

Scot McKay (00:01.504)

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you should probably go check out YouTube because this show is now on video and you can check out the video version of this show nowadays as well. And that's at @scotmckay on YouTube at @realscotmckay Instagram. Gentlemen, if you're not a part of the Facebook group just yet, Hey, come join us. It's a lot of fun at The Mountain Top Summit on Facebook and the website as always is Mountain Top Podcast.com.

Well, I gotta tell you, I'm particularly excited about this show today. I've got a new friend of mine. We were chit chatting before we hit record on this particular show. His name is Owen Marcus and he is the head of something called The Meld Community and Meld makes me think of pinochle you know, but, these guys are like, what the heck are you even talking about, McKay? Look it up, Google it. But he is the head of The Meld Community, which stands for men, emotional leadership development and,

that is an outstanding topic idea in and of itself, but what really drew me to Owen's work as he talks about something that has somehow eluded us in this show, which is Polyvagal Theory. And it has a lot to do with how we as men can be our best selves, obviously to attract the right woman and to conduct a successful relationship with the kind of women we want. So, with nothing further,

Owen Marcus from Nevada City, California. Welcome, man.

Owen (01:55.954)

Thank you, Scot. It's an honor to be here.

Scot McKay (01:57.986)

That's an honor to have you, man. You're doing great work with some great guys. It sounds like the type of guys who come to you are a lot like the type of guys who come to me.

Owen (02:07.356)

Yeah, we tend to get guys that are successful and they're used to not just investing in maybe their business, but investing in themselves across the board from the physical, but also the emotional and the relational parts of their lives.

Scot McKay (02:21.858)

Yeah. I mean, that's what we're all about around here. anti-victim hood, pick yourself up by your bootstraps, make it happen, captain, you know, your own life. well, it's yours. It's your own life to, do with it what you please. I mean, obviously some things can happen that are beyond our control, but everything that is within our circle of influence is something we as man should take care of. Right?

Owen (02:45.522)

Yeah. And, um, we, you know, we get into why we don't do that and everything from how our physiology takes us out to, how the culture entrained us not to.

Scot McKay (02:53.388)

Yeah.

Scot McKay (02:56.876)

Yeah. And that's where Polyvagal Theory comes into play. Now, the disclaimer here is Polyvagal Theory

just the tip of the iceberg for you. You talk about all kinds of smart things in terms of how men carry themselves, the ramifications of masculinity. We can talk about somatic awareness as part of Polyvagal Theory, which, you know, self-awareness in general is a huge topic around here. And you also talk about how men get numb and we just kind of just check out.

And you know, a lot of times women, their number one complaint, Owen is, you know, men aren't emotionally available and guys are like, you know, what does that even mean? Well, I think you're going to be able to describe that to these guys and how to get out from under it. You have something to say about the "nice guy" thing versus being a jerk. And you tie that to narcissism, which is another big, hot topic. And, you talk about relational intelligence as well. So all of that is fair game here, but I guess the best place to kick this off

would be to, help these guys out who are probably frantically Googling while they're listening and driving at the same time, trying to figure out what the heck "polyvagal" even means. Talk to us briefly about what Polyvagal Theory is, and why it's so relevant to us as men and our success with, female human beings.

Owen (04:15.313)

Polyvagal Theory sounds really complicated and it really isn't. It was developed by a fellow named Stephen Porges, great guy we've had on our program, known him for years. He's a scientist that he first got traction with the clinicians rather than other scientists, because the clinicians understood what he was saying was really right on. And what he realized in his research is that we're hardwired and we have a nerve in our body that is set up for what he calls co-regulation.

This ability to connect. And what he found is, you know, it's like Scot and I are co-regulating, we're connecting, our physiology will start to sink. And this is sort of like the mirror neuron thing that people talk about. But we are hardwired, you know, instinctually to read people's non-verbals. The little muscles in their face, how are they moving or not moving? The tonicity of their voice, the general body language, body movement.

We read all that first for safety. Is Scot safe? And if he's safe, I'm probably going to feel safe and he's going to see or perceive those cues from me. And then we start co-regulating and we train men how to do that. We give them a little of the theory, but that's just it... just a little. But give them the skills that really train or retrain the nervous system to be able to do that. And then they get to practice with other guys in these safe experiences.

And what happens is because we're hardwired to do it, it doesn't usually take long for our nervous system to learn or relearn this. And it starts to generalize into their other relationships, be it going out on a date, be it in the relationship or at work. And people start to feel safer. They start to trust and they start to have this sense of a deeper connection. And they, rather than feeling put off or unsafe or hesitant. And as you said, the other person feeling that

you're checked out because you're just numb, that person starts to feel like, you're really present and I'm drawn to you because when you're safe and you're present and you're connected to your own experience, you are attractive.

