Relationships with the Husbands of BFA

Episode 56

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SPEAKERS
Angela Belford, Chris Kinnison, Sami Kinnison, Barry Belford

Sami Kinnison
Welcome, everyone to today's special episode of be freaking awesome. First, Happy Valentine's Day. We're so excited to be one of my favorite holidays, favorite times of the year, Valentine's Day and Galentine's Day.

Today we have two very special guests with us. They are actually the husbands of Be Freaking Awesome, they are going to be joining us today for our Valentine's Day episode. So why don't need to be taken moments to introduce yourself and tell us a little bit about you.

Barry Belford
Thanks, Sami. I'm uh, actually I wanted to thought about this. I'm like, Alright, longtime listener, first time guest after a year. excited to finally get to be on here. Angela, actually today that we're recording this was the anniversary, the 30th anniversary of our first date. So I've been together now for over 30 years where we've been at least dating, married now for 28.

My day job I actually am a software developer website designer. So I'm really analytical and what I do do a lot of fact based kind of things and analytical kind of stuff for me. So how about you, Chris?

Chris Kinnison
Yeah, so Sam and I have been together probably the six and a half years now. And so I'm a sales engineer for a poultry conveyor company. And we build conveyors for poultry plants across the US. And yeah, I mean…

Angela Belford
That's good. I would like to

Sami Kinnison
Today is not the 30th anniversary of us being together

Angela Belford
Hold on, as the mother in law, I'm gonna jump on in and tease to my guy Chris, you know, my son in law I always wish I had um, but I think that your seventh wedding anniversary is coming up in about

four months. So I think you guys have been together longer than six and a half years Correct?

Chris Kinnison
Yeah. That's true. That's true. Yeah. We've been together for probably…

Sami Kinnison
Pop quiz. … This is our tenth year to be together.

Chris Kinnison
Tenth year to be together.

Sami Kinnison
This September will be 10 years.

Chris Kinnison
In September.

Barry Belford
Nice.

Chris Kinnison
Met each other in the Razorback band and never looked back since

Angela Belford
Aww, yeah. That's funny. I did not know I was gonna get harass you. We thought we prepped our guests well, but we didn't know we were putting on the spot by not knowing how long

Sami Kinnison
What did you mean, you didn't think you would get the harass him?

Angela Belford
Well, I try to be kind.

Sami Kinnison
Not teasing each other.

Angela Belford
I was expecting to harass Barry, it wasn't expecting to you know, jump, but I was gonna let you mostly harass your husband.

Chris Kinnison
Always say harassments free, right?

Angela Belford
That's right. We got to find a different way to say that it's less politically correct in this day and time. Anyway, we only tease people that we love. I don't know.

Barry Belford
Yes. You say that as well.

Angela Belford

What are we going to talk about today, Sami, with our special guests for our Valentine's episode?

Sami Kinnison
Absolutely. We are talking about relationships today. Go figure. We're gonna be talking a little bit about some marriage advice, seeing if our guests agree or disagree and telling us a little bit more about why they're getting some perspective on some marriage cliches, and we're gonna have a fun conversation about it. So,

Barry Belford
I like how you say that. Fun.

Sami Kinnison
Fun. I think it'll be fun.

Barry Belford
We'll let you know when we're done if it's fun or not.

Sami Kinnison
I like it. Okay, so I'm gonna go ahead and start us off with our first marriage cliche. Want to hear from both of you? Do you agree or disagree and tell me why. So the first one we've got for you guys, happy wife, happy life, agree or disagree from your wives to our husbands.

Chris Kinnison
So, okay, so this one, I always have to say that I have to disagree with it a little bit. Do you and I have talked a lot, Sam about how there are a lot of things. It's okay to be sad. You don't necessarily have to be happy. You don't have to be just you don't have to do whatever he can to make someone else happy to make your life easier.

You know, there are times I guess it works out good for you. But it is also okay to meet somebody in their sadness and sometimes you grow together as a married couple better. Not just trying to please the other one all the time.

Angela Belford
Oo, I like it. Barry?

Barry Belford
I would agree with Chris that it is I think I've tried for this. I think I've taken that mindset of keep her happy at all costs. And reality is the times that I had done that to try to avoid conflict to try to avoid make life easy and make life simple. is where I've gotten the most trouble in our marriage. It's a times where I've got myself in the in the doghouse and caused the greatest pain I think, in our marriage.

And so for me, it's one of those things that it's like, I'm learning that conflict and actually draws us closer in discussions and actually dealing stepping into the hard spots. versus trying to keep it easy and simple.

Sami Kinnison
I love it. Both of them just bringing it deep right off the bat. So good.

Angela Belford
I do love it. I want to pay $1 and say nuance but I'm not gonna because we're gonna let our guests I'm going to keep it with them.

I do appreciate that both of you have come to see this. And I think if I could summarize it, it would be not making your spouse's current emotions mean something about yourself. Because if you can, like, be a whole human and be there for them when they're sad. Listen to them. Be empathetic. Then, I think that being heard and understood, and someone validating emotions is so much better than some bizarro toxic positivity that is peace at all cost. So I love that y'all both have come to see that.

