

**MICHELLE WARNER**

**THE SECRET INGREDIENT IS ALWAYS LOVE™**

**HUMAN CONNECTION EXPERT | AUTHOR | SPEAKER | CONSULTANT | CERTIFIED JOHN MAXWELL COACH**

## INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

### Human Connection

*The foundation of every great relationship, exceptional leader, thriving culture, and unforgettable customer experience.*

**1. Why do so many people feel disconnected today despite being more connected than ever?**

Technology has transformed how we communicate, and it hasn't replaced our need to feel seen, valued, and understood. Communication and connection are not the same thing. We can exchange information all day long and still feel lonely because genuine human connection happens when people know they matter.

**2. What is the difference between interaction and genuine human connection?**

Interaction exchanges information. Human connection changes how people feel about themselves. Every interaction leaves an emotional impact, and the most meaningful conversations leave people feeling valued, understood, and inspired rather than simply informed.

**3. Why do people perform differently when they know they matter?**

People perform differently, live differently, and love differently when they know they matter because feeling valued changes how we think, collaborate, innovate, and serve others. When leaders intentionally create that experience, trust grows, engagement deepens, customer experiences improve, and performance naturally follows.

**4. What emotional impact are we having on one another without realizing it?**

Every interaction leaves an emotional impact, whether we intend it to or not. Through our words, actions, and even our silence, we're constantly making love deposits or pain deposits that shape how people feel about themselves and their relationship with us.

**5. Why is human connection becoming a competitive advantage?**

Human connection has always mattered. In a world increasingly shaped by automation and AI, it's also becoming one of the greatest competitive advantages because people choose to follow leaders, remain loyal to organizations, and return to businesses that make them feel genuinely valued.

**6. What are love deposits / micro moments of love and pain deposits?**

Love Deposits and Pain Deposits describe the emotional impact our experiences leave behind. Love Deposits strengthen our sense of value, trust, belonging, and hope, while Pain Deposits leave us feeling discouraged, disconnected, or like we don't matter. They can come from people, leaders, organizations, technology, life circumstances—or even the stories we tell ourselves.

**7. How do small moments create such lasting impact?**

Life is rarely changed by one grand gesture. It's shaped by thousands of small moments that communicate, "I see you. I care. You matter." Those micro moments of love often become the experiences people remember for the rest of their lives.

**8. What are some simple ways people can create more meaningful connection?**

Put your phone down. Listen with curiosity. Learn what's important to someone. Remember their name. Celebrate their success. The most meaningful connections aren't complicated—they're intentional expressions of care repeated consistently over time.

**9. How has technology changed the way we connect?**

I love technology and use AI every day because it creates incredible efficiency. The opportunity isn't to replace human connection—it's to create more time for it. Technology creates efficiency. Human connection creates trust, loyalty, belonging, and lasting relationships.

**10. What gives you hope about the future of human connection?**

Human beings have always needed to feel valued, and that will never change. As our world becomes more digital, I believe the leaders, families, and organizations that intentionally create meaningful human connection won't just improve relationships—they'll define the future of leadership, customer experience, and the human experience itself.

## Emotional Restoration & Personal Growth

*Before we can lead others well, we must understand what restores us, strengthens us, and helps us show up as our best selves.*

**11. Why do you believe wellness alone is not enough?**

Wellness helps us function. Emotional restoration helps us flourish. We can be physically healthy and professionally successful, yet still feel disconnected, discouraged, or emotionally depleted because human beings weren't created to thrive without meaningful connection.

**12. What role does human connection play in emotional restoration?**

Human connection is one of life's greatest sources of restoration because it reminds us that we are seen, valued, and never alone. The right conversation, relationship, or act of kindness can restore hope, strengthen resilience, and change the direction of someone's life.

**13. How do people know when they are emotionally depleted?**

Emotional depletion often shows up long before we recognize it. We lose patience, joy, curiosity, creativity, or compassion—not because we don't care, but because we've spent too much time pouring out without intentionally restoring what we've lost.

**14. What are some common pain deposits people experience?**

Pain deposits are experiences that leave us feeling unseen, unsupported, or like we don't matter. For example, they may come from criticism, rejection, betrayal, poor leadership, frustrating systems, broken processes, or difficult life circumstances.

**15. How can we become more intentional about restoring others?**

Restoration rarely requires grand gestures. It begins by slowing down, noticing people, listening well, encouraging often, extending grace, and intentionally helping others feel seen, valued, and like they matter.

**16. What have you learned about resilience through your own life experiences?**

I've learned that resilience isn't about pretending life doesn't hurt—it's about refusing to let pain have the final word. Some of my greatest heartbreaks have become the very experiences that allow me to lead, encourage, and love others more deeply today.

