

Married With Benefits

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Episode 15: Season Finale - Live Women's Conference Speed Round

Featured Host: Shaunti Feldhahn
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Brian: Welcome to the FamilyLife Podcast Network. I'm Brian Goins host of Married With Benefits. This whole season it's been a pleasure to have Harvard-trained researcher, author and speaker, Shaunti Feldhahn with us answering Questions Every Wife Is Asking.

For this last episode I ended up going to the Aspire Women's Conference. It was the first time I've ever spoken at a women's conference. It had to have been the most intimidating group I've been in front of.

During one of the intermissions, we gathered all the questions that we had gotten from the ladies in that audience at that conference and did a Facebook Live. I hope you tune in to the end where we did this speed round from the women that had gathered around our booth.

Hopefully we answered some of the questions that you wanted to ask this season that we hadn't gotten to yet. Well, let's pick up with Shaunti and I at the conference.

[At the Conference]

I'm at my first women's conference.

Shaunti: This is very exciting for you.

Brian: This is very exciting for me.

Shaunti: Look at all the like--

Brian: I know.

Shaunti: --jewelry on sale.

Brian: I know. This never happens at a men's conference.

[Shaunti laughing]

What you don't see at a--

Together: Men's conference.

Shaunti: No.

Brian: Now we might see hunting or you know like how to -- bowie knives or something like that.

Shaunti: And pretty soon you're going to see 1,000 women out here. We're starting before intermission.

Brian: We are.

Shaunti: So we're going to get invaded here in a minute.

Brian: We are and it might get a little loud because there's about 1,000 women here.

Shaunti: Yes.

Brian: And you just got done speaking.

Shaunti: I did! About men

Brian: You did a fantastic job.

Shaunti: Well thank you! Did you hear it?

Brian: I did. I was sitting out here listening to it.

Shaunti: Well cool.

Brian: We are going to be doing this live rapid-fire version of our podcast.

Shaunti: Yes.

Brian: And the season of Questions Every Wife Is Asking.

Shaunti: Yes.

Brian: I've already gotten a ton of questions. I've got one--I thought this was a really good one from Amanda here at the conference.

Shaunti: I haven't heard any of these yet.

Brian: This is all brand new, rapid fire. "Why does my husband go on errands and vanish?"

[Shaunti laughing]

Like, he goes to Walmart and she specifically said for "chicken feed" so I guess they've got chickens, but he doesn't come back--

Now my wife does the same thing at Target.

Shaunti: I kind of do the same thing.

Brian: Yes, now she's got three young kids.

Shaunti: Oooh, so that may be why he's vanishing because he's overwhelmed and it's like, "Well okay Dude, she's overwhelmed, too."

Brian: Yes.

Shaunti: Yes.

Brian: Yes, so how can you communicate that to a guy? I gave one little bit of advice but I want to know what you would say.

Shaunti: Okay, well the first thing that I would say is to actually say, "Do you need time? Is there something--?" For example if he's been working 80 hour weeks--

Brian: Right.

Shaunti: I mean, she's obviously been working with the kids to.

Brian: She's working a ton, yes.

Shaunti: Yes, but if he's been working 80-hour weeks and he needs some time, like, tell me.

Brian: Right.

Shaunti: Like you know we can talk about it or you know, take a kid with you to get chicken feed.

Brian: That's why he wants to go to the chicken feed store.

Shaunti: So what was your advice?

Brian: Well I just said for her to sit down with him and go, “Hey I totally want you to get your space. I want my space as well but this is kind of the Bermuda triangle of my life, because that’s when he would go is when she’s most exhausted.

Shaunti: Yes, yes.

Brian: But is there any way you could go from eight to ten at night rather than four to seven?

Shaunti: Well, I think that that is perfect is to be able to say, to really respect and really recognize the fact that this is hard for him, too.

Brian: Yes, it is.

Shaunti: A lot of guys you talk about how guys just don’t feel competent at things and chasing around three small children when she’s the stay-at-home mom or whatever--

Brian: Yes.

Shaunti: He may not feel very competent at that.

Brian: Yes.

Shaunti: So he’s like, “Nooo!” So you can understand that and just you don’t have to put up with that necessarily.

