

Summer Mulder: Hi, I'm Summer.

Mike Mulder: And, I'm Mike.

Summer Mulder: And, we got married ...

Mike Mulder: With children.

Summer Mulder: We're going on two years of marriage.

Mike Mulder: But, we've been together for 10.

Summer Mulder: He brought two.

Mike Mulder: She brought two.

Summer Mulder: Together, that's four kids.

Mike Mulder: That's way too many kids.

Summer Mulder: And, we wanna share what works for us.

Mike Mulder: And, what doesn't.

Summer Mulder: For step parents, co-parents, marriage, being your best self, managing work, family, friends, health, we're gonna talk about ...

Mike Mulder: Everything.

Summer Mulder: You're ready babe?

Mike Mulder: Always.

Summer Mulder: Hello and welcome to the very first Everything Always podcast.

Mike Mulder: This is number one.

Summer Mulder: This is number one, and I am Summer Felix Mulder. I'm here with my husband ...

Mike Mulder: Michael Mulder.

Summer Mulder: We decided to start this podcast because we are the parents of four children, and-

Mike Mulder: Four great kids.

Summer Mulder: Four really great kids 20% of the time, just kidding. We do have four kids though, so from me, I have an 11 year old daughter, and a 13 year old son, and Mike has ...

Mike Mulder: A 15 year old son, and a 13 year old daughter.

Summer Mulder: And, here we are with four kids together, and we have known these kids though for 10 years together, because, we'll we've known our kids much longer that came from us, but Mike has known my kids for 10 years, and I've known his for 10 years, and we blended this family, and officially got married, so I just wanna explain to you guys the setup that we have right here, because this is our first podcast, and I've actually done a podcast for almost three years for my business, and I had this idea to do this podcast with Mike because I felt like there was this incredible need for blended families to hear the real raw truth of what's going on.

And, you know what? There's really awesome stuff. There's the kind of like, "Oh my gosh, this is so hard stuff." And then, there's just like really icky stuff to navigate through, and we've had a lot of people that have come up to us, and said, "Wow, you guys do such a great job at being step parents, and blending your family." And, the thing is, is we know like it hasn't been so easy.

Mike Mulder: And then, behind the scenes we laughed, and we're like, "If they only knew."

Summer Mulder: If they only, it's freaking hard, so if you that are listening, and I'm gonna take a wild guess that you're listening to this. You found this who knows how, maybe you know us, maybe you searched for this, and we came up, but you know with the challenges that come along. You're either a stepmom, a stepdad, you're maybe dating somebody with kids, and thinking about taking that leap, who knows? But, you get like what happens with blended families, and it's challenging. It's awesome and challenging.

Mike Mulder: It's a never ending process of peaks and valleys where you'll have some amazing, amazing times. Then you'll be like, "Holy crap, what happened to that day? I'm down here in this very low [inaudible 00:03:12]."

Summer Mulder: Yeah, no, that's exactly it, and babe that's something actually I just wanna highlight, because that's so true. Mike has always said to me probably since the beginning of when we first started dating, he always said that in relationships, whether it's a girlfriend, boyfriend, it's dating, it's marriage, there's peaks and valleys. There's times where you're just kind of like, "Oh my gosh, this is hard. There's a struggle." And then, there's times where you're just like, "Oh my gosh, we're in this peak." Like, everything's just so harmonious and feeling awesome. Which is, I mean, that's just life in general, is it not?

Mike Mulder: That's true. That's true. The key is to remember the peaks and try to forget about the valleys.

Summer Mulder: Learn from the valleys. That's what we're trying to do, is learn from the valleys. Now, we've gone through a lot, and here's the thing. We've known each other's kids sorry that's, let me just speak to that little squeak that you just heard, so it's actually pretty awesome, and we're probably gonna post this on social media, so normally I will record in my office, or like a soundproof podcast room when I do my business podcast, and right now we are in our bedroom, because it's like the only carpeted area in the house, and if you are recording a podcast you need to make sure that there's no like weird echos happening, and most of our house is like stone, and so mike was like, "Okay, it's our first podcast." He brought in like-

Mike Mulder: Two dining room chairs.

