

## Ep #17: How to Solve Any Problem



### **Full Episode Transcript**

**With Your Host**

**Brooke Castillo**

[The Life Coach School Podcast](#) with Brooke Castillo

## Ep #17: How to Solve Any Problem

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, it's Brooke Castillo. How are you all doing? I'm doing amazing today, having a wonderful lovely day. Today, I'm going to talk to you guys about How to Solve Any Problem.

This is a product I actually created. I'm going to give you a little back story on how I created it. It's a product that I created that is for sale on my website, [thelifecoachschool.com/howtosolveanyproblem](http://thelifecoachschool.com/howtosolveanyproblem).

It's, by far, my most inexpensive product but it is jam-packed with information so I highly encourage you, head on over there to check it out. That's [howtosolveanyproblem](http://howtosolveanyproblem), no spaces, to get there.

You can also go to the show notes, which would be the [lifecoachschool.com/17](http://lifecoachschool.com/17) and the link will also be there in the show notes.

The product I created, How to Solve Any Problem, I was hanging out with my instructor leader, Chris Plackie, and we were talking about how much we'd love our work, basically. We were talking about why we love it so much and why we love working with clients and the tools that we have. We just love having them in our tool belt.

One of the things that I said to her, I said, "One of the things I love about the model and about the work we do is there is no problem we can't solve. There's nothing that a client can come to us with and present us with that we can't help them."

I said, "I think that's what I'm going to call this introductory product that I'm going to make. I think I'm going to call it "How to Solve Any

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Problem" because it