

Ep #13: Success vs. Happiness



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With Your Host

Brooke Castillo

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Welcome to The Life Coach School podcast, where it's all about real clients, real problems and real coaching. And now your host, Master Coach Instructor, Brooke Castillo.

Hey, everybody what's up? How are you today? I am so excited. We are about ready to take off on a plane and go to Montana with my huge extended family 14 of us are going to spend the week together. I'm really looking forward to it, but I wanted to make sure I got this podcast out to you, so you would get it next week.

What we're talking about today and this is such an important topic and distinction is the difference between success and happiness. I've talked to many clients who talk about wanting both of these things and yet they don't have them very clearly defined in their mind. In fact, most people don't separate those two things out, those two words. They make them mean the same thing.

I think that it's part of our culture we have this energy of striving towards success. Because there is this promise of happiness at the end of it. If you think about really successful, "People," who comes to your mind? It's usually people that have made a lot of money, usually created big corporations, or maybe really famous professional people that have created empires.

I think that's pretty normal for us all to default that success means that you've made a lot of money and a lot of people know who you are. The other one seems to be ... if you've achieved success in a certain profession meaning you have a PhD in some area, you make it the label of success if you are a neurosurgeon, or a corporate executive, or maybe an attorney. There seems to be the labels of success. They seem to go along with those professions. I think part of the reason why that is because typically they come with a high salary.

Thinking about that word success and being successful are huge association with money and being able to then purchase things that

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demonstrate that success, is that how you define success for yourself, and is that how you want to define success for yourself.

The other question is, how do you define happiness and is it really associated with success for you and do you want it to be associated with success. Are they really the same thing? Of course, I had to go to Google to find out what they determined what success was by the definition.

What is success? Success is defined as the accomplishment of a name, an attainment of popularity or profit, which it thought was fascinating, and attaining prosperity. That is how success is defined. That's in contrast to how they define happiness which is a feeling of contentment, delight, or being pleased. Those are they different definitions. I think it's important to distinguish between them and I think it's really important to define them for yourself.

If we're going to go that success is the accomplishment of an aim, then you have to have had the aim in the first place which I think is surprising to many of my clients when I say to them how will you know when you're successful? How will you know when you have achieved success if you aren't clear in defining your aim? How will you know when you have attained it? If you aren't the one defining your success, who is defining it? Really think about that.

Many of us aren't deliberate enough about these terms in terms of thinking them for our own life and we're not calling ourselves success. Because we're not meeting some societal aim of success, or what our parents define success, or what the people in our life defined as success. You need to decide what is it you're aiming for being very specific about that. Then you'll know when you attained it and then you'll be able to call yourself successful. Have you set yourself up to be successful or have you been denying yourself success.

The same is true with happiness. What are you waiting for? If happiness is a feeling of contentment and if you've been listening to this podcast for a while you know that my philosophy and my teaching is all about our feelings are created by our mind and our thinking. If happiness is a feeling, then it is always available to us, it is always a choice by what we chose to think about. Then are you allowing yourself to feel happiness on a

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consistent basis or have you tied it up with some vaguely defined idea of success. Are you postponing your happiness until you achieve that?

I would say so many of my students and my clients spend their time chasing somewhat vague, undefined success, and they postpone their happiness until they achieve it. They spend most of their time beating themselves up for not achieving this thing that they can't even put their finger on what it is, and denying themselves happiness. That's what I want to talk about. I really want to talk about these concepts and I want to give you some ideas on how to really start using these concepts for you in your life instead of using them against you in your life.

First, I want you to think about what is it that you really want, do you really want success, and why? Do you really want happiness and why? Now, believing that you need to be successful in order to be happy is thinking about it backwards. There have been many positive psychology studies much of the work of Shawn Achor in, "The Happiness Advantage," and, "Before Happiness." Great books written on happiness.

He's a Harvard professor, so it's backed with a lot of scientific research on one of the things that he talks about and proves over and over again is that success does not lead to happiness. In fact, it's happiness that leads to success. You can look at many of the people on our society there are supposedly success that are miserable. They have all the trappings of success, they have the money, they have the fame, they have tremendous number of fans, they're incredibly talented, they're very successful on their career and yet they are miserable, and on drugs, and they didn't know how to rehab.

How can that be explained if that success is supposed to bring them so much happiness. I just look at the example of Justin Bieber. I look at this kid who was so eager and so happy on the way to success and now seems to have lost his way once his achieved it. I think that's very interesting. Had he really thought about why he wanted to achieve what he did and has he really achieved his desire ultimately.

I think sometimes we think, "Oh, I want to be very famous and I want to make a lot of money," but you have to think about why, what's on the other side of that you want and why do you want it. I think that's important for all of us to think about. Focusing on first of all happiness and why we

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want to be happy, and then focusing on success and why we want to be successful.

I think it's important to note too. I know for me in my own life, I've done a lot of work on happiness and finding happiness in this moment without having to achieve anything additional, really working on this concept that it doesn't get better than this moment. My capacity for happiness is a 100% right now, and really being in that space, and also feeling this deep drive and desire from that happiness to achieve and to set goals for myself, and to aim for them.