The next one agree or disagree: the couple that plays together stays together. We'll start with you, Barry.

Barry Belford
I will say I agree with this. I think as we plan like in our stage of life right now we are doing a lot more adventuring. A lot more travel, a lot more things. And so we're planning together what we're doing. We're having dialogue. I want to do this I want to do that we're having more conversation about it. And so for me, it's we're experiencing life together.

If I'm talking about play, I think about experiencing new things experiencing new foods, new places, new adventures, even sometimes new discussions for us some new conversations. And so that's opening up just new levels of seeing each other in different ways and trying new things. And so I'd say yes.

Chris Kinnison
Yeah, I think I agree that as well. You know, the biggest thing probably is how you define play, right? So play doesn't necessarily have to be Oh, yeah, we're super active. We're going on bike rides all the time, where you go in and exploring new places. I mean, play can simply be that we're doing a puzzle together. Or were hanging out at the house reading the same book together or there's some different aspects that takes in so I definitely think that you know, one of the critical things in marriage you interact with each other and more interaction is better.

Angela Belford
Wait, reading the same book or playing the same video game which did you say? I'm sorry, go ahead Sami.

Sami Kinnison
We do the same books together.

Angela Belford
I'm teasing you.

Sami Kinnison
No, hold on, we do read some of the same books together.

Chris Kinnison
We actually did just get done with one. Her book club was actually reading a sci fi book and I picked it up and listened to it this last week.

Sami Kinnison
I didn't think I needed somebody to talk about it with before book club. And I was like, please I need you to read this book and I know you'll like it or at least in their genre of books be like please please let me talk about this book with someone.

So he did and it was great and he liked generally liked the book he had some specific critique on it but you know overall, like in the genre of the book she likes.

And so, Chris also, what is it that we say about board games? All is fair in love and war and games are war?

Chris Kinnison
That's exactly right.

Sami Belford
We, you know, like, if we're gonna play games together, there are no like, oh, well, you're my husband. So I'm gonna give you a path of No, you're my husband. I'm specifically going to take you down. I haven't taken you out. Let's go.

Angela Belford
And didn't you guys like I remember early early, early in the relationship when you guys used to wake up before a lot of your friends did when it was like, you know, six or seven people crashing in an apartment and didn't y'all have like a little board of wins and losses and you figured out very early on this was not a good plan.

Chris Kinnison
We try to keep that bord on the hush hush. It might have been a little lopsided by the time we got done with it.

Angela Belford
We're not going to ask you to, you know this is not necessarily deep confessions but you guys did figure out that you needed to make it more play

Barry Belford
Are you saying it was lopsided for Sami or lopsided for you, Chris.

Chris Kinnison
We don't have to discuss that part.

Angela Belford
Hey come on now.

Sami Kinnison
All right. So our next question next cliché, so to speak, marriage is hard, agree or disagree. So, Chris you want to start?

Chris Kinnison
I would definitely say that marriage is hard. It's probably different kinds of hard for different people. But if it was easy, it wouldn't be worth working for in a lot of cases and I don't know I think marriage is definitely thing to work for all the time.

Barry Belford
For me, Chris. I like what you said that it is hard. You know, marriage is hard and it wasn't easy. I think that's one of the things for me. I've always in my life. I always tried for the easy things and so early on, I expected marriage to be easy. I expected it to come just naturally. And as we progressed in our marriage, it's definitely one of those things that it takes effort it takes you have to put energy into it to

get energy out of it.

But it actually, I feel stronger because of our marriage. I feel stronger because of the energy when I put it into it and they've worked where I've actually work at it and recognize that you know, my part of my thing is I want to be the best husband I can for Angela, I want to be the best husband I can for my family. Because even teaching my kids you know, as I was watching it, my kids are watching how I treat their mother. And so that relationship is also important for me. And so it does have, there's definitely places right I know I mess it up and I know places I screwed up a lot. But other times the one thing that the kids say dad loves Mom, dad's always loved mom and they can tell that, you know, working at it you have to constantly thinking of that.

Angela Belford
I read an interesting counterpoint to this when doing research for this podcast that said to be careful because marriage doesn't have to be that hard all the time. And I think that there are some elements of it where learning to communicate well and actually, you know, we went to an Emotionally Focused Therapy marriage counselor to learn a lot about how we our cycles work and how we kind of trigger one another and I think that after we understood that and our therapists would say it's not about communication. It's really about the emotional focus part of that therapy.

That it doesn't always have to be hard. Like it is worth working. It's worth learning the people. It's a very yes and sort of thing. That I when I read this other alternative view, I was like, yeah, yeah, like, are there things you can do? Are there tools in the toolbox? It's sort of like, you know, if you've got to put together something where you need a screwdriver, and you got to do lots and lots and lots and lots of screws to put something together. You can do it with a screwdriver, and you can upgrade to a cordless drill and you can do it faster.

And so in some ways, I think that there are some ways that we can upgrade the tools in our marriage that we can make it a little less hard sometimes.