Scot McKay (06:24.193)

There's so much to talk about there. First of all, Polyvagal Theory, logistically speaking, is talking about the vagus nerve. Correct?

Owen (06:34.417)

Yeah, the vagus nerve is the 10th cranial nerve. It's the longer, so biggest nerve of the body. But one of the interesting things that Porges found is that 80 % of the nerve impulses go from the gut and below

the head to the head of the brain and only 20 % go down. And so what he said was we have this another sense called interception or our ability to feel our internal sensations.

And so when we can feel them consciously, because we're always feeling them unconsciously, when we can tune into that somatic awareness of feeling our bodies unconsciously, we talk, often we talk, I'll ask the guy, where do you feel X or Y? And they go, Oh, I feel it in my gut, for example. Alright, feel it in your gut. And so what happens when we feel it, say in our gut, we are becoming consciously aware of what the unconscious or their lower centers of our brain already knew.

And what that's telling us is that, if I can feel my body, I'm safe. And if I feel safe, someone else is going to feel safe with me. And that's going to set up this deeper connection that we do want in our relationships.

Scot McKay (07:47.918)

You know, you're already on the right wavelength because you're talking about safety and that is basically the central premise of, well, in our vernacular, the beginning stages of attraction with women, the masculine work as it were, in terms of attracting women is to make them feel safe and comfortable so that you are seen as a provider and a protector. And it literally makes women horny and guys don't realize this. So you're talking about guys and their somatic awareness.

And the first thing I thought of is the guy at the bar who bought a drink and he's protecting himself with it. He's got a drink in front of it. Like, you know, don't get near me. And then he goes and he talks to a woman and he's so wadded up in fear that she just follows his lead in terms of the energy she's going to give out. And then the woman's looking at him like, you know, what do I do with this guy? And he's thinking, See? She rejected me. She's afraid of me. She doesn't like me, but he led, didn't he?

Owen (08:45.029)

He led from a state of stress or survival. And so just like I was saying, that woman unconsciously picks up that this guy does not feel safe in himself. So it means that he's probably not safe for me and he's not vulnerable. He's not present. He's like in some previous event that he's running in his head and his body and his physiology. And so he's completely unavailable. And so it's like, I'm backing away from this.

Scot McKay (09:13.579)

Yeah, and see, that's what women mean when they say, this guy is "emotionally unavailable". He's checked out. I don't know who he is. I don't know what's going on inside his head. He's not going to express any of that, let alone, you know, demonstrate it. So what does she feel? Voila, she feels unsafe. Am I onto something?

Owen (09:31.557)

You're completely onto it. And she might not, you know, consciously say, I feel unsafe, but she's going to, in her own polyvagal way, her own somatic awareness, go something feels off. And how many times have we been with someone and we said, Hmm, something rubbed me the wrong way. He might've, or she might've said all the right things, but you know, it just did not feel right.

Scot McKay (09:53.294)

I know. You're right. Yes, you're absolutely right. And meanwhile, I think we as guys have been taught by the old pickup artist Community or whatever that women are social geniuses, the whole lot of them. They know exactly the right words to say. They know how to carry themselves. They can reject you with a bolt of lightning and you never even knew what hit you and all this fear mongering that women are out to get us. And they're better at this than we are, right? In terms of being social, in terms of communicating.

In terms of emotions, you know, men are logical and women are emotional. You know, you talk about

interception. I don't know if the guy who thinks interception is a good thing is a football fan, but you know, if he's ever been to a football game and your team throws an interception, you're going to see people get emotional in the audience about that. And you're going to see them get emotional in a completely different way when the same guy comes back and throws a touchdown. Men can be emotional. And if you

want to see a woman get logical really quickly? Watch her discipline her three year old toddler who's misbehaving in the supermarket. It'll get down to brass tacks pretty quickly. You know, it'll be an if/then moment. Yeah, oh you bet...my gosh, they can...

Owen (10:57.259)

Or when they're arguing with you, when they argue with you. I mean, I joke with my clients, it's like they're really emotional and suddenly they're in an argument with you and they're like the best litigator. It's like, how did you remember all this? Where did you... and you've strung it together. And it's like, and I tell the guys, you cannot come up with a kind of argument. You will never win that argument.

Scot McKay (11:19.797)

Right. But yet men are thinking, well, if she's not feeling positively, if she's feeling a little scared, then obviously she knows what she's doing. She can put a finger on it because women are geniuses at this stuff, right? This emotional awareness and emotional control and being present in the moment and all this cute Eckhart Tolle stuff is stuff that we as men think women are born naturally to do. I'll have to tell you something, and this is, this is on point.