Summer Mulder: Two dining room chairs, all the way [crosstalk 00:04:45].

Mike Mulder: Board.

Summer Mulder: Bar stools from the kitchen. We're standing here with like our dry cleaning and laundry on the bed.

Mike Mulder: This is pretty much the most big shift-

Summer Mulder: A made bed [crosstalk 00:04:55] I didn't make the bed today. No, it's pretty awesome. We've got two glasses of wine ready for us for when we're done recording.

Mike Mulder: Or, maybe during.

Summer Mulder: Or, maybe during, and here's the cool part. He's got this like door, it's like a, what do you call this? It's like a shutter.

Mike Mulder: It's a shutter.

Summer Mulder: I think it's a shutter.

Mike Mulder: Yeah, it's a shutter.

Summer Mulder: He's basically got a shutter that I bought somewhere. It's fall now, and it says like [inaudible 00:05:21] I don't know. It says something cute, and he basically turned it upside down, and he's like, this is gonna be our standing desk, so that's what we've done.

Mike Mulder: We'll post pictures.

Summer Mulder: We'll post pictures, it's pretty cool. Anyways, I wanna kind of like explain what's to happen in this whole season of Everything Always. For me, it's been really important to bring some messages out about blended families, because I think that there's such a high percentage of blended families. I mean, I would say a good portion of our friends are either going through a divorce, dating somebody with kids because they've already gone through a divorce, and there's not a huge ton of them that are still married.

I mean, we have some, we do have a good percentage of friends that are married still with kids, but we have a lot of friends that actually have gotten divorced, had kids with somebody else, like are navigating this whole world of like, "I'm dating someone with kids." Or this, or "I'm marrying somebody with ..." It's like-

Mike Mulder: At least the statistics show it.

Summer Mulder: The statistics show it. It's pretty high and I'm somebody who's like super into family, and having harmony, and peace, and Mike knows this, and I'm sure like during this season of episodes you're gonna hear about how OCD I am in terms of like, "We've got to keep the family together, we got to do this, we need traditions, we need this." All these things, because I grew up as an only child, so the family drama, and like sibling rivalry is kind of just like, "Wait, what's happening here?"

Mike Mulder: It's true.

Summer Mulder: So, it's been like, it's been a big deal for me to have our family feel united in a way that's like, wait, how can you expect us to feel united when I, these are my original parents or one side of the family is saying, and then, another side of the family saying, "These are my original parents." But, they've been with us for all these years, and still there's challenges.

Mike Mulder: A lot of challenges.

Summer Mulder: Yeah.

Mike Mulder: I was gonna say like one of the things that we talked about when we decided to have a podcast kind of talking about these things, and relationships, and how to be a better person, and how to live an inspired life, and all of that stuff, it's like, "Well, are we qualified?" And, really I'm hoping that we're gonna get as much out of this as we can hopefully spread something. Who knows?

Summer Mulder: Totally. You know what? That's like, that's kind of the mission, and it is so important. I think that we're coming into this with this open mind at, "Hey, what are you as our audience going to ask of us? What are you going to share of us?" Because, you're gonna have some insight as well, and as much as Mike and I might study, and read books, and read blogs, and listen to radio shows, or different people, and what they're doing just in everyday life. I'm not even talking about just blended family, but we like to listen to podcasts in terms of business, in terms of like personal growth, in terms of how to be healthy.

Mike Mulder: Really it's, Summer's always playing something.

Summer Mulder: I am. Like literally walk into, I'm like getting dressed in the morning, I'm in the car, I'm always just like filling my brain with something, and I don't even know if that's like, it might be overwhelming, it maybe too much. I don't know. I do talk a lot as you're gonna learn.

We're not even trying to call ourselves experts, but like I've always learned from the people that have made mistakes, and then, share what those mistakes are. I've learned from the real people, and sometimes people will call themselves an expert, but you're like, wait, have you actually done the thing?