Barry Belford
Yeah, can I add to that made me just think of recently when we were in New York, so Angela, we're on a trip we were going through actually in Rome and with might with some family members. And as we're walking down the street, I just stop and I love taking pictures. And I'll stop and take a picture of something and Angela will just keep on walking. And my brother-in-law would turn around and kept looking for me and waiting for me.

And one time today, he asked Angela, are you going to wait for your husband? And she's like, No, we have this. We had this routine that we've developed. And that routine was developed about working at it. We learned each other's things where we did put in the work early, which makes trips easier knowing that this is how I like to do a trip. She likes to do it differently. And we've learned to work our routines together, that when Angela gets to a corner, she'll turn around, make eye contact and she'll point in a direction. So I know where she's turning. I know where she's at. If she's going into a store. She makes sure I know where she's at. So we always have this rhythm. But that rhythm takes effort and energy and work. But then it becomes easier to so sometimes you have the hard starts as you're getting to know the routine and then it becomes easier later on.

Angela Belford
When we were early married one of our recommendations we got was to go and have dinner with somebody that had been married for 30 to 40 years and just ask them for advice and my favorite we had the sweet sweet couple over and they'd been married I think 45/50 years at that point.

And they were like oh the first 10 years just suck if you can just imagine that first 10 years are gonna suck then anything, any bonus, any happiness, you get the first 10 years, then they're just it's just an upside. Just get your mindset that you're going to take it because she said Do you know that for 10 years, he was so immature. And he needed to work so hard at growing himself and he was smiling the whole time and and she goes well yeah, I mean I was immature and I had to grow as well and they I found out later from their adult children that they were both only children and so it really happened hard for them. But I can promise you that Barry and I's method of travel, there were a bazillion arguments before we have this very sweet flow that we work with now. And so it is worth the investment and it's worth the energy and make sure that you got some good tools along the way.

So next question next cliche. Love is a commitment not just a feeling. Barry, what do you think about that?

Barry Belford
Yes. I think that I agree in that. I, I love you. Actually, you know, I love you but I don't like okay, which way it goes, you know. But it's like one of those times that I love you right now but I really don't like you that gritted teeth kind of thing. And it's like you have had that feeling of it's like this frustration this anger. I know why they I feel like I definitely have gotten that grace as like it's a good thing I love you right now because I really don't like you know when I've made some of my boneheaded mistakes and things I've done.

But it's one of those things that it's, it's definitely not just, I'm committed to loving you, even when it's hard you know, even when things aren't easy, are difficult even when there's a sick child or we're dealing with something like that. We don't like to deal with those things. But I love you. You know, and I'm committed to loving you through that.

Angela Belford
Chris?

Chris Kinnison
Yeah, I definitely see what you're saying there, Barry. In my head I was trying to sit and think I was like okay, is love the commitment or is love more of the feeling you get because you're committed to the marriage. And I was trying to like figure out if there was a different word of like, well okay, so what are you actually like, what is commitment? I couldn't quite put it together in my head there but yeah, no, I think it I think it can be.

I think in the marriage is definitely commitment. And there are a lot of times you get that love feeling because you see you're interacting and you're hanging out and you're just enjoying life and figuring things out together whether they are difficult or easy, piecing through it. With that, and you know, it's got like you mentioned they're very, no matter what you always know that you go back to you always know that you do everything I love and there is like love is a definitely a foundation at the bottom of it.

Sami Kinnison
I am so grateful for sort of this idea of love being a commitment and that was the feeling and if it makes me think of the in sickness and health sort of thought you know, for better or worse in the marriage vows the traditional version of it.

This past probably couple of years really not just one year, I have not been at my best physically. Last January of 2022, I had pneumonia, where I think there was a week where I just slept pretty much all the time and Chris took care of Henry and took care of me and made me food and all these things.

When it came to like Oh, is there a division of labor in the house or what did Sami done to show Chris that she loved him? Well, she stayed out of the hospital and didn't get more sick. I don't know.

It just was one of those things where like it is. I'm sure it was not easy. Taking care of me. And I've also been on a journey just overcoming anxiety.

And lately I've really felt so much better and so much farther along. And in some ways I'm sad to look back at things that I have, I don't know probably harmed for us along the way within my anxiety journey. And I'm really grateful that he has been committed and that, you know, now sort of on the other side of some of these things. There's not like a keeping score. You know, we talked about keeping score earlier. There also isn't necessarily a keeping score in this so I think it's great.

Speaking of scorekeeping, though, here's another cliche. In every argument, remember that there aren't winners and losers. What do you think about this idea of winners and losers in marital arguments?

Barry Belford
I'll take that one first, Chris. I think for me, the thing was for a long time, I thought that if Angela's right that made me wrong, and I didn't want to be wrong, so I would fight in an argument. Or I'd argue over things that I'm going on. Even when I realized that I was, I didn't have the right side or the right point. I keep going. I didn't want to be wrong. And it actually made a lot worse.

I also remember a time where we had a discussion. It's like, Why do you always win every argument and I never feel like I want an argument is and Angela came back and said, because when I realized I'm wrong, I just shut up. I just stop and walk away. I leave it alone. And I'm like, you don't even let me win. So therefore, by walking away, you win and so I still don't win.