Oh, and I can't, I can't underscore enough how life changing it was for me. The first time I tried to date a beautiful woman who I realized had no social skill. It wasn't me. It was her. And I didn't realize it. I was falling into this trap going, I don't even know if she's attracted to me. I don't know if she even likes me. I don't even know if I should try to hold her hand and I'm a grown ass man and we're on our, like our third date. And I realized she's still here. So...

I just blurted out something I actually learned from a comedian, which is to take any statement, put "huh" at the end, and it turns into a question, and a particularly masculine one, if you put it that way.

And I just finally said to her on the third date, cause we were getting along. We were very friendly, but I felt this was awful platonic for something called a date. And she was really, really sexy. And I really wanted it to go in a different direction. And I just said, man, guys have... guys must have the hardest time understanding where you're coming from, huh? And she just looked up at me and she said, Oh my goodness. Am I doing it again? That's what she said to me with this... cute little doe-eyed Latina. She looked at me literally like this. If you're watching.

Oh, my God, am I doing it again? So it went into like shock, disgust and oh God, I'm so sorry. Right? And we were kind of off to the races after that, as soon as I threw it on the table. And so when it happened again, I didn't need three dates. The second date is like, Hey, look, you know, I know this isn't a mercy date, but I have no idea where I stand with you. You know, this is, this is something you do, isn't it? And she's like, no, no...you're doing fine. I'm doing fine. Right. Great. You know,

Scot McKay (13:31.452)

you know, it's just, my mom taught me at an early age, don't ever give any man any sense of you being attracted to him because that'll make you look like a slut. And I said, well, you know, we can have a conversation and you know, you can smile and you can say you're glad to have breakfast with me. And I'm not going to think anything like that. I mean, that's kind of... that's, that's a few too many chess moves ahead to make a conclusion like that. And suddenly same thing, the body language, you know, the semiotics, the look on her face were just, she just [sigh...]

Owen (13:53.487)

Mm-hmm.

Scot McKay (14:01.101)

Thank you. You know?

Owen (14:02.417)

And see what you did was you confronted her, but you confronted her in a funny, accepting, non-critical way. Right. Where you made her feel safe. Right. And, and, and, And it's like you in doing that, you sort of saw what was behind that mask and you wanted it and you gently called her out to sort of have a real conversation. And, and like, you're basically saying, you know, I see this fine,

Scot McKay (14:09.801)

A non-confrontational way. Just observational.

Scot McKay (14:26.604)

Yeah.

Owen (14:31.171)

whatever, but you know, I'm going to risk and say the truth in a non-judgmental way. And these women go, okay, I can relax.

Scot McKay (14:39.117)

Well, because I cared about an outcome that was socially acceptable. I really wanted this to go well and they could sense it. Yeah.

Owen (14:42.459)

Right. What you wanted, you wanted to connect to her. You didn't want her just sitting there looking pretty. You wanted to have a connection.

Scot McKay (14:51.467)

Yeah, that would be better than her simply looking pretty, right? By the way, that brings up the love languages thing. The reason why don't like the love languages is because mine isn't one of the five. Mine is connection. You know, I mean, I'm probably halfway to being some sort of demisexual, right? Because women get hotter to me when I connect with them, right? Because that's something porn can't do. You know, all these guys who are replacing real women... All these guys who are replacing real women with porn.

Owen (14:54.192)

Right.

Ha

Owen (15:11.483)

Mm-hmm.

Owen (15:15.129)

On the same way.

Scot McKay (15:20.193)

They're missing out. First of all, they're missing out on three of the five senses, but they're also missing out on a human level thing. That's why this whole AI girlfriend thing is so disgusting because guys are thinking that's going to be the same thing, but it's really just a large language model. We all crave this

connection. We just don't know how to get it.

Owen (15:38.121)

Well, well, and I would add to that what, you know, I'm an older guy, I'm 72, you know, so I, you know, I've worked with older guys and, and, oh, thank you. And so what I find is, know, when we were all young, we had all these hormones that just drove us good and bad, you know, sex was great because we had these hormones. But what I found myself and other guys is sex actually gets better when we get older, but here's, here's the distinction.

Scot McKay (15:44.525)

You damn good for 72, brother.

Owen (16:05.317)

Because we're connected. Because when we have a real connection with our partner, it's a different kind of sex. I couldn't do that. I didn't know I was even missing that when I was young because hormones were driving everything. And so when guys can... Yeah, right. We get a lot of benefits out of hormones, but we can get other benefits when we work on this connection. Benefits in terms of just having a date that works, you know, having...