What I've noticed is when I set big goals for myself it often shifts me into thinking that takes me out of happiness. In that sense, it's almost like success by adding this desire for success into the rhythm of my happiness; I jolt myself out of it. I think that is part of the process. In fact, I don't think happiness is something that we should air for all the time, that we're supposed to be happy every minute of the day.

We've talked a lot about this on this podcast. Is that half the time we're in negative emotion when somebody does something that is out of character? I don't want to be happy about it when someone in my life dies, when someone in my life is hurting. I don't want to feel happy. When I am pushing myself to take myself to the next kind of my own evolvment in my life, I want to bring up the emotions. I want to bring up the fear, and the doubt, and deal with those emotions.

In that sense, that goal of success takes me out of happiness and that is okay. That's part of the process. I'm not going to try and attain something because I believe that happiness is on the other side of it. Thinking about that, what is the point of happiness and why do I want it, and what is the point of success and why do I want that? What determines it, I like to set myself up for success in a way that I know I can achieve.

Let me kind of give you a rundown of my definitions and how I like to think about both of these terms. Because I think it will help you kind of get your mind around how you want to think about them. For me, happiness is a feeling I create with my mind. It's a choice that is always available to me. That does not mean is a choice I always want to make. I know that happiness is available and within me now. I don't need to achieve anything;

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I don't need to do anything outside of my life in order to achieve it. In order to have it. In order to experience it.

Success on the other hand is something I define and achieve deliberately on my own terms. It does not determine my happiness, but it's rather a manifestation of it. I already think of myself as successful because I've set my rules up for success to bring that kind of that identity to myself and that's a choice. I kind of setup the rules for myself. I also want to achieve more success in my life by setting new aims and achieving them. Not because I believe that will make me happy, but because it's almost like I want to keep evolving, and I want to keep taking myself to the next version of myself.

By starting with happiness and abundance, that need is even more exciting, and is even more intriguing even though I know it will take me out of the emotion of feeling happy and content in that moment. Sometimes they're in direct contradiction to each other. Here's what I mean by that, I mean that when you are able to manage your mind into a space of happiness, which means that pretty consistently if you want to feel happy, if that's the choice you want to make, you can find your way there.

That takes a lot of practice with managing your mind and being able to create thought patterns that are believable to you, that create happiness, and that's what most of my work is about doing, and that's a lot of the work that I do on myself.

Once you've been able to do that pretty consistently and then you start setting goals of higher achievement in your life, and you start really putting yourself out there in terms of what you want to achieve again, not because you believe it will make you happy, but because it's something that you feel is coming from within you. Then it will start to bring up the fear, and the doubt, and the frustration which will seem like it's in direct contradiction to your happiness.

Part of the process of achieving that success is to find a way to process those emotions and therefore the thought patterns that will take you to the next level of success. Here's how that works. When you set a goal that you don't believe you can achieve which is always what I like to do. All the thought patterns that don't serve you come to the surface that is

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the work. That's the work that is more important than the actual steps to achieve your goal.

You do the work on that negative emotion that comes up on thought patterns that come up. Once you've done that work then you achieve that equilibrium of happiness again and from there you create the success. Even though it seems like a contradiction it's not. It is one in the same. If you are trying to achieve something to get happiness on the other end of it, that is why you're going to quit. Because if your goal is happiness and on your way to the goal you're feeling nothing, but frustration, and doubt, and fear. You're going to think you're heading the wrong way.

The truth is, you're heading the exact right way because by evaluating and processing those thought patterns and those emotions, you're taking yourself to the next level of yourself which makes it easier to achieve that next goal, that next level of success.

I want to give you an example that's ideal with my clients. I'll actually give you two examples, I'll give you the one first with the weight. Because of course that's why I'm dealing with a lot of time with my clients and then also I'm going to talk about the money. With weight, I talk to my clients about the difference between success and happiness when it comes to their weight.

One of the questions that I asked myself when I was going to this process is, "would I rather be happy, or would I rather be thin?" To me thin meant success, so it's very applicable to what we're talking about here. I have to tell you, it took me a while to answer that question. I had always thought that thinness or success meant ... you know success with my weight meant happiness. I had never separated them out.

When I gave myself the option, it really got me thinking. I ask this to my clients often, would you rather be thin or happy? Would you rather be happy in this moment or are you willing to sacrifice that happiness in order to be thin, and if you are? Why are you? When I answer that question for myself, I would rather be happiness, and I will not sacrifice my happiness in order to achieve thinness. Because I no longer believe that thinness equals happiness. That is when I lost the weight.

That is the only way anyone ever does it, you can't beat yourself thin, you can't hate yourself thin, you can't unhappy thin. You have to find a way

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to accept, and love, and excite yourself into a place of your natural weight. The same is true with money, I deal with a lot of clients who are struggling with financial issues and spending a lot of time telling me that if they only had more money they would be happier.