**17. How did caring for your sister Wendy shape your perspective?**

Walking alongside my sister Wendy during her battle with cancer forever changed how I define love. She reminded me that our greatest gift isn't always having the right words—it's choosing to be fully present when people need us most.

**18. What role has faith played in your life?**

My faith has been the steady foundation beneath every season of my life. It reminds me that my identity isn't defined by my circumstances, my success, or my struggles, and it gives me the courage to keep choosing love even when it's difficult.

**19. How do we choose love during difficult seasons?**

Love is easy to appreciate when life is going well. Difficult seasons reveal whether we're willing to choose it intentionally. Pain can either close our hearts or expand it, and that choice shapes the emotional impact we have on everyone around us.

**20. What does emotional restoration look like in everyday life?**

Emotional restoration is found in ordinary moments—choosing gratitude over resentment, forgiveness over bitterness, presence over distraction, and making intentional love deposits that leave people, including ourselves, stronger than we found them. When we're restored, we have more to give to our families, our teams, our customers, and our communities.

## **Leadership & Culture**

*Leadership is love in action. When leaders intentionally elevate the human experience, trust grows, cultures strengthen, and performance accelerates.*

**21. Why do you say love is a leadership strategy?**

Love is a leadership strategy because people perform differently when they know they matter. When leaders intentionally create trust, belonging, accountability, and care, they unlock higher engagement, stronger cultures, greater innovation, and better business results.

**22. How does The Secret Ingredient Is Always Love® 3-Step Framework work?**

The Secret Ingredient Is Always Love® 3-Step Framework is a practical guide for intentionally elevating the human experience. It begins by *Leading Yourself with Love*, continues by *Building a Team That Cares*, and comes to life through *Creating Micro Moments of Love* that help people know they matter. When I say "team," I mean any group of people you're influencing—your family, workplace, classroom, community, or organization.

**23. Why is employee experience so important?**

Customer experience will never consistently rise above employee experience because employees create the experiences customers remember. When organizations intentionally care for their people, their people extend that care to their customers.

**24. What is the Platinum Rule and why does it matter?**

The Golden Rule is timeless. The Platinum Rule elevates it by shifting our focus from how we want to be treated to how others feel most valued. When we intentionally understand what matters to people, relationships deepen, trust grows, and individuals, teams, and organizations thrive.

**25. Why do people leave leaders more than companies?**

Most people don't leave because of the mission—they leave because of the daily experience. Leaders shape that experience through every conversation, every decision, and every interaction, making leadership one of the greatest influences on retention, engagement, and culture.

**26. What does it mean to build a team that cares?**

A team that cares is one where people don't simply work together—they genuinely support one another's success. When people know they're valued as human beings, not just employees, collaboration strengthens, trust grows, and performance follows.

**27. How do leaders create cultures where people know they matter?**

Culture isn't created by slogans or values on a wall. It's created when leaders consistently listen, recognize contributions, communicate with clarity, invest in people's growth, and intentionally create love deposits through everyday interactions.

**28. What mistakes do leaders make when trying to improve culture?**

Many leaders focus on programs instead of behaviors. Culture doesn't change because a new initiative is launched—it changes when leaders consistently model the behaviors they hope to see throughout the organization.

**29. How do trust and accountability work together?**

Trust and accountability aren't competing priorities—they're partners. The healthiest cultures create environments where people feel supported enough to take risks and accountable enough to deliver their very best.

**30. What advice would you give leaders navigating change?**

People rarely resist change—they resist uncertainty. The best leaders communicate with transparency, lead with empathy, and create stability by helping people feel informed, supported, and confident about what's ahead.

## Customer Experience & Hospitality

*Every customer experience begins long before the customer arrives. Leaders shape cultures, cultures shape employees, and employees shape every experience customers remember.*

**31. What inspired you to write The Secret Ingredient Is Always Love®**

After decades of working with leaders around the world, I realized the highest-performing organizations all had one thing in common—they intentionally made people feel valued. I wrote *The Secret Ingredient Is Always Love®* to show that love isn't soft; it's a practical leadership system that strengthens culture, transforms customer experiences, and drives measurable business results.

**32. What is the connection between hospitality and revenue?**

Hospitality isn't an industry—it's an experience. When people feel genuinely welcomed, cared for, and valued, they return more often, stay longer, tell others, and become loyal advocates, making hospitality one of the strongest drivers of long-term revenue.

**33. Why do customers remember how they felt more than what happened?**

People remember emotion more than information. Long after they forget the details of an interaction, they'll remember whether they felt respected, appreciated, frustrated, or genuinely cared for—and those emotions shape future decisions.