Scot McKay (16:19.287)

Yep. Plus we last a little longer.

Owen (16:34.458)

ongoing relationship that is deep and fulfilling.

Scot McKay (16:38.241)

Yeah, absolutely, man. You're touching upon something that gets right to the heart of why younger women like older guys. They understand relationshipy connection stuff more than, you know, these horny young bulls who just want to get some. And I think that's fantastic. And it's a message that these guys always need to hear more of. Let's go back and talk about the vagus nerve and how it applies to everything we've been talking about so far. You were talking

pretty extensively in our chit chat before we hit record on this podcast about relaxation. And so I know that, you know, what you're talking about here in terms of Polyvagal Theory,

goes along with with, with relaxation very much. And that relaxation term in turn makes women feel safe and comfortable, which is the holy grail. Tie all of this together for me. What do we need to know about the vagus nerve and Polyvagal Theory? And how can we get practical with that?

Owen (17:39.185)

Well, start with that. Everyone's told us, at least me for years, relax, but they never taught us how to relax. So it just makes us more stressed, like, oh, I gotta relax. So yeah. So I created this, what I call the ROC formula, R-O-C. R stands for relax, but you relax by slowing down and you slow down by slowing down your physiology. And we can talk more about what that is.

Scot McKay (17:47.435)

Mostly cops. Relax buddy. Right? Yeah.

Owen (18:03.823)

And then once you get that, once you slow down your physiology, and then you open up or you become vulnerable. First to your own experience, but open up and vulnerable to the other person's experience. And then from there, from that place of being relaxed and open and vulnerable, you reach out and connect to that person from this open and vulnerable place where you feel safe and that person almost

innately just starts to connect with you. And if you, you... what I teach guys, if you start to lose that connection,

for whatever reason, go back to the arc, slow down and, you know, feel your body like we were talking about. And then you can start to, you know, establish the connection. And where the Polyvagal Theory fits into this is that, and we talked a little about this before we started, is that men become numb. They become disassociated. That's what therapists will call it. We disconnect. And so we've learned through physiology or stress or trauma work that

you know, we have fight or flight. But what I learned back in 1980 was there's a third option that I didn't learn when I was an undergraduate, which was we freeze. So when an animal, particularly a mammal or certainly a human can't run or fight, we default to an older physiology, which is a freeze physiology. So we... Exactly, exactly. We disassociate because that animal can't run and we can't fight.

Scot McKay (19:22.829)

And a deer in the headlights look is not very attractive to women.

Owen (19:32.569)

So we check out. So we hope that we're going to look like we're dead and the predator is going to leave us alone.

Scot McKay (19:38.789)

Well, the predator will leave you alone if that predator is a hot female. Yeah, that's you're hoping will eat you alive.

Owen (19:41.047)

Exactly. And so what happens On a physiological level, the dorsal vagal, that part of the vagus nerve that's in the back takes over. And that's the parasympathetic state in excess. The parasympathetic state is the relaxed state, but you're so relaxed that you're disassociated. So yeah, you will look like you're there and you haven't left the room, but psychologically or energetically or emotionally, you're checked out.

And so what that other person starts to feel is unsafe because you lost a connection and they'll start to try to connect with you. And you might be, your words might be sounding great, but you're not embodied and you're, you know, you're checked out because that's something you learned to do at an early age. And we're so checked out, we don't even know we're checked out. And short story, what got me turned on to this, I mean, I knew the science, but

I didn't realize was doing this until many years ago. I was in this relationship and this beautiful woman, real patient said, Owen, I do not feel you. And for several minutes, I wasn't arguing. I was debating with her, giving her all these reasons why she should feel me. And suddenly my dumb brain realized I'm just giving her intellectual analysis. Yes. Duh. Now I didn't, at that moment I didn't know what to do, which has got me into the men's work, but

Scot McKay (20:57.815)

You can't talk her into feeling you. Yes.

Owen (21:05.378)

I realized that I was checked out for no reason, just habitually checked out. And she was patient enough and she was like trying to shake me to feel.

Scot McKay (21:15.457)

And here's the thing. Once we master the art of being present, being emotionally available. And I mean,

not to be overlooked. Most of us as men need to change our stinking thinking even about that entire concept. Cause we, we somehow have gotten into our minds that if we go ahead and make ourselves emotionally available, that vulnerable word again, you know, Brene Brown, made famous.

The simple fact that there should probably be two words for vulnerable in the English language, the good kind and the not so good kind. We don't want to be, you know, lambs taken off to the slaughter, you know, without any protection. That's not very masculine, but that idea that we see a risk and we go for it anyway, knowing the outcome might not be there for us is very masculine, but we are vulnerable in that brave, courageous way in the moment.