Angela Belford
I knew that one was coming. As soon as this cliche got brought up, I was like, no, no, let Chris go first.

Chris Kinnison
I mean, I definitely think there are winners and both losers. Now, I will say that, oftentimes in most arguments you do find yourself in a lose lose situation, regardless of what side you're on. But I do think there are some arguments that Yeah, there's definitely winners of that of your particular bout. Maybe a minor argument, but there are definitely sometimes there are winners, people that are one side that comes out more on top than the other.

Sami Kinnison
I want to clarify something that you just said, because I know we use it for shorthand. Well, you said that there are losers we talked about there are some fights where the options are two losers or two winners, there is not an option for one winner and one loser. If there are if the argument ends in that way where there is one, quote unquote, winner. That means you actually have two losers because you have, you know, in trying to beat someone else, you didn't accomplish the goal which is growing closer together. So there are two losers. Sometimes.

Angela Belford
I like it, that's a good clarification because I was thinking of people I know that when they are fighting against each other versus when they make the problem, the enemy and they both try to work together to solve that problem. Instead of making the other person the problems the enemy, not the person and I've seen people that when they can get into that shift into that mindset, the arguments become more productive in the in the light of like, what Barry was saying, is that we don't just go for peace at all costs.

But it's really it becomes a more productive argument.

Angela Belford
All right. So I'm up for asking the next question. Okay. All right, next cliche, which I don't even know if I've ever heard this so, marriage is 5050.

All right, so then, that makes me think of one of the things you talked about in one of your previous podcasts where life is fit. You know, and as a whole, there's times where we have things that are good. Sometimes things are bad, and but they all kind of balances out marriage is kind of that way too. Sometimes things are hard. Kind of going back to the hard question Is marriage hard. Not sometimes it's hard. Sometimes it's easy. You can still be married 50 years and still have hard times. So hard is not just something you get away from so it's kind of a balance. So I think yeah, and even then we are no real lovers. We're not lovers of the time. We're not a person. It's a balance, even though we're not We're friends. We're best friends at times. We are, you know, parts of life. We're roommates. You mean it feels like we're you know, just like you were you know, having to deal with cooking and stuff like that. And cleaning and just like anyone else living together would be. So there's a I think I agree.

Chris Kinnison
I would say in the ideal marriage, it's 5050. Right. So in, in marriage, inevitably there are times where people get upset and while they don't want to stop working for the marriage, it's not that they won't work for it. They may back off to at I'm only gonna put in my my 30% this week and just kind of coast through this because I'm just not really happy with how things are going right and I don't feel like fit into it. And there are times where the other person may pick up and say, Well, I really need to try to try to do better. So I'm going to put in 70% this week or so.

And so you run into issues a lot of times with that ideal is sort of when you get to it both you'll just start dropping off and not getting in 50/50 at all. And all of a sudden, you're not that ideal state. Right?

So I'd probably say I think ideal marriage. Yeah, you're both 50/50 but there are times where you may do maybe put in more or may feel like you want to put in less work.

Sami Kinnison
So I have a dissenting opinion on this, but it's mostly just a different perspective really. I think marriage is not 50/50 Because I think it requires both people putting in their 100%. And if you are viewing it like well I'm gonna put in 50% and they're going to put in 50% and then something happens and you get sick or you know, or whatever or even stress or maybe frustrated at them and you like sort of passive aggressively start putting in less effort. It's just not ideal. But I think if both people are striving to put in 100% I think you end up with better results rather than viewing like, I'm going to do half the work, they're going to do half the work. You're both putting in 100% of the work. And that will lead to good.

But I really just think that I'm just putting a spin on perspective than just like, sort of a trick question and kind of making it.

Angela Belford
No, I like it because we took it in two different ways because what various ways. Yeah, exactly.

Sami Kinnison
Really three different ways.

Angela Belford

Yeah, you guys took it in very different ways. Because what very saying is that you're not gonna be happy 100% of the time. You're not gonna be sad 100% of the time. You're going to live it's going to balance out some of the time we're gonna be happy. Sometimes you're gonna be disappointed some of the time you're going to be just mad, just like it's 5050 so it was marriage. So anyway, you guys took it as like, contribution and percentages. Love it. Fantastic.

Sami Kinnison
Okay, so our next question, we only have a couple more. never talked badly about your spouse to other people. Agree or disagree. This is not so much as cliche as it is this advice.

Chris Kinnison
Probably good life choice there.

Sami Kinnison
So you agree?

Chris Kinnison
Yeah. I mean, you shouldn't talk bad about anybody around the people. I mean, that's probably not exactly the nicest thing to do. Now, does it happen sometimes? There are some times where you get caught up in what you're doing and hanging out and most times you don't talk bad about your significant together. It's probably a pretty solid route to go but there are times that it does happen

Barry Belford
It's a tricky one. I'm like yes, you obviously say no, and you should never say anything bad about anybody, especially your spouse, this person you love. There's times though, where this person, you know, can frustrate you drive you crazy. You have to have a release somewhere. And so it could be with, I think, a trusted friend and maybe that you actually have I have one of my best friends. He and I will have conversations about marriage and events and things or if my counselor when I'm in counseling, we do talk about, you know, our marriage and the hard things and the good things and what's going on.