**34. What creates customer loyalty today?**

Customer loyalty is created when every part of the experience works together—from great products and efficient processes to caring employees and meaningful human connection. People come for what you offer, and they return because of how you made them feel.

**35. How can organizations create exceptional experiences?**

Exceptional experiences are never accidental—they're intentionally designed. Organizations that invest in leadership, culture, and employee experience create the kind of everyday moments that customers remember and want to experience again.

**36. What role does employee experience play in customer experience?**

Employees cannot consistently create an experience they don't experience themselves. Organizations that intentionally align leadership, culture, training, and accountability create

employees who are equipped to consistently deliver exceptional experiences—and customers who want to come back.

**37. Why is emotional connection important in business?**

Every purchase, partnership, and relationship has an emotional component. Organizations that intentionally create positive emotional experiences build stronger trust, deeper loyalty, greater advocacy, and more sustainable business success.

**38. How can technology support rather than replace connection?**

I believe AI is one of the greatest opportunities leaders have today because it can eliminate routine tasks and create greater personalization. The goal isn't to replace people—it's to give people more time to do what only humans can do: build relationships, create trust, and make meaningful love deposits.

**39. What are examples of micro moments of love?**

Micro Moments of Love are the small, intentional behaviors that communicate, "You matter." Remembering someone's name, listening without distraction, anticipating a need, celebrating a milestone, following up after a difficult day, or simply making someone feel genuinely welcomed often has a greater impact than grand gestures.

**40. What separates memorable organizations from forgettable ones?**

Memorable organizations don't just deliver products or services—they intentionally elevate the human experience. They understand that every interaction leaves an emotional impact, and they consistently choose to create experiences people want to return to, recommend, and remember.

## **Family, Motherhood & Life**

*The principles I teach on stages and in boardrooms were first learned through life's greatest classroom—family, love, loss, faith, and the relationships that shape us.*

**41. What has being a mother of 11 taught you about love?**

Being a mother of eleven has taught me that love is deeply personal. Every child receives love differently, which continually reminds me that meaningful relationships begin when we understand what helps another person feel seen, valued, and like they truly matter.

**42. How do you love people who are all very different?**

I begin with curiosity instead of assumptions. The Platinum Rule reminds us that the greatest expression of love isn't treating everyone the same—it's understanding who people are and loving them in ways that are meaningful to them.

**43. What lessons did parenting teach you about the Platinum Rule?**

Parenting continues to teach me that loving people well doesn't mean loving everyone the same way. It means intentionally understanding what helps each person feel valued and responding in

ways that honor their unique needs, preferences, and experiences. That's the Platinum Rule in action.

**44. How can families create stronger emotional connections?**

Strong families aren't built through perfect moments—they're built through intentional ones. Time together, meaningful conversations, shared traditions, forgiveness, laughter, and choosing one another day after day create the kind of love deposits that strengthen relationships over a lifetime.

**45. What role does belonging play in healthy relationships?**

Belonging is one of our deepest human needs. Whether at home, at work, or in our communities, people flourish when they know they're accepted, valued, and loved for who they are—not simply for what they accomplish.

**46. How can we help people feel understood?**

We help people feel understood by becoming genuinely curious about their experiences instead of assuming they're like us. Listening to understand before seeking to be understood is one of the simplest and most powerful ways to create human connection.

**47. What does it mean to create a home filled with love?**

A loving home isn't defined by its size or possessions—it's defined by how people feel when they walk through the door. Home is a place where people feel safe, welcomed, encouraged, accepted, and reminded that they matter.

**48. What life experiences shaped who you are today?**

Every chapter of my life has shaped this philosophy—from my childhood and military service to corporate leadership, caring for my sister Wendy, raising a blended family, and coaching organizations around the world. Each experience reinforces one simple truth: every interaction leaves an emotional impact, and we all have the opportunity to make that impact a positive one.

**49. What would you tell your younger self?**

I would tell her that the hardest seasons won't define her—they'll prepare her. The pain she experiences will one day become the compassion, wisdom, and purpose that allows her to help others know they matter.

**50. What do you hope your legacy will be?**

I hope people don't simply remember what I accomplished—I hope they remember how they felt because we crossed paths. My greatest hope is that every person who crosses my path experiences love in a way that inspires them to intentionally create that same experience for someone else. If I had a legacy line it would be ... **Leave every person feeling loved enough to love someone else.**

**51. One final question.**

If there is one idea I hope people remember after reading my books, hearing me speak, or spending time together, it's this: Every interaction leaves an emotional impact. We all have the opportunity to help people feel seen, valued, and like they matter. My hope is that every person who crosses my

path leaves feeling loved enough to love someone else. If each of us chooses to create that kind of ripple effect, we'll elevate the human experience—and bring more love into the world, one relationship at a time.