Case in point, every time we talk about even approaching a woman and talking to her, we're vulnerable in the good way. Yeah.

Owen (22:14.362)  
When I call that a-

Owen (22:20.096)  
Hell yeah, and courageous and I call that assertive vulnerability, which is unique for a man to be open, which is not collapse, which is what we think your vulnerability is. And that's sort of what we interpret the feminine model of vulnerability. If you want to...

Scot McKay (22:25.836)  
Yes.

Scot McKay (22:33.931)  
That's exactly right. And see, that's where I was going with this. Most guys have learned to tune that out as anti-masculine. If I'm emotionally available or vulnerable, then I'm being a wuss. When in reality, it's one of the most manly things you can do because owning who you are and feeling free to express it comes from a place of character. I know who I am. I know what I believe.

Owen (22:40.336)  
You're right.

Owen (22:58.618)  
Character and power.

Scot McKay (23:01.611)  
And I have that personal power because I'm grounded. So then I can show up. I can express who I am without worrying what you think about me. You see, you have all these guys stomping around. I don't care what anybody else thinks of me. It's like, well, you're going to become Ted Kaczynski or some kind of hermit out there and you're not going have anybody. And we're living in a human race where we're social and we help each other out here. So, you know, good luck with that. Right? But that's... that, like I said, is stinking thinking. The guy who can show up

you know, as a man of character and strongly confidently represent who the hell he is and be in his emotions and in his logic. Sure. ...is going to be very impressive to a whole lot of people because not a lot of people have that down pat in their lives yet. But I think most of us would like that. Even if we're not there, if we were trained something different, we weren't raised right. We've gotten knocked down off our pedestal a few times,

been kicked around the block a few too many times. A lot of guys are going around getting beaten down and it's in their voice. They sound like Eeyore, you know, from Winnie the Pooh. We should be more like Tigger, you know, and if you talk about being charismatic, that's the person who draws people in and



they want to be more like that person. They want more of that person, which is charm, you know, making someone look more, look like at least they want more of you instead of less of you.

Owen (24:14.437)  
Mm-hmm.

Scot McKay (24:27.697)

And they just are drawn to you and want to follow you and be more like you. It seems to me that a core component, if not the flat out kernel of that thing is having this, this presence, this energy about you where you're authentically you and it shows. And yet for men, the irony here, and I want you to riff away on this, no doubt, is we've been told to hide that, you know, get rid of that, push that down.

That's not anti-masculine. You should be stoic. You know, all your pictures should be like a duck face and a squint. You know, looking the other way. You should be this hard guy. I mean, back when online dating was a thing, and by the way, it's dead gentlemen, but back when online dating was a thing, I had this guy who looked like he killed somebody. He looked like a mugshot. I'm like, you're expecting women to be attracted to that. Well, I had three different other dating coaches tell me that's what I should do. I said, yeah, well, three other dating coaches can be wrong. Sure enough,

had something a little bit more warm, you know, with his eyes and inviting kind of, told him to, think of like a, celebrity picture that they hand out when they sign, you know, that makes them look warm and approachable instead of like, you know, some cold jerk in an ivory tower who's, you know, arrogant because he's famous and these guys would start doing that instead. And even being a little bit more warm and light, God forbid on a date and, and, and women, I mean, the clothes were falling off these women.

Owen (25:52.419)

And you're right. I mean, and those, even through a photo, those visual cues we read, and we might not consciously interpret, but you know, with dating apps, it's like, no, no, no, because you see that picture and you immediately get the hit. And so it is important. And we start, we're starting with the physiology, the unconscious and the emotions. And then we use our conscious mind or, you know,

analytical mind to justify what we're feeling. And so, yeah, this is what I call this assertive vulnerability is key because we both worked with special ops guys and they're vulnerable. And one reason that they're so damn successful is that they trust each other and they will throw a guy off the team if they don't trust him because their life and the lives of their buddies depend on that guy. And so why how do they trust them? Through vulnerability. It's not by being macho. And so the macho guys don't make it.

It's the ones that are strong, they're vulnerable, they're willing to risk their vulnerability and themselves for the team or another guy. And that's what we all want. And that is sort of that charisma that we've talked about. And you don't need to be an extrovert to have charisma. To go back to where we started, you'd first need to be safe and you need to have your own unique way to develop rapport. Because when I dated years ago and I was terrible at

picking women up at bars. Terrible at it. But if I could be in a real conversation with a woman, I excelled. And what I realized was when I could be authentic, people, women would connect with me. But when there are some men that could... and I've been a bartender years ago, so I know I would hear these pickup lines from these guys. And then what was even worse is these women would buy them.