So I think it's the right situation or with the right, trusted person that's kind of like a person that you can confide in. But it's not this thing of saying, I would also definitely say you never would talk about your spouse, to a person of the opposite gender, or the same gender as your spouse's because that can lead you down a slippery slope as well. Especially when that person starts commiserating with you, or starts giving empathy and all that stuff that could lead to other problems. So it's one of those things that having that having a safe place. I think we all need that.

Angela Belford
I think that the one thing that if you are that safe person and you guys are all way better humans than I am, I would love to this is this is beautiful advice. Maybe this will be my next 50 years I'll endeavor to do this.

But there I have seen people before that lament about their spouse to their parents or their friends, and then don't understand why their parents or friends don't like their spouse. And so I think that when you're doing that trusted person… if you are the trusted person, like being able to separate that and being able to say like I don't need to have a triangular relationship with my son in law, like she he has a relationship with my, with my daughter, and because they're married that sometimes doesn't go well. And if I'm one of her closest friends, that she's going to share things maybe from time to time that don't go well, and I have to work really hard to just let that go in and out the other I mean, hypothetically, Chris, if you ever, you know made a mistake. I have to let that that go in and not the other and also not

be the scorekeeper. Oh, well, you remember the last time you did that, right? And encourage and support her to you know, the I love the Bible verse to encourage one another to love and good works.

And so it's like also if I can give her perspective and balance to that like wait, wait, wait. Just last week remember he did the dishes without you asking, you know, whatever it is if you can be a be positive and be pro something. I can tell you that some of my closest friends are the biggest fans of Barry Belford and they do a great job of being like you are being ridiculous right now. And they're not, they love me and love Barry enough to tell me when I'm being ridiculous.

So I think it's sometimes it can also, in that way it has helped me when I had somebody else's perspective to be like, oh, oh, maybe I am being ridiculous. Maybe I am tired. Maybe I am stressed. Maybe I'm not feeling well. Maybe I have wrong expectations.

Sami Kinnison
So Angela, I would also agree with you I don't think you have nearly quite as like, right. It's not the right word, but you know, of high…opinions about this. Because it is helpful to have a relief valve and it is helpful to have somebody to go to…to just, I don't know, keep you from having to bottle it up.

And I think that there are times where I don't I certainly get mad about things that I actually don't care to bring out to Chris because I know, I do know I being ridiculous sometimes. That doesn't mean that the feeling is that there that doesn't mean that the frustration isn't there. And I can recognize that it will be unhelpful to actually bring up whatever it is to Chris directly. Like, maybe I just need to let the frustration happen. Let it go and move on. It's not actually something that is this like, well, we need to have a deep discussion about this issue. I can just call my friend and be like, can you believe it that Chris said this thing? I mean, he's super tired and very stressed and has a lot of things going on but ugh! He said this Can you believe it? Like I know I have all the things that I would say to myself.

But anyway, I'm sort of like you but I agree. Perfectly confident. It's not like to the world and to anybody. It's not pearls before swine. It's the people who you know, have your back and have your marriages back.

All right. I think we have the last couple of just thoughts. These ones are less agree and disagree about marriage, but really just some questions in general about things that our family culture, subscribe to when it comes to marriage.

So we're going to start and talk a little bit about why we think road trips with the person you're in a relationship with is a good idea. Anybody want to jump in with the initial thoughts on why road trips?

Chris Kinnison
I feel like there's a lot of aspects with road trips right? So you got you got the planning aspect of all right, we're gonna have to, we got to figure how each other plan right? So do you have… Are you the spontaneous person are you the detailed planner that's got the minute by minute itinerary?

So you got you figure out how to each other plans and then you got the aspect of how each other vacation you have the relaxer who just wants to lay on the beach all day or do they want to be active, right, like so there's so many different things that come out when you're on vacation that don't come out necessarily when you're at home. And you learn more about how to work with each other to cope and identify like how to work together.

Chris Kinnison
I think, too, in a road trip though you have a lot of us have, especially a long drive. I know like Angela

before we got married. I'm originally from Canada. And so one of the things that she did she actually drove to Canada with me my mom paid for her to drive the Canada with me and flew her back the first time I went back from college. And so we had a 14 hour road trip. And on that road trip you have conversations that happen that you got to fill time so how you fill your time.

How are you at stops when you stop for gas? You know, we've really worked down to where our stops have been where you stop, one person's going the bathroom other ones pumping gas, the other person who would then pay for the gas well, back then you couldn't pay at the machine, at the tank. So getting comfortable pay what the other person was gonna be. And then you get back in the car and we'd be done in 10 minutes. We know people that you know every time they've stopped to get gas on the road trip. They're stopped for 30 minutes minimum.

You know, and so just figuring out what is that routine like? Is this a routine that you can do? And then it's like, Is this our is your spouse the kind of person that insists that they drive the entire way? Are they okay sharing the load on driving? Because I know people that do both. We love to share that we know people who they like to be the one who control the whole time. So you also learn as is your that person a control person where they need to be in control of everything. You know, and that's what some people have said is like, I don't like let my spouse drive because I need to be in control. I can't trust them at the wheel. That that's an indicator light of what could be going on or something like that.