Brian: Right.

Shaunti: You don’t have to say that I don’t get what I need but to approach it like, “Look I know you need the time, but yes, can you go eight to ten instead of 4-” yes.

Brian: And can I track you on your phone?

[Shaunti laughing]

Okay so--

Shaunti: Yes, exactly.

Brian: This was another great question, “I always get frustrated,” this is from Natriah, “I always get frustrated when I tell him something and then he doesn’t listen to me but then his friends tell him the same thing and then he all of a sudden goes, “Oh, that’s great advice.”

Shaunti: That's a great question because that is what every professional woman has seen happen over and over in the office.

Brian: Sure.

Shaunti: Where we're in a meeting. We suggest something and everybody's like, "Well, I don't know, I don't know." Then suddenly the next day a guy says it and its like, "Great idea Bob." It drives us nuts. So it's the same thing.

Brian: Yes, it's the same thing, happening at home.

Shaunti: So I can tell you one of the reasons that we've studied. Now this is not the only one.

Brian: Okay.

Shaunti: But one of the reasons is, literally, that his brain has had time to process it. It just happens to be that it's his buddy--

Brian: So he's not meaning to be chauvinistic.

Shaunti: No.

Brian: Yes.

Shaunti: Usually absolutely not meaning to be chauvinistic. It's just literally that you said something on Tuesday morning and he was like, "What?" His brain hasn't processed it yet. Then by Tuesday night when Nate says something his brain has processed it enough that he's like, "You know that really is a good idea."

Brian: I heard that somewhere. Somebody wise said that.

Shaunti: So that actually could literally be just a matter of he's heard it twice and his brain has had a chance to sort of think about it.

Brian: Yes.

Shaunti: So, the question is--

Brian: So what would you say?

Shaunti: Well the question is, how much do you want to get credit for it?

Brian: Right.

Shaunti: Actually I've had to do this with Jeff before and this is something professional women had have to do before where sometimes you actually you have to say, "You know, I am so glad that Nate brought that up again, you know when we talked about that on Tuesday morning--"

Brian: Let me just refresh your memory.

Shaunti: Yes.

Brian: Dust it off a little bit.

Shaunti: Without being really super overt like, "I said that first." There's no problem in some of these situations with wanting to get a little bit of credit.

Brian: Right. We're getting some background noise, you're hearing it because we've got -- we're inundated by a thousand women looking at purses and fudge and great little t-shirts and stuff you won't find at a men's conference.

Shaunti: You're right. We'll have to see how you think the background noise does.

Brian: That's right, I think it's alright though.

Shaunti: Okay.

Brian: Okay so here we go, let's see, this lady said, "Why is it my husband says, 'Is it time to go?' and then right when we get ready to leave, he goes to the bathroom?" I said it must be a prostate issue. She said no.

Shaunti: I don't know.

Brian: I don't do that but I guess her husband does. Have you heard that before?

Shaunti: You know what? I've heard that both ways because there's usually the guy --

Brian: Right.

Shaunti: -- who's and we could actually reverse this to be candid because what I've heard more is --

Brian: That's what I wanted to say.

Shaunti: Well what I've heard more on this one is, "Why is it that my husband gets so annoyed with me when it's like, 'When are we going to be ready?' and you're taking an extra five minutes or ten minutes." There's this annoyance like looking at the watch factor.

Brian: Yes.

Shaunti: That I've heard that much more and how to handle that is actually a really good question.

Brian: Yes.

Shaunti: I'd actually be curious what you think. Is this something that you and Jenn struggle with because it's definitely something me and Jeff struggle with?

Brian: Well I'm generally the one that drags his feet more than Jenn. She wants to be--

Shaunti: Really?!

Brian: She's prompt. She wants to be on time.

Shaunti: Okay.

Brian: One of her --

Shaunti: So you're an outlier. You're switched.

Brian: Well her pet peeve is she hates being late. My pet peeve is I hate people who worry about being late.

Shaunti: [Laughing] So you have a problem.

Brian: So I've got an issue, we've got an issue. I don't have a great answer for that one. I just don't like -- usually I do a preemptive bathroom thing so I'm --that's not an issue. That's not my issue.