Scot McKay (27:48.174)

They're probably seeing something under there, you know, it probably wasn't the pickup line that did the trick. sometimes it can be kind of cute. At least the guy's making an effort. But you know, you're saying some very key things there. I too was the kind who would think, you know, if I could just get on a first

date, I'll be fine. But you know, meeting a woman, cold approaching, risking rejection or just as significantly risking bothering her.

Owen (27:52.132)  
Yes.

Owen (28:18.096)  
You're right.

Scot McKay (28:19.661)  
Was too scary to me and I was even one of those guys who couldn't hold eye contact with a woman at the grocery store. I'd look down and finally one day... and this was after I became a dating coach. I I reconciled that I I said to myself, what am I afraid is going to happen? Is she going to shoot daggers at me? Is it going to be laser eyes and you know, I'm going to be blinded or...? And I read somewhere that I'm afraid my shame will be reflected in her eyes. And I thought that was powerful and I said hell no to that.

Owen (28:36.613)  
Alright.

You're gonna run you down with a cart?

Scot McKay (28:49.547)  
I said, I don't have anything to be ashamed about so even now as a married guy, I'll I'll see another woman, you know, a woman pushing a cart at the grocery store. I'll just give her a warm smile. She'll give me a warm smile back or wait for it. She'll look at the floor in shame. But now I recognize, hey, you're one of me. It isn't about me. It's like, oh God, that guy's looking at me. How gross. It's It's that shame.

Owen (29:05.648)  
Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Scot McKay (29:16.641)  
And so I go back in time and think, oh my goodness, how many women out there may have theoretically wanted to have eye contact with me. And when I looked at the floor, they thought I was shaming them. I was rejecting them. You know, guys don't think like that because, know, once again, we're in our head all the time. So wadded up and so un-relaxed, right? That we just forget to be observant.

Owen (29:41.945)  
And with that, there's this sort of operating system that I need to have it all laid out, understand it and have it all planned. And I can't do improv. So, you know, I say something, she responds and I just respond, you know, I got to have it all figured out. Or, I got to have it down so well, but no, no, no. I mean, you've probably seen this. I've seen it. And I've certainly heard about it from men and women that sometimes what draws a woman in is when you screw up.

Scot McKay (30:13.503)  
I can raise my right hand and say that has actually been a factor. I mean, in my marriage, the first couple of weeks, I was dating Emily, I was on my best behavior. I was Mr. Perfect. And I didn't royally screw up, but I messed up enough that I was really gripping over it. And my dear sweetheart of a future wife said, no, no, I'm glad. Cause now boy, do I feel the freedom to relax knowing that you're human.

And I was like, wow, that's really gratifying. Thank you. Yeah. I mean, now frequently my wife and I mess up around each other and don't give it a second thought because we're all human here. But isn't that

something? You also mentioned improv? And I don't know if you have any way of knowing this, but I've got an entire audio program called "Yes, And..." because I think that core principle of improv is the way to connect with women once you've introduced yourself to them. You know, just build the conversation and you'll be connecting.

Owen (31:12.816)

Yeah, right. And again, it starts with being connected with yourself because you, I, and we as guys get trained to be connected to our head and that's not going to build a relationship or connection. But when you, when good improv, I mean, you're thinking with your body, you're thinking with your whole being and you're responding to what's happening in the moment. Not, you know, not worried about what you're to have to say three minutes later. And then this is dance. Yeah.

Scot McKay (31:38.653)

It's a hell of a lot more entertaining and fun. Naturally. Yeah.

Owen (31:42.436)

Right. And when you get that rapport happening, that's what sets up the chemistry. And when you don't have the rapport, even if that person's physically attractive, you know, that attraction starts to wane.

Scot McKay (31:56.715)

And you know, once you get this down, chemistry is an afterthought. You could build chemistry with most anyone who at least is somewhat far along and quite literally everything you're talking about. I mean, men and women, I'm assuming here can have vagus nerve issues. Right. So if you meet a woman who's all wadded up and she's all scared and she's coming from a fear-based mentality or whatever, she just had a bad morning. Who knows?

Owen (32:14.682)

We all do.

Scot McKay (32:25.109)

And you're being warm and you're being light and you're being authentic and you're showing up and trying to be present. All these little buzzwords we've been throwing around. It's amazing how people like you better and, and women, and I will swear to this, okay? Time after time on Ten-Plus Lives, which is when I take guys out in field and the whole point of taking guys out in field isn't to hit on them and get laid. Not like a pickup artist. When guys come

to visit me for four days, what we do is we go out and and by pure pure immersion, figure out what it takes to make women like you and want more of you because as soon as that's taken care of, the rest takes care of itself. So most men are amazed is the right word to use that it doesn't matter what a woman's energy is when we find her. She can have RBF.