Angela Belford
I think the two parts of it for me one is that you will encounter something not going well. So how did this person handle stressful situations? Expectations not met, that sort of thing.

And the second is the boredom factor. And I say this because going on vacation, you can hit the stress factor. But with the road trip, you hit the boredom factor and where you're like I mean if you've ever given driven from Arkansas to Colorado or from Arkansas to Chicago and just the plain states in America are ridiculous. Maybe this isn't as applicable in Europe. Maybe you go on a long train ride I don't know but just the idea of like just filling hours with nothingness and can you can you have a conversation that goes deeper than just the day to day.

I've had friends over the years that they started, they met online and they dated long distance before they ever lived in the same town. And they were like we date on the phone or on chat and so because you're not going to the movies and waiters interrupting you then they would have these deep, deep conversations and long conversations. And so they had they had kind of accomplished that of like how do you spend hours together in kind of, you know, boredom, but I think those are the two reasons why is you hit both of those at the same time.

Barry Belford
How do they handle road traffic when you're in a traffic jam for hours on end?

Angela Belford
Yeah, seriously. Okay, the next question relates to how do you guys think about your significant others family another some people that are like, Oh, I'm not marrying the family? Or…

Chris Kinnison
I feel like this is a real loaded question for me.

Angela Belford
Yeah, absolutely. is primarily for Chris because, yeah. Not how do you feel about your family but like, what advice would you give to people and how to think about your spouse's family or significant others

family? Yes, go Chris.

Chris Kinnison
Yes. So um, I definitely think that when you when you're getting to know someone, I think getting to know their parents and their family is probably the second best thing you can do. Because there are a lot of times these people that you're going to be in a hard time with, that are going to help get you out of a situation. Especially when you have kids, they're the people who will watch them for if you want to date night, or if you want to sneak off somewhere in the afternoon. You got to have a good relationship with them. And just like with any relationship, you know, getting to know someone like that will just help you and benefit you for many years to come, moving forward.

Barry Belford
This is a tricky one for me. And that I know it's important. But with Angela's background, you know, I didn't really have a spot where I could go meet the parents. It was…we had an aunt and uncle she lived with she had grandparents she lived with and so meeting those people is very important to me.

But it was also kind of like trickier because I think for you, Chris, you had the ability to look at you know, Sami and Angela are very much alike in a lot of ways. And so you get a little insight into what Sami will be like from her mother as well. You learn things. For Angela, I didn't really have that I didn't have a family member I could say oh, she's like this person. She's learned different aspects from all different members of her family.

And so it's been interesting getting to know them because they have different contributions and they've contributed different things.

I love her family. We've not ever had that spot though where we are having like, we don't live in the same category of her family. Her brother lives here now but when we were dating, we didn't have that raise you had. You're in the same town as hers of all her family, all her friends, everything else. So definitely a difference there.

Sami Kinnison
I think that a point that you just sort of brought up about, you know, kids and parents can be similar. There's something about getting to know your significant others family that you can start to uncover like habits. What are like, I think each family has their own culture. And sometimes understanding you don't have to understand where it came from, but understanding how it works can help you understand your significant other more. You know, how do they treat holidays? Do they have traditions that your significant other is going to expect you to uphold such as waking up at 5am on Christmas morning, morning sorry, Chris. That's a hard pass for me and I'm glad that we are adjusting that family tradition from your family.

But other things like that, you know, there's something about getting to know them. And yes, you are going to have to go through hard times with them. That's not really going to be easy to separate your relationship just with your spouse and their family. It doesn't work out very well most of the time.

Angela Belford
Yeah, so I think these are this is a good compare and contrast because you have a little more traditional role with Sam and Chris with us and Barry and I both have a pretty nontraditional relationship with our family.

And you know, there's, there's people that have told me like, well, you have to be in relationship with them because their family and I'm like, Well, you actually don't because I have found that there are

people that are unsafe, that may be blood relatives, and so I have had to put up some boundaries at different points in my life.

And you know, when we got married in Canada, the week after we got married in Arkansas, they threw a big wedding and reception up there. I joked but only halfway joking was I like oh no after meeting all of you this weekend, so sad that we lived 15 hours away. And it's like because it's you know, we all we all have our own, we all have our own version of fun and dysfunction.

Sami Kinnison
They really try hard to put the fun in dysfunction.

Angela Belford
I mean, there's a lot of parts of various family that are wicked fun, and there are a lot of parts that I thoroughly enjoy, and probably I thoroughly enjoy because I, I'm with them a week of the year if I get lucky and I get a whole week with them right? And then I can kind of oh you can everything can be entertaining for several days or a weekend. That is that is harder, longer term, day to day sort of thing.

So I think appreciate whatever you have, if you do have an opportunity to be in relationship with your in laws, then treat it as a relationship. Don't treat it as a triangular thing if you're able to. I know there's people that their dysfunctional family lives right in the same town and they do still need them for sick kids and the kids the parents are, oi-vey, maybe not fun and dysfunction and still treat it like a relationship.