It's kind of like you go to learn from a professor in business, and then you're like, "Okay, well are you an entrepreneur? Have you actually owned your own business?" And, he's like, "No." It kind of for me, this might not be for everyone, but for me I'm just like, wait, I wanna learn from the guy that's actually done it.

Mike Mulder: Well, I can say we've done it. We've had epic fails, some really, really great victories, and I guess in terms of that we've been through it, and still going through it. We're in the middle.

Summer Mulder: We are, we are.

Mike Mulder: Still learning.

Summer Mulder: We are still learning, so Mike and I, we met 10 years ago. We're probably gonna share our story on some of these episodes, and here's the thing, we are gonna share some of our personal stories. We're also gonna share some stories of other people, and friends that we have who've gone through this stuff, and some of it maybe somebody chooses to be anonymous. That's all good. The main thing is like we really wanna share the real stuff, and this isn't gonna be about slamming one person or another, or like vengeance, and any of that dirty stuff. In fact, it's the opposite.

Like, one of the big things that we believe in, and really have learned is you got to put the ego away, and we all have ego, so we're not here to say like, "Oh, we operate life without any ego." I mean, we're human, so you have that, but we really wanna show like how that affects your kids, and your spouses kids, the person you're dating, your own children when you're talking about your ex-spouse, when you're talking about your spouses ex-spouse. I mean, there's like so much room for ego to have it's like little party, and it's actually so detrimental, so one of the things that we, you'll probably notice in the theme of the things that we talk about is we don't promote that.

Mike Mulder: No, we don't.

Summer Mulder: And, I think there's some lessons we can share of and why we don't, so that [crosstalk 00:11:10]

Mike Mulder: Yeah, this isn't gonna be a bitch session.

Summer Mulder: No, it's not gonna be a bitch session.

Mike Mulder: Of-

Summer Mulder: We don't want it to be that.

Mike Mulder: Memories past.

Summer Mulder: No, no, no, no.

Mike Mulder: What we really wanna help people do is to create a clear vision of what they want their family to be, and hopefully we can lay out a path so you can achieve that.

Summer Mulder: And, that's so important. I know I am, and I've kind of forced you into doing this, and maybe you do already do this, but like I am all about visualizing where you want to be, what it is that you want certain aspects of your life to look like, because if you can't actually visualize it or you don't really know what you want, it's kinda hard to get there.

Mike Mulder: But, that's the same no matter what you're deploying that information on whether it's your business, whether it's your family, whether it's your health, fitness, bike riding skills. If you don't know where you wanna go, you'll never achieve whatever that is.

Summer Mulder: It's true. It's so true, so vision is a big part, and one of the things too is that I feel we're both lucky enough to know ... I don't even know if it's luck, but we've

pursued a lot of relationships in our life, and some of those people are some very important influencers in this world, and we're gonna have them on our show. They're gonna be in the health industry, they're gonna be in the parenting industry, they're gonna be in personal growth like all different areas of life, but it's amazing how all of that does pertain to how you live as a person, and how you show up for your kids, your family, and your spouse, because the thing is, is that a blended family, while it's not your original plan like, oh, this is the first person I had kids with, then I thought it was gonna be this big fairytale, and now that failed, and so, okay, we can just whatever. This is just a whatever thing.

Mike Mulder: Somebody tore down my picket fence.

Summer Mulder: Yes, my picket fence was torn down. You have this chance right now to do something again with so much more intention, because you've learned, and I would guess at least from the people that are in our circle that have gone through divorce, and have gone through that horrid, wretched pain of, "My family is not intact, and we are broken." They have learned some pretty hard core lessons, and I would say that for the most part, all of those people are stronger and wiser, because they chose to be, because they chose to learn the lessons from that pain in their life.

Mike Mulder: Well, either you choose to gather that information, take those lessons and implement them into your next experience, or you are bound to have the same result which statistically is even higher than the first time.

Summer Mulder: No, and that's the thing. I mean, Mike knows this. I have this big moonshot goal, and you'll find out later, but I've got a book that's soon to come out that talks about all things blended, family related, and at the root of it all it's not just about, here's some tips and tricks to succeed with your blended family. It's not just about here are the things you can do. It really comes down to who you are as an individual person, and what is your relationship going to be with your spouse.

