means to be Jewish, but it was really more about what you don't celebrate Christmas, how can that be? You don't have Xmas tree, right. And I want and we raised our kids with the understanding that different isn't bad, it's just different. And we can do something different. And that's okay. And that's been, you know, very much a mainstay of of, you know, how we've helped them come to grips of being different in, in a very in a secular community that, you know, you didn't have a lot of commonalities with although that being said, there was a strong Jewish community in, in State College and a lot of our friends were Jewish, and so we had a lot of bonding through the Jewish Community Center there. So our faith, I think, in terms of our Judaism is kind of ebbed and flowed. As we've as our life has ebbed and flowed.

**Dave Yukelson 49:56**

I think Danna, you know, faith from a non You know, secular kind of perspective, the inner faith, the inner belief that I can, and I will, and how that evolves, you've had some situations with health, you know, I've had health situations. And then there was a period of time, the, you know, the thought I had a certain kind of cancer and they cracked open my chest and, and I'll never forget that I got a flat tire going down to Hershey, you and I drive up and it's an oncology clinic. And so the doctors didn't tell me this. They said, Well, you've got this kind of cancer, we have to crack open your chest. And I'll never forget the dry back, which was about 95 miles from Hershey to stay college. And I was prepared, if that's where things were going to be, I was prepared, I was only thinking of our family. So I remember this vividly that, you know, the interface to keep moving forward, and things are going to be okay. We don't know what that's going to be. So I bring the family together. And I say, Well, you know, I got good news, and I got bad news. You know, the bad news is that they feel I have cancer is going to have to crack open my chest to get it, you know, but the good news, it's a good kind of cancer to be able to have, and I'll never forget, Drew was our youngest at the time. That's all he needed to hear. Dad's gonna be okay. And he goes upstairs. And I drew that inspiration of faith. I didn't know what was gonna happen, you know, I still don't know what's going to happen. But the inner belief that things are going to work itself out, the only thing I was fearful was my family, you know, how are they going to survive, and you know, the little things on this, but somehow you get the inner strength to keep moving forward. And

whether that's even in my practice, and what I do is I try and instill that versus the situation is in your eyes right now. How do you keep moving forward? That's faith. And that's trust. And that's, you know, the instinct question.

**Marla Yukelson** 52:03

Dana, you've talked about that, too, about, you weren't more concerned about yourself, you were more concerned about your family? Oh, absolutely.

**Dr. Dana** 52:10

Well, because I've almost died a bunch of times. And I could see the look on my children's face and my wife's face, in having to cope with the idea that I wasn't going to be around. And I was way more worried about them than I was me. Because, you know, it's heartbreaking to think that you might be leaving your family prematurely. Heartbreaking. Yeah. But I've been really lucky that so far, you know, my brother in law says, Well, you got nine lives, and you've already used up eight of them. So he better be careful.

**Kim Fauskee** 52:41

We better get that book done.

**Dave Yukelson** 52:44

But all this inner connects, you know, because, you know, people who are fearful of death, fearful of a lot things. I believe, you know, personally, it's how you approach a situation. And, you know, if you got your own strategy, and you're grateful, there's another word gratitude, yes, grateful for the things you have. This podcast is about a sustainable relationship, that whether it's 47 years of marriage, or 50 years together, I am so grateful that I've got a soul buddy, right, I can share my life. And then we have children that, you know, they're their own people, but they believe in the importance of family and, and communication. And, you know, that's one of the keys is that, you know, that's a sustainable thing, because we work well, and I

**Dr. Dana** 53:35

always tell people I married up big time,

**Kim Fauskee** 53:40

or in a sports analogy, you out kicked your coverage.

**Dr. Dana** 53:42

Exactly. And that, you know, that renews my faith that, you know, if she's willing to put up with me, then that's enough for me.

**Kim Fauskee** 53:53

Yep. So my assumption is that the apple doesn't fall far from the tree, and I'm assuming your sons are in relationships, or I heard a granddaughter and grandson and a grandson. I don't know if all three are married.

**Marla Yukelson 54:07**

Well, it's very interesting how right now, we just feel really living a really blessed part of our lives. Because when we moved back to California, at that time, our middle son Josh and his wife, he has his wife, Lacey. Were back in Pennsylvania, and there really wasn't any plan for them to move to California. And but at that time, when we moved here, our oldest and youngest sons were in San Francisco. So when we move back, we were really excited to be on the same in the same state even within six hours. Yeah. But there was still a piece of us that was just missing with with them in Pennsylvania and then they flew us series of circumstances, Basie was able to get a job out here and they took the plunge and moved out here. And had they had their daughter by that time. And when we supported them completely they live with us for this past year just recently bought a house and moved out. And so they live like five minutes from us in one direction. And our youngest son and his Drew and his wife, Genevieve and their son, Everett, live four minutes away in a different direction. So, and our oldest son Adam lives in San Francisco. So we are just feeling so blessed right now to have everybody close by and to be able to watch our grandchildren grow and just to be part of their lives. It's yeah, I never really understood, you know, when they say, oh, you know, grandchildren are the best grandchildren are the best. But you know that Dana, you're just reliving their, to me the best part of their lives in the very beginning when they're in their formative stage. You know, you get to witness that again. And it's just such a blessing for us to be here. It's just amazing. We're so happy Rachel

**Kim Fauskee 56:15**

did your boys follow the mom and dad blueprint in terms of how they picked their partners. Now, they have their own blueprint, they had their own their own blueprint. But But again, in terms of I understand that, but in terms of picking the right person for themselves, I guess, in that way, and, and what you both had said early on in the podcast, that you had this great foundation that you were raised from, from both sets of parents there. And obviously, not only what I've heard, but what our listeners have heard this last hour of how great of people you two are, and