Shaunti: So I think one of the things that when we're talking about guys getting tense about you know like we're getting ready to go to church and he's constantly looking at his watch and tapping his fingers and honking the horn, one of the things honestly that Jeff finally diagnosed that was going on in his head --

Brian: Right.

Shaunti: -- is essentially this we're being disrespectful to him by causing him to be late.

Brian: Oh okay.

Shaunti: Basically.

Brian: Right.

Shaunti: Because for him, for example going to church he really wants to be there before it starts so he's not rushing.

Brian: Right.

Shaunti: So he's able to sit, get ready for worship.

Brian: Okay.

Shaunti: He feels it's very disrespectful for me to not care about that, which if -- can I be candid?

Brian: Yes.

Shaunti: It actually kind of is.

Brian: Right.

Shaunti: If we're being honest, it is kind of disrespectful.

Brian: Yes, it is.

Shaunti: So that is something that for us the answer has literally, literally, just been okay we have to -- I have to be willing to see what's important to him.

Brian: I think that's true with all of these. Oh yes. So why --

Shaunti: This one's good.

Brian: Is this one good?

Shaunti: That one's a really good one.

Brian: "Why do men keep flipping between channels and programs watching two or three at the same time?" So you probably want me to answer that question.

Shaunti: Yes, because you're the token man.

Brian: For guys, I am the token guy here in a society -- surrounded by women.

Shaunti: Yes, it's now gotten crazy.

Brian: It has. So I find that it's not what men -- men don't want to watch what's on, they want to watch what else is on.

Shaunti: [Laughing] That's so good.

Brian: It's FOMO, it's the Fear Of Missing Out. The other thing that my wife can't stand is that she can't stand when I flip during commercials.

Shaunti: Oh, oh it drives me nuts.

Brian: Yes.

Shaunti: Yes.

Brian: Yes, I -- but you have time. You have seven minutes but I have an internal clock and it's like so I can switch and part of the game is to get it back right when the show starts back on again, so it's a game.

Shaunti: And you're trying to beat the clock basically.

Brian: Right, yes.

Shaunti: This is all sort of challenging ourselves.

Brian: It is.

Shaunti: It's a competition.

Brian: It is.

Shaunti: Yes.

Brian: Yes.

Shaunti: Guys make everything into a competition. So really that's part of it. It's part of the fun is what it sounds like.

Brian: Yes. It's not fun for you at all.

Shaunti: No, it's not fun for us.

Brian: Right, so a great --

Shaunti: That's the next question, so what do you do?

Brian: A great thing to do is have two T.V.s in different rooms and then you just watch them and you're fine. You watch T.V. your way. It's a great way to build oneness. Don't you think?

Shaunti: So do you set the T.V.s side-by-side and use headphones?

Brian: You could do that.

Shaunti: So that you can actually sit on the couch together.

Brian: Right, if you wanted to be together in that and want to watch -- no.

Shaunti: This is tongue in cheek, yes.

Brian: Here's what I would say, for Jenn and I what we end up doing is if it's something that she really wants to watch, like if she's interested and she wants time then we kind of have that expectation talk. But if it's I'm sitting there and I'm just wanting to watch what else is on, she'll --

Shaunti: That's really good. He doesn't want to watch what's on, he wants to watch what else -- he wants to see what else is there to beat it.

Brian: It might be better.

Shaunti: Yes.

Brian: Okay I want to see, let's see here.

Shaunti: We have a couple other questions.

Brian: Yes, we have a couple other ones. Oh "He gets frustrated when I ask him a question during a game."

Shaunti: Okay.

Brian: He's watching a game, I want to ask him a quick question and he gets frustrated.

Shaunti: Alright we have to tackle this one. I actually know what's behind this because we've actually studied this.

Brian: Yes?

Shaunti: So, it turns out this is part of that we always call it compartmentalizing and there's actually some truth to that. Guys like getting in the zone like it actually feels good to get in the zone when they're doing something. It's actually difficult for them to switch and do something else.

Brian: Right.