Mike Mulder: Look, at the end of the day, if we can create a community of people that have had similar experiences, that can help support each other, and really break down the stigma that sort of comes around that feeling of saying like, "I'm in a blended family, wah, wah, wah." We have an opportunity to hopefully better people's lives, to give them the resources. Maybe the skills, the inspiration, the motivation to do a better job.

Summer Mulder: Yeah. This is like a chance. It's a chance to show like, hey, here's what a healthy relationship looks like. It doesn't have to be this extra added drama, and some of the things that I dive into in my book, and like we'll probably dive into here is that there is so much unnecessary drama, and I think that sometimes, and I

don't, not to make people feel bad, because there's a lot of emotion involved, so, of course, drama happens.

But, if we can like just shift our thinking, and just kind of have a new perspective on, is this really necessary to start an argument here? Do I really need to be so sensitive about that? I mean, we know ... We talk about like making assumptions, we talk about like taking things personally. I'm all about, you know I love The Four Agreements. We love The Four Agreements. I think we've listened to that-

Mike Mulder: We've made our kids listen to it twice in the car.

Summer Mulder: We have.

Mike Mulder: They're like crying, and going, "Please not again."

Summer Mulder: "please not again."

Mike Mulder: I'll agree to anything if you don't make me listen to these four agreements.

Summer Mulder: But, you know what's funny? Is then they'll call us out on it. Like, something will happen in the car, like [crosstalk 00:16:10]

Mike Mulder: "You're making assumptions mom."

Summer Mulder: Yeah, "I think you're making an assumption." It's like, "Ah, damn it." But yeah, we do make our kids listen to stuff. You know what though? Here's the thing. Sometimes we're like, are they listening? And then, we go, "Hey, what did you think of that?" And then, you've seen that like 15 minutes, and they've already popped in their headphones. They're ...

Mike Mulder: They're gone.

Summer Mulder: They're gone. They're listening to music later.

Mike Mulder: Bye, see you later.

Summer Mulder: Welcome to road trips with the Mulder family. Anyways, we're not gonna talk your ear off forever here. We just wanted to do this intro episode to just share with you like where we're coming from. You're gonna learn about our story along the way. We actually have a really, I think super cool story of how we got together, but you're gonna have to like keep listening to the podcast in order to hear that.

Mike Mulder: That's coming. You're gonna get to hear about how Summer loves me so much. Mostly that's what the podcast-

Summer Mulder: I'm like obsessed with him, and it's crazy.

Mike Mulder: That's why I agreed, I'm here.

Summer Mulder: I'm here. Okay, so babe, I don't know what else to like say. I think we have so much good stuff lined up.

Mike Mulder: This is supposed to be fun not only for the people that are listening, but for you and me, which I actually think in a weird kind of way this helps us bond.

Summer Mulder: It does. It totally helps us bond.

Mike Mulder: We have to stand across from each other, and look at each other talking for like 30 minutes nonstop.

Summer Mulder: And, he's so cute in his glasses by the way, and his headphones. I've never seen you in like headphones like that.

Mike Mulder: That's because I've never done a podcast before.

Summer Mulder: I know.

Mike Mulder: This is my very first podcast ever. Summer's done this like a thousand times. I've done it half of one time, and now I'm halfway done.

Summer Mulder: Baby, you're doing awesome, so you know what guys? We're even gonna have our kids on here. We've even talked to them about this, and we're like, "Guys, do you wanna be on the podcast?" They were like, "Yeah." So, here's the thing. We're totally, we are being vulnerable, because our kids could come on, and be like, "You know what? It super sucks how my stepmom does [crosstalk 00:18:12]this, or my mom does this, or my stepdad ..." But, I also know for a fact that there's a lot of awesome that they're gonna share, but that's the thing. We wanna share the real stuff, because it is not all like sunshine and unicorns. There's sometimes like-

Mike Mulder: We'll dig into a lot of that stuff.