**Dave Yukelson 56:53**

they both have found partners, the two that are married, have both found partners that are special to them. And they've been through relationships, but when they came together in their own relationship, that is the blueprint is that communication and laughter and being there for one another and showing respect, even our oldest son, who was engaged to a wonderful person, but you know, for whatever reasons, things fall out of favor. And, you know, I still have very positive feelings towards her, she's just a wonderful woman still is a wonderful woman, and helped Adam grow and develop for the period of time they were together. And his blueprint is still there, you know, he he's been in other relationship, we'll find the right person. But, you know, again, it's part of communication, there

**Marla Yukelson 57:46**

was a time, probably six or seven years ago, when none of this was on anybody's radar. And our boys were, you know, going through their 20s and having their, you know, different relationships. And, you know, I was getting like, you know, a little anxious, like anybody can find anybody have an opportunity here. And, and I remember one of them might have been Adam, and who said, Mom, do you want us just to find anyone? Or do you want us to find the right one? And I'm like, oh,

**Kim Fauskee 58:19**

there is the apple fall from the tree?

**Marla Yukelson 58:22**

That's right. And then that was it. That was the end? You know, I didn't bring it. Because he's right, you know?

**Kim Fauskee 58:28**

Yeah. So we're coming, we're coming kind of close to the end of the hour. And and I think the the important question is still out there. As your relationship hits its fifth decade or marriages coming into its fifth decade, your relationships over the fifth decade now. How does it keep evolving? In your words?

**Dave Yukelson 58:49**

I'd like to start with that if I can, okay, because there's really no secret sauce to be able to, you know, help the plants grow, so to speak. But you know, the beginning of the relationship you think back as teenagers were teenagers were first growing up, and I was rebellious, independent, and, you know, and the thought of sex right, then is lust. You know, and but that really isn't as wonderful lust is, I'm not sure that's the foundational skill or what relationships hold on to for a long time. So not that we don't have active sex life, but it might also just be massaging each other. Giving a back rub it 18 was, you know, I'm not going there on the podcast. It's a developmental kind of growth and development.

**Kim Fauskee 59:41**

Your voice just turned it off. Yeah.

**Dave Yukelson 59:47**

Red here. So go ahead. Marla, what is your thought developmentally?

**Kim Fauskee 59:51**

No, I understand. I don't want to know I mean, we were laughing at that what you just said however, I think it's very important what you just said about it. How it does morph into something else. And this physical connection is still very important. Yeah, in this?

**Marla Yukelson 1:00:05**

Yeah, I think I think just the evolving nature of relationships. And I think, in many ways, people in general are very quick to give up on something, if it's not working for them in the moment, you know, instead of just working through it, and seeing, you know, if you know, the foundation that you grew from, is still solid, then you can work through things, but I think if, you know, we were really, you know, in the hard parts, we weren't really ready or willing at all, to throw anything away. You know, I mean, every relationship has has its hard parts. And, but if you just toss it, then you don't really, you don't get to actualize what may have really happened and may actually be more wonderful. Whereas I'm saying right now, like we're living, really, you know, just wonderful lives right now. I mean, just having everybody close in our family close. I mean, this is what we've always wanted from the beginning, took us a little while to get here. But here we are. And I wouldn't trade anything that we've done in the past for where we are now.

**Dave Yukelson** 1:01:19

And I think you're bringing up a really important point, too, about society. And it may be a judgment, but kids today and people, they're always problems. But if the first gut instinct is to run, I'm not sure that's the best way to resolve things. If after communicating and talking and trying to work things out, it doesn't work, and that's fine. But if the first instinct is to run, I'm not sure that's the right approach.

**Kim Fauskee** 1:01:48

And I think that's a little bit of why I asked that question about your your own kids, right? Because this millennial generation, in the generation after in the in the Gen z's. They weren't raised with the same type of resilience that I think our generation was raised with, and our parents weren't solving our problems for us. Right? If they were good parents are trying to keep us out of danger, but they weren't solving our problems you need to certain age, you need to solve your own problems. I don't think these generations are being raised with that. So I think you're right, Dave, in the societal question, is I think it's just easier to run because the grass is greener on the other side, at least for

**Dave Yukelson** 1:02:25

the moment, or they think the grass is greener until they experience it and

**Kim Fauskee** 1:02:29

tell you problems. They only realize eventually, that your problems continue to follow you no matter where you go. Whether the grass is green, brown or yellow. Yeah, they're not going to give you the the final say, as we hit end up on the hour here. And really appreciate that you invited David Marla, because this has been a very pleasant and fascinating conversation with them.

**Dr. Dana** 1:02:53

Yeah, I just want to thank you guys. You've always been an inspiration to me in a certain way, especially when I was young, and I saw how much he loved each other. Because relationships did not come easy to me when I was young. And I always admired the love that you guys had and now even admired more, because it's lasted forever. And it's so nice to see that you still really really love each other and are willing to take care of each other and support each other and enjoy your life as much as you can. Very sweet.

**Marla Yukelson** 1:03:23

Thank you for having us. This is maybe it was a little nerve wracking to begin with. But you guys know how to put people at ease very much. So I

**Kim Fauskee** 1:03:31

think what you do is you give people hope that aren't in a relationship or want to get into relationship or people that have been in relationship for a long time. I think that you give them hope and and, you know, the keys on the key chain to how it works, especially for you guys. And I don't think you're an anomaly that I think a lot of people it should work the same way. So, again, thanks for being here today. Thank you.

**Dave Yukelson** 1:03:54

Thank you for inviting us.

**Fear Me Out** 1:03:57

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