If they could just get more money they would be happier. If they could just be more successful in their business they would be happier. I tell them that happiness is available to them now. In fact, from that place of happiness, they'll be able to create much more money than from this place of scarcity, and fear, and struggle that they are currently ... I would say indulging in.

First thing is first, we focus on happiness. We remind ourselves that it's always available that we can create it, that we setup the rules for that for ourselves by what we think. Second, we talk about happiness and again we get very specific. We define what success means to us. We define what exactly our aim is and how we will attain it. If you're anything like me, you like to set it up in a way that challenges you, that takes you into a bunch of obstacles that make life interesting.

Sometimes that knocks us off and gives us contrast away from happiness in that moment, and for me that's part of it. One of the questions I get, a lot of times from clients when I start teaching this concept is, if I can be happiness right now and I can find contentment here, why would I even focus on being successful? Why would I even put myself into that position?

What I have found is that from that place of contentment, there is that part of us that is like that seed that can't help itself, but bust out and bloom. It's like our nature is to evolve. We can evolve through pain and we can evolve through discontentment and unhappiness, or we can evolve through happiness. I have found for me that evolvment and the success is actually much quicker when I'm in a place of happiness, when I find that place of happiness first.

It's also quicker when I define my success and have a very clear goal, so I know when I've achieved it, I've made my aim, and I know when I've attained it, and then I allow myself to acknowledge my success and to say, "Yes, I am successful." To feel the emotion that comes along with that acknowledgment from that achievement. It's not that I haven't felt happy and once I achieved my goal then I am happy.

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In fact, here's what I find the most interesting about goal setting and about achieving our success is once we have achieved it then we're always on to the next thing. We're always on to the next evolution of ourselves. I think that's part of being human, that's part of how we evolve.

Really thinking about that for yourself and knowing that when you land at that goal, when you make \$100,000 in your practice, the first year that you do that feeling like, "Oh, I've achieved success and then it's over and then you're happy forever that's not how it works." You know this, right?

Once you've achieved your ideal weight, you don't just stop there and say, "Ahh, I'm so successful, now I found happiness." That's not how it works; happiness doesn't come from that result. Happiness comes from your mind, and it's a constant process that evolves with you as you achieve different layers of your own success and how you've defined that for yourself.

One of the things that I think is really important when you're defining success for yourself is to make sure that it's a 100% on you. One of the things that I deal with new coaches is helping them define success in their sessions, with their clients. A lot of times, my students want to define their success based on their client success which of course is unreasonable; it puts too much pressure on their client. It also puts pressure on the coach to try and manipulate or create results with the clients. That's not useful.

When you can define success based on your own terms like, "Did you show up for the session with a lot of love, are you attentive? Did you give everything you've got? Did you teach everything you know? Did you hold the space for your client? Did you enjoy the session?" Then you can walk away from the session feeling successful regardless of whether your client decides to make changes in their life, or not, that's your client's choice, and that's up to your client.

We give our clients the freedom to make that choice, but you define success, so it's a 100% depended on you. I think that's really important when it comes to making money, when it comes to getting clients, when it comes to your own business making your success based on how you show up, now who shows up for you. Not how many people show up, not how

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much money shows up, but how you show up defining your success that way is much more powerful, and I think much more gratifying.

Knowing that happiness is available all the way up to success once you've achieved it and then on to your next aim for success whatever that is, and making sure it's on your own terms. The question of why do we want to set goals and aim for success if we're already happy is one of those questions to really think about achievement in our life isn't about attaining happiness. Achieving in our life is about expressing happiness, it's about manifesting it; it's about being it and showing it, and inspiring it. It's happiness visible, that's what success is.

The happier you are, the more creative, the more excited, the more tapped in you're going to be, the more you're going to be able to create whatever kind of success you want in your life, right? Remember that what you do in your life comes from happiness, not to achieve it. Don't be chasing happiness with action. Happiness doesn't come from action and it doesn't come from your results. Your happiness comes from your mind, in how you feel.

When you create that happiness, that's when you take the action and that's when you get the result of success if that's what you want. Make sure you've defined success based on what you want in your life, what you want to achieve. I'm going to end by just being really clear about understanding your why. When you start defining what it is you want and what you believe it means for you to be success.

Ask yourself why, why is that what you want. Make sure you really like your answer. Because what you do in your life is not just about what you get to do and what you get to achieve, it's about who you get to be. Make sure you set up those goals, those aims that send you into the success person that you've defined yourself to be. Make sure that you're going to like who you end up on the other side of it.

Know that all the way there during and after happiness is available. Happiness and success are two completely different things that are achieved and completely different ways. Do not be confused and mixed them up. I'd love to hear about what you believe success is for yourself and how you achieve it in your own life.

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Please head on over to the lifecoachschool.com/13, and tell me in the comments how you define success for yourself and what it is you want to achieve from a place of happiness. Have a wonderful week and I'll talk to you all next week. Take care, bye.

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