Summer Mulder: Three kids [crosstalk 00:18:32]

Mike Mulder: We're dealing with that kinda stuff right now.

Summer Mulder: Getting sick. There's all kinds of stuff. Yeah, there's teenagers. There's like, "I'm mad at you, I don't wanna talk to you." There's all kinds of that stuff, and, I mean, you deal with that anyways.

Mike Mulder: And it, I think the thing is we're keeping this light right now, but we are fully intending on really opening up the box, and letting a few of those skeletons inside out.

Summer Mulder: Oh, skeletons?

Mike Mulder: It's too close to Halloween, I don't know [crosstalk 00:18:59].

Summer Mulder: Halloween. Hey everyone. Thanks so much for listening. I hope that you stick with us, because we do promise to bring you some valuable content. This was our intro, but we promise we are gonna have, like you're gonna start to notice, we're gonna have some takeaway points for you that you can actually implement, and go, "Okay, cool. This totally worked for me." We have things that have really worked for us, and we wanna share all of that with you, so we're counting on you. We're counting on you listeners to share this.

Mike Mulder: We want this to be a group thing.

Summer Mulder: We do.

Mike Mulder: Yeah.

Summer Mulder: We have a big goal, like that number, that statistic that's out there of like second time marriages are failing more than the first time marriage. Like there's some icky statistics out there, and we wanna change that, and I feel like if we can actually really take responsibility as parents, as adults, make ourselves better in this whole process, and create this awesome life for these kids where they're actually having this really great experience, that'd like be amazing. You could actually, that actually makes a total impact on the world as a whole, and it, because it impacts their life experience, what they're gonna do in the world, and how they're gonna raise their families. I mean, really, at the end of the day, that's what we're trying to do, and we do believe that we've learned a lot. There's a lot that-

Mike Mulder: And, we've been through a lot for sure.

Summer Mulder: We have been through a lot, and we super love each other too. That's the other thing.

Mike Mulder: That's kinda weird.

Summer Mulder: It's kinda weird. I think a lot of people would be like, "I can't even believe like you guys are, it's like you're-

Mike Mulder: You're so close.

Summer Mulder: In your honeymoon. It's close, like get away. Like, I don't know. What's going ..."
And it's kinda true, but, and that's another choice, so we're gonna share all that with you, because there's a lot that can happen that can make you go, "I'm not sure if this is right for us."

Mike Mulder: Here's the thing. Life is supposed to be amazing. It's supposed to be fun. It's supposed to be joyous. You're supposed to have all that stuff that like makes you feel awesome all the time always.

Summer Mulder: Always.

Mike Mulder: But, the reality is, is that a lot of the time you don't. You feel overwhelmed. You don't know what to do with your kids. You hate your situation with your spouses ex, or whatever the dynamic is, and at the end of the day, if you can start to put the negative way, and you can start to focus on the positive, have a clear path of where you wanna be, then you can start to achieve it, and if we can be part of that team in your journey to be amazing, then we wanna be there.

Summer Mulder: Yes.

Mike Mulder: That's all I got.

Summer Mulder: That's all he's got. Hey, thank you guys so much for listening to our first episode, and until next time ...

Mike Mulder: Do Everything ...

Summer Mulder: Always.

Mike Mulder: Hey guys, thanks so much for listening to our podcast. You know what they say, if you can't find what you're looking for, then you need to create it, so that's what we did.

Summer Mulder: Yeah, I scouted the internet, and looked for the tribe that spoke to me, and I just couldn't find the community that was [inaudible 00:22:09] and really wanting to make a change to the millions of families like ours, so I decided to create it. It took about one conversation for my husband to say, "I'm in." And, here we are.

Mike Mulder: But, it takes listeners like you to keep it alive.

Summer Mulder: So, please if you like this, write a review, take a screenshot, share it on your social media, tell people. It means the world to us.

Mike Mulder: Remember to email us. We would love to hear from you.

Summer Mulder: And, please share this with someone you love.

Mike Mulder: And, be bold enough to share it with someone that you don't.