Barry Belford
I appreciate the fact though that independently we have a relationship with Chris. So our relationship with Chris is not through Sami our relationship with Chris is with Chris. And so I remember when they were dating early on, it was one time Sami was out of town. And Chris came for dinner on Sunday night anyways, you know, and so he was still part of it. He became just part of our family. He is a he is one of our children. Just like Sami is and so we don't see, you know, there's not a difference at that point. And treating that that in law, as not an in law as a, as a child. And seeing them that way makes a big difference perspective. As you know, you're part of our family period.

Angela Belford
We're very lucky, it's easy to do that. Okay, last question. Oh, say me you're gonna take the last question for us.

Sami Kinnison
Yeah, it was like not really a question more of just an affirmation from all of us to all of you. Marriage therapy is great guys. We all support and endorse marriage therapy. Chris or Dad, do you guys have thoughts about marriage therapy you want to share?

Chris Kinnison
It's definitely awkward. It's definitely some weird times or once in a while, but I think there are some you don't know what you don't know. Unless you work unless you are told what you don't know. And there are elements where you can try to wander and guess what you don't know how to deal with someone else. Or you can work with someone who is seeing a lot of different cases and they can help you figure out what you don't know.

Barry Belford
I think Angela likes to joke a lot that you know, for us, we have his hers and ours when it comes to therapists. And so when it comes to that, though, it's really helpful to have that third party perspective.

Because they can was interesting is that our therapy, our marriage separate, our couple of therapists is a lot more like Angela, so he can give me her perspective, but from a guy's point of view, and so that kind of helps a little bit more to help me see her in a way that I can't see her because sometimes when we get into an argument over something, I can't see her through the words or through what I'm feeling.

And so with that, counselor, he's able to say it and I'm not feeling this emotion coming from her. I'm not getting caught up in what she's saying. So that I can actually hear what he's saying. And it's couldn't be the exact same word she said, but because I'm not tying the emotion to it, and toward her, then it makes it it's easier to get it to understand it and to actually then digest it and do something with it.

Angela Belford
I have a big confession. So… and I don't even know if anybody recognizes this but…

Well, okay, so let me context this with: I had my nervous breakdown when I was 24 and went into therapy very intense, weekly 13 months a very intense individual therapy. At the end of that then was facing like I have become a completely new person. And I am still married to the same guy that I've been married to for the last three or four years. And so Barry joined me in therapy with that therapist for probably four or five sessions.

And I don't know if my lovely therapist, I hate to say this because I'm pretty open about who the first guy was, but I don't think he was particularly skilled at being a marriage therapist back 25 years ago. And we know so much more, Emotionally Focused Therapy was not a thing back 25 years ago.

But anyway, what it felt like to me is that he spent the several sessions going now Angela, remember because of that thing that you have, then you need to make an accommodation to this. Well Barry, remember, she has this thing, so you're gonna have to make an accommodation for this. And so it felt very much there were very few things that it felt like that he shared with Barry that Barry could do differently. And it felt a lot more like let me teach very how to get along with Angela who is now on her healing journey.

Which affirmed to Barry he didn't need a healing journey, that he was fine. And he was perfect. And that was his that's his story.

But I will tell you that in all those years, we did a lot, we did classes on parenting. We did several small groups on parenting. We never went to a marriage retreat. We never went to a marriage conference, which when you are in a traditional conservative Christian culture is very hard to actually do. Like you have to be a little bit obstinate to say you will never go and I never would go and I never would go to marriage therapy. I would never go to any of it. Because I was like, No, I do not need somebody to tell me that I need to communicate better. I do not need to tell me anybody to tell me.

And so for many, many, many years 25 many years would not go. In 2019, we, I guess it wasn't 25 It must have been 22 years. Anyway 2019, when we hit a wall and felt like there was we tried everything else we'd both been to therapy at that point. Barry had really come a long way on saying like, no, no, I've recognized my need to heal.

Then I finally tried it again and I will tell you the first marriage therapist after the third session, I almost punched him in the face. And we waited a long time to get in to see the marriage therapist that we did use for over a year and he's a guy that trains other therapists. I mean by then I'd already written a book about you know, a lot of mindset work and stuff.

So, which there's I'm sure there's some arrogance in there. I'm not at all claiming that arrogance, but

just, I'm pro therapy. I'm a huge fan of Emotionally Focused Therapy. They say that it's 88% effective. If you do that, and if you go to traditional cognitive marriage therapy, there's a 12% effectiveness so you literally if it's not an Emotionally Focused Therapy, you should not even go because it is so disheartening because it is so ineffective. It works for so few people. And I think that was what the difference is for us.

So anyway, any of you that are reluctant to go, don't be afraid we can change our minds. Ms. Pro-Therapist was anti marriage therapy for a very, very, very long time.