Owen (33:08.08)

You have a

Scot McKay (33:20.215)

You know, she can be bubbly and like, my God, give me 60 to 90 seconds and I'll have them all on the same energy as me. The question is going to be what's my energy. So if I'm warm and light and I'm having fun and I'm being friendly and I'm not afraid to demonstrate, Hey, I'd like to like you. Then that is the leadership that comes back, kind of a boomerang effect socially, towards me. But see, most guys are like, well, I can't even let her know that I like her because then

Owen (33:30.16)

Mm-hmm.

Scot McKay (33:49.921)

she'd be in the power position and she can reject me. Well, I mean, if you don't let a woman know you'll at least think she's interesting enough to talk to, then what's she supposed to think in return?

Owen (34:00.004)

Yeah, Scot, I think you just said something that I think is really powerful, maybe without realizing it. And it's what we call that emotional leadership. And so we've been trained as men, and we particularly see it in relationships, that we believe, and women believe this too, that they are the emotional and relationship responsible party. That we just assume that the woman is gonna lead the emotional dance. We might do the other stuff, but they're gonna be

Scot McKay (34:06.453)

I realized it.

Owen (34:29.818)

doing the emotional stuff and we can just sort of tag along. But when the guys, not always, but you know, at the needed times takes their emotional leadership and that starts off with vulnerability, which is just, you know, initiating as we said before, that vulnerability could be just the initiation of a conversation or a deeper conversation or more honest or vulnerable conversation. It's my metaphor is you're the guy going into the cave

showing your partner there's no barrier there. And that takes courage. And when a woman sees that the guy is stepping up to go into a new area of emotional conversation that they have not been in, that woman really respects that and down regulates and starts to feel even safer and more attracted to that man.

Scot McKay (35:21.494)

Fantastic. I think, you know, you nailed it. My next question was going to be, if you're a guy who knows, there could be a little room for improvement here. You know, uh, my quasi-mentor Harvey McKay once said, the biggest room in the world is the room for improvement. I love that quote. I was going to ask you, what are some things guys can do to

practically set this in motion, but I think you just covered it.

Owen (35:52.464)

Yeah, I think one is just getting more aware of your somatic experience, what's happening in your body, because I was one of them. If you ask most guys, what do you feel, as in what do you feel emotionally, they'll check out, you know, because it's a performance thing. It's, I don't know, you know, I'll get it wrong, because that's how we're trained. But if you ask a guy, what do you feel in your body? 99 % of the time, the guy's going to answer that. And then we ask him a few somatic questions, and then you ask him the emotional question, and they know.

Scot McKay (36:11.393)

Yeah.

Owen (36:21.923)

So they've made that connection. So, making that yourself, reinforcing the somatic, emotional, and then speaking from that experience is one thing. And then another thing is to practice like you're saying. And one of the things that we do in our free groups, through our trainings, is we put guys together, which innately makes the space more emotionally safe. And we teach some of these simple skills. And then we have a practice with each other. And it's huge how these guys start to learn

Scot McKay (36:22.261)  
for

Owen (36:50.319)  
when they can practice and they start laughing at it and they start getting connected to the guys and what starts... that because it's basically the same skill with men applied a little differently with women. But when guys can get some mastery with other men, getting it with women comes pretty naturally.

Scot McKay (36:54.71)  
You bet.

Scot McKay (37:11.094)  
Yeah, we as guys have a hard time making male friends nowadays too. So it's good stuff. And that's what goes on in The Meld Community what you just described, right?

Owen (37:13.987)  
Hell yeah!

Owen (37:19.715)  
Yeah, and guys, that's some of the reasons why they come. They often come because they just realize that they don't have it worked out with women either in dating or relationships. And they realize like I finally did, I was a consistent variable. You know, I realized I was my relationships, my dating was not working because of me.

Scot McKay (37:40.17)  
I love your way with words, you know, instead of just saying, look in the damn mirror, you're like, I'm the consistent variable. Yeah.

Owen (37:46.56)  
And what I also realized with me and now with thousands of men is that I and they are not fucked up. We're not, we don't, we don't have psychological problems. It's a learning problem.