Shaunti: Literally one of the guys in our workplace study said, and this was a perfect example, he said, “When I’m at work, like I am at work. I am focused. My brain is all in this place.” It’s like home life has disappeared. So when someone says, “Oh did you and your wife go to the beach this weekend?” The guys said, “In my head I’m like, ‘Oh right, I have a wife,’ umm.”

Brian: I forgot about that.

Shaunti: Yes, yes we did, we went to the beach.

Brian: Right.

Shaunti: It’s hard for us as women who can bounce back and forth between so many things--

Brian: You have that giftedness.

Shaunti: --to realize that guys, that’s actually kind of difficult.

Brian: So our friend here just asked --

Shaunti: So what is she asking?

Brian: She’s asking, “why -- I’ll ask my husband what he wants for dinner and he just can’t come up with an answer.”

Shaunti: Yes, because he’s not in that frame yet.

Brian: You’ve got to be in the zone. You’ve got to be in the food zone.

Shaunti: Yes.

Brian: So you’ve got to prep him to get into the food zone.

Shaunti: Yes.

Brian: Then when he’s there, then he can think about it.

Shaunti: Let me tell you, back to this question --

Brian: I have no problem with that by the way, telling what I want.

Shaunti: My guess is that when he says, “I don’t care,” he really doesn’t care. So like it’s not that he’s withholding something it’s just that his brain isn’t in that zone, he’s not

thinking about it and literally whatever you make is going to be fine, or whatever you plan is going to be fine. It's not like --

Brian: But sometimes I think she'll say, "What do you want?" and he's like, "I don't care," and then she offers like, "Well, let's go out to this place," and then he's like, "No."

[Shaunti laughing]

Right.

Shaunti: Okay so we have four women here who are nodding.

Brian: Right so now it's like, wait, now is it a guessing game? Is it Restaurant Roulette that we're doing?

Shaunti: [repeating a woman from the crowd] You're a great cook but he'll say, "I don't want to decide what's for dinner."

Brian: He wants to decide what's not for dinner.

Woman in the crowd: Yes!

[Shaunti laughing]

Shaunti and Brian: Yes.

Brian: That's why I am here.

Shaunti: So this is a good question.

Brian: Right.

Shaunti: This is --

Brian: Yes.

Shaunti: [repeating a woman from the crowd]: Where do you want to eat dinner? I don't know let's get in the car and drive.

Brian: Guys deal with this, too, let's be fair.

Shaunti: Let's be --

Brian: Let's be fair.

Shaunti: Let's be fair that for us as women very often it's the reverse where a guy will say, "What do you want to do?" Now here's what happens, I do know this, again, this is one we've studied, where a guy says, "What do you want to do?" "I don't know." He says, "What about this?" And that's where our brain starts processing.

Brian: Yes.

Shaunti: Like so then we start processing out loud and he's feeling criticized and he's like, "Well you said you didn't care." "Well I hadn't thought about the options yet."

Brian: Right, so I would think the processing question's really big when it comes to food. When he's not getting into and he's starting to think and you start giving him options now he's like, "Oh well no I don't really want that. Now I'm starting to care. Now I'm starting to care"--

Shaunti: These women are grimacing. We have ten women here going, "Yes!"

Brian: What you might want to do is plant the seed a little earlier--

Shaunti: Great idea.

Brian: --like at five o'clock or at four or in the morning and say, text him and go, "Hey, I'm trying to think about what to do for dinner tonight," right and then you go, "Here are four ideas."

Shaunti: That's good.

Brian: "Give me what you want or what you don't want and then we'll go from there."

Shaunti: Yes.

Brian: So just start the process earlier so that guys can process it and think about it.

Shaunti: I like that.

Brian: Yes.

Shaunti: Okay so now you have a good potential solution. Try it. Ask him at three and say, "We have these four options for tonight, which would you like? I don't need an answer now."

Brian: There you go.

Shaunti: "I don't need an answer now, because you haven't started thinking about it yet, but on the way home call and let me know what you think."

Brian: Yes.

Shaunti: Yes.

Brian: Okay, I

Shaunti: What's another one?

Brian: Well I want to do this one because I thought it was really good.

Shaunti: Anybody have any other questions?

Brian: Wait, they're sending them in.