Barry Belford
And I'll say too, though, it takes a little bit to find the right therapist. Sometimes you may go and you say it's like well that didn't work that didn't that…It may not be that it's not the thing you need. It may not be that's not the right person for you. It took me a little bit I went through several myself before I found the one that I'm really connecting with. Sometimes it was more it felt like I was going to hang out with a guy and we were just chit chatting things and it was never like we got into things. Whereas my therapist now her and I really have a deep conversation and we actually can get to get to different layers and peel back the different things that are going on. So keep looking for the right one.

Sami Kinnison
We also did not go with our first marriage therapist that we tried. We researched it up as well. So

Barry Belford
and they don't take offense to that they understand that can happen. So it's not like oh, I you know, they're bad or like that. They just realize that sometimes you take a little bit to find the right one.

Sami Kinnison
Yeah, this perfectionist over here definitely still had a hard time telling our first marriage therapist that we wanted to see someone else so you can go back and listen to our episode on perfectionism from a couple weeks ago.

Let's end our conversation today with one piece of marriage advice that you would have for other people. Anybody want to go first?

Chris Kinnison
Yeah, I can go first. So I think the biggest piece of marriage advice I can give is always have perspective on things. When you're trying to make a decision when you're trying to have a conversation with your spouse when you're trying to plan around things or when you're working together, always think about what does your significant other need or what are they thinking about that they need out of out of this? How are they feeling about this? Kind of that put yourself in their shoes kind of moment of

what do they need to work together on this with you? That way you both can achieve what you want to achieve.

Barry Belford
For me, I remember several years ago we had our washing machine broke down one time. And then the washing repairman came in and he was working on it and he was he was asking questions and just talking we're chit chatting he goes, how long you guys been married? And by that time, we were probably like 12 years or something like that. Like well, my wife and I we've been married 40 some years and let me give you a piece of advice. We go out once a week. She goes on Tuesdays, I go out on Thursdays.

You know and he was kind of funny with that it was a really good funny joke in the way you said it and laugh. But it was really though it's like you also got to have your own identity to it. I think that's kind of what I took from that is that you can't be all wrapped up in us as a couple. It's, I still have time with my girlfriends. She has time with her girlfriends. We have time together.

And you know, they make that joke that one plus one equals one that you have to come together as a couple. Well, you're also still individuals and recognizing that she is an individual of herself. She is wholly entirely capable of doing anything she can. And together we can work things. It doesn't mean that I can't open the door for her, she can open the door herself. That's still something I can do and if I open the door for her doesn't mean I'm be in for her. She's not offended. I'm not saying she's not capable. It's a recognizing that she's fully capable and I can still work for her and take care of her and we're individuals. So really look at that. I think it really good advice is make sure you stay individuals as well as a couple.

Angela Belford
Our marriage therapist said that with our history and with all that we've been through there's no reason in the world that we should still be marriage married.

Sami Kinnison
And that you've Marriage Marriage. Yeah, we should still be marriage.

Angela Belford
We should still be married and was shocked to find out that we have a great sex life. And I will tell you Chris just got really uncomfortable because his in laws were talking about but I just want to briefly want to try to keep this really brief. But I, in my book, you will read that I had numerous episodes of sexual trauma when I was before I was 18. And I that that was a very hard area of our life for me to heal through and what my attitude through that was I didn't want any more joy robbed from me. And I pursued healing so that things that had happened to me would not continue to steal joy for me for the rest of my life. And I've met people over the years. That that wasn't their choice. That they decided no, no, no, this bad thing happened. I can't handle that. So I'm, we can't we can't do that. And I want to be sensitive. Because everyone has, I'm not saying mine is the worst story ever.

Just consider are you making that choice that is going to allow you to live a whole life and a full life and have as much joy as is possible.

Sami Kinnison
I also don't think that you're saying that people should just get over it and turn the page. No, I think there's a journey of healing.

Angela Belford
There was a huge journey of healing.

Sami Kinnison
Likely for anybody would involve some type of licensed professional supporting you through this journey.

Angela Belford
Lots of discussion when think that this is going to go a certain way and it suddenly a panic attack. ensues and deal with the mood and yeah, so lots of conversation, lots of gentleness and kindness from my partner to win that battle, and to have conquered that.

Anyway yeah, that's my advice is don't like a lot know the things that you need to heal from and understand that that that they make you who you are and that you know if you had a you know your foot amputated, you're never going to run a 40 meter dash, you're never going to be the fastest human. But how can you live in a way that is going to bring you as much joy as possible? Even if we've all we all have scars.

Sami Kinnison
I think my marriage advice for people is don't forget that you're also roommates and sometimes roommates need to have logistical conversations about who's going to wash the dishes or fold the clothes. And that can it can be, you know, quote separate from the marriage. But sometimes if you let the roommate problems build up, they can affect sort of the best friend and romantic partner problems.

So talk about it. Be upfront, make a roommate agreement if you really need to, and be like Don't forget, you know, I cook you clean. I don't know whatever works for you. So also be roommates when you're going to live together.

Sami Kinnison
Thank you so much, Chris. And dad for joining us on this podcast, our Valentine's Day episode. But it feels fun that we get to do this with our significant others for today. We hope that all of you have a great rest of your Valentine's Day, Valentine's week. And that you guys go and be freaking awesome. Thanks so much. Thank you. Thanks.