Scot McKay (38:01.009)  
Oh man, these people who want to medicalize everything social. God. All our kids are on Ritalin. We're all just being kids. You know, I agree. I think, you know, everybody's trained to think we need to medicate this because it makes Big Pharma richer, you know, cause we live in that culture and really we're, we're more normal than we think we are. You know, we're struggling with a lot of the same things

Owen (38:03.427)  
Scot McKay (38:24.286)  
other guys do. mean, I'm sure you've seen this in your practice time and time again. A guy comes to you and says, here's one you've never heard before. And I've heard it six times this week. You know, I feel like a dermatologist. Oh, yeah. This thing that you think is going to kill you... rub this on the rash. It'll be gone in three days. You know...

Owen (38:31.961)  
Right, right.

Owen (38:38.051)  
Right. Right. And that's... we did a big study several years ago with our guys and the takeaway was that guys didn't feel good enough. And with that, it's like when they get together and they hear one guy say one thing because he has the courage to admit to something and suddenly almost every other guy in the room's going, me too, I thought I was the only one and everyone relaxes. And then the other thing

that happens is guys are competitive. And so they start to see

Scot McKay (38:48.406)  
Never.

Owen (39:06.787)  
who could be more vulnerable.

Scot McKay (39:08.224)  
Yeah, they compare themselves to the George Washington on Mount Rushmore every time. Yeah, and you can't beat that guy. And there's always going to be that guy.

Owen (39:15.449)  
No, you can't. But when you can be real with other men and real with yourself and then being real with women starts to become a natural thing. And then the right women, and I use that sort of in a limited way, but the woman that's right for you is going to find you attractive. And the other problem that I've seen with couples is that people perfect their masks, their presentation.

Scot McKay (39:35.082)  
Because you're authentic.

Owen (39:43.364)  
Then after a while, the wrapping paper of that package wears off and it's like, who the hell are you? Who the hell are you? Right. And it, because you, we can never live out that mask. It just wears out after a while. And so when I was dating and, I did, you know, this is years ago, the online dating, I got so that on my profile, I said, here are the reasons why you don't want to date me.

Scot McKay (39:50.838)  
And they wonder why the relationship fails. Yeah.

Scot McKay (40:15.2)  
Well, I have whole bunch of reasons nowadays why you should go do something other than online dating. So maybe that's a suitable place to end the show. Yeah. We'll definitely have you back to talk about, uh, much, much more because you know, Owen, you know, you're just a wellspring of information, all of it right on the money for this stuff. For now, I want to send these guys to your Meld Community, which they can go to by going to Meld Community. But as is the custom around here, I'm going to send them to

[mountaintoppodcast.com /meld...](http://mountaintoppodcast.com/meld...) M E L D, just like in pinochle and when they go there they'll be able to find more about your Meld Community, I presume?

Owen (40:54.323)  
They'll find more, they can set up, we'll gladly just talk to them for free, see what they want or need. We have free offerings, we have online offerings, we have retreats, it's the full gamut. And yeah, we're here to serve men and give them the skills that they never got so they don't need us anymore.

Scot McKay (41:14.048)  
Fantastic. Once again, that's [mountaintoppodcast.com/meld](http://mountaintoppodcast.com/meld). Owen Marcus from The Meld Community. Thank you so much for dropping by today. Been a fantastic conversation. And, as I often say around here, it went in twists and turns that we didn't expect, which is kind of why we do the discussion format around here instead of just a rote set of questions and it always makes for a great show. And you know yourself and you know, your stuff, sir. So, good on you and, thank you so much for joining us. Hope you'll be back.

Owen (41:41.945)

I would love to be. Thank you, Scot.

Scot McKay (41:43.392)

Yes, and gentlemen, if you haven't been to [mountaintoppodcast.com](http://mountaintoppodcast.com) lately, check out Jocko Willink's company Origin in Maine, Hero Soap and also The Keyport... new titanium stuff from Keyport, which you guys are going to love. Also gentlemen, check out the Substack channel. I I put articles up there you don't see coming. If you can handle the truth, go check it out. You can go to [mountaintoppodcast.com/substack](http://mountaintoppodcast.com/substack) and it'll send you right there,

keeping that [mountaintoppodcast.com](http://mountaintoppodcast.com) domain is kind of the standard around here. But it is @scotmckay on Substack. Also, some of you guys I haven't talked to personally yet. I'd love to meet you, especially if you're a longtime visitor to this show. I want to challenge you right now to get on my calendar and talk to me for 25 to 30 minutes. If there's a coaching program for you, great. If not, I am glad to meet you, know that you've been listening, and hear your feedback on everything.

All of that and more is there for you at [mountaintoppodcast.com](http://mountaintoppodcast.com). And until I talk to you again real soon, this is Scot McKay from X & Y Communications in San Antonio, Texas. Be good out there.