Shaunti: Wait. Hold on, hold on. Oh. Oh.

Brain: Okay.

Shaunti: If a Christian man is asking for physical intimacy and you're single.

Brian: Yes.

Shaunti: And he knows you like him and he knows you're waiting for marriage, does he still feel like you don't desire him if you say no? Well, first of all that's you holding to a biblical line.

Brian: Right.

Shaunti: So he needs to respect that.

Brian: He does.

Shaunti: That should be a line that he cares about, too.

Brian: Yes. If he is a Christian man --

Shaunti: Don't let him take God off the throne and put you on the throne.

Brian: He's not, he's not, he's got to follow what the Bible says about that and I would say if he doesn't desire you after you say, "No," you need to walk away.

Shaunti: Absolutely.

Brian: You need to go away. So that's a good one. Well, I want to tackle this question because I thought it was good, too. How can he possibly think that I am in the "mood" when he decides that he wants to engage?

Shaunti: Sex.

Brian: Yes. Like.

Shaunti: Yes, well I'm sleepy. How can he think that I'm in the mood? Is that the--?

Brian: How can he think that I'm in the mood when he's not watching obvious signals like: the dishes aren't done yet, and the kids aren't in bed yet, and we just argued, and fill in the blank.

Shaunti: Yes. So here's the thing about that we have seen over and over and over about men, is that for a guy this first of all there's none of this needing to have all this other stuff--

Brian: Right.

Shaunti: --like figured out before you hop in the sack.

Brian: Yes.

Shaunti: Because for a guy this is actually the way he restores connection whereas we have to feel like that connection beforehand.

Brian: Right.

Shaunti: And frankly how can he think I'm in the mood? Well, it's because frankly he's bought in to this Hollywood idea that if I am desirable enough she wouldn't be able to keep her hands off me.

Brian: Yes.

Shaunti: Jeff has often said guys think if I was enough of a stud she wouldn't be tired.

Brian: Yes, you know that's right.

Shaunti: Because that's what Hollywood says.

Brian: Sure.

Shaunti: Unfortunately that's not real women--

Brian: Right.

Shaunti: Who have the physiology that we've talked about in previous podcasts where for women most women, not all--

Brian: Right.

Shaunti: But most women need what we call anticipation time. Like they need to be thinking about it ahead of time. But a guy has a completely different physical makeup and he doesn't need to be.

Brian: No.

Shaunti: So he just simply, he truly does not-truly!-does not understand that we need that.

Brian: Yes. One of the biggest misconceptions when it comes to intimacy especially because of culture and T.V., is that both just naturally should be thinking about it--

Shaunti: Ready and thinking about it.

Brian: --whenever they are each one is thinking about it. That is just not the case.

Shaunti: No. So this lady is saying that I just prayed that He would -- that God would prepare me for those moments which is actually a really good prayer.

Brian: Yes.

Shaunti: Yes.

Brian: So this is an Aspire Women's Conference that happens. How many people come? Let's give it a quick plug here.

Shaunti: There are about a thousand women, 900-1000 somewhere in there who are here tonight.

Brian: Yes, in Glendale, Arizona.

Shaunti: In Glendale, Arizona. At the Vineyard Church and Aspire Women's Tour, I will just put in a plug for this.

Brian: Yes.

Shaunti: Because they're kindly allowing us to have this booth here.

Brian: Right.

Shaunti: And giving us a spot on the stage. Aspire Women's Events are there's about 70 of them this year in cities all over the country.

Brian: Right.

Shaunti: It's, we joke, that it's a weekend women's conference in one night.

Brian: That's a cool idea.

Shaunti: It is. It's two speakers, a comedian, and a worship leader.

Brian: Right.

Shaunti: It is a packed evening and it is so much fun.

Brian: You're going tomorrow night to...?

Shaunti: So tomorrow we'll be in Reno.

Brian: Okay.

Shaunti: Nevada. And then the night after, then Sunday night we'll be in California.

Brian: Perfect.

Shaunti: Northern California.

Brian: Okay. So check it out. Aspire Women's Events online.

Shaunti: Aspire Women's Events, yes.

Brian: Okay. Here's a great question: "Why can't they--" I'm assuming "men".

Shaunti: Men.

Brian: Why can't they multitask?

Shaunti: Why can't men multitask?

Brian: Why can't they multitask? What do you mean?

[Laughter]

Because these women just went, "Yes, why?"

Shaunti: Tell us why.

Brian: Because we're not women.

Shaunti: Yes, you're men.

Brian: How about that, we are men.

Shaunti: So I'm curious to hear your description of what this feels like, as a dude.

Brian: Okay.

Shaunti: I can tell you the brain wiring which is literally the brain wiring in the -- if you think of the hemispheres of the brain.

Brian: Yes.

Shaunti: The left and right hemispheres, there's a super highway in between the left and right hemispheres of the brain and it's wired completely, it's structured completely differently in men.

Brian: Right.

Shaunti: Than it is in women.

Brian: This is called the corpus callosum, right?

Shaunti: The corpus callosum, yes, yes.

Brian: Okay.

Shaunti: You're good.

Brian: All right.

Shaunti: The corpus callosum in women and in men is structured so that in men it's almost like you've got isolated chunks of grey matter like supercomputers and not a lot of white matter that's like the networking cables.

Brian: Yes.

Shaunti: So it's like you're doing one thing at a time in these giant supercomputers.

Brian: Right.

Shaunti: Literally then it has to go all the way through.

Brian: Yes.

Shaunti: And whenever that thing is done and then it goes through the little cable and then on to the next thing and on to the next thing. Women it's more like we have ten million personal computers.

Brian: Yes.

Shaunti: And we're all networked together and we have tons of white matter. It's all running at the same time. Our brains are literally wired to multitask. Men's brains are literally wired to not multitask

Brian: Yes.

Shaunti: And do one thing deeply.

Brian: So I've heard my buddy, Tim Downs, say that women basically have a fiber optic cable that connects both brains.

[Shaunti laughing]

If you can imagine a men's brain it's like a string with two tin cans.

Shaunti: Now that's not fair.

Brian: You know, so.

Shaunti: Now hold on, that's not fair.

Brian: But I will just say this about this so here's the good thing. The other theologically you think God made us to reflect His image.

Shaunti: Yes.

Brian: Men and women and that there's something about men and there's something about women that uniquely reflect to the nature of God and you go, God is a God who is near and yet He is far.

Shaunti: Far.

Brian: He is perfectly loving and yet He is perfectly just, He is merciful and he is just. He's three and He's one. There's something about a man that yes he can focus intently on one thing.

Shaunti: Yes.

Brian: That's like God. God can focus intently on one thing.

Shaunti: Very deep on that one thing.

Brian: Very deep and yet --

Shaunti: At the same time...

Brian: At the same time a woman can focus, can have "mom-nipresence" where she knows everything that's going on all at once.

Shaunti: "M-omnipresence," oh my gosh that's the best word ever. Mom-omnipresence.

Brian: Yes, mom-nipresence. I think Tim Downs said that too, I'll give him credit. But God's like that.

Shaunti: Yes.

Brian: He's ever present everywhere but yet he can be focused as well.

Shaunti: Yes.

Brian: The conference is about to start back up.

Shaunti: The conference is about to start.

Brian: That was our 20 minutes of the podcast.

Shaunti: Very exciting.

Brian: That was fun.

[In the studio]

Man, that was fun. I had a great time with Shaunti at the conference and I had a great time with you. Thanks so much for joining us on this first season of Married With Benefits where we were passionate about answering those Questions that Every Wife Is Asking.

I know we left many of them still out there. I look forward to bringing Shaunti on in future seasons but we also have so much great help at FamilyLife.com. FamilyLife is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to helping you as a wife, as a spouse, to move closer together in a world that's often pulling you apart. So if you need more help and hope please go to FamilyLife.com.

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I'd love to give a special thanks to our audio producer CJ3 and our project coordinator Page Johnson for helping to pull this off. We couldn't do it without their help.

I look forward to seeing your next season, where we're going to continue to help you love the one you are with and discover the real benefits of saying "I do."

I'm Brian Goins, seeking to help you love the one you are with. See you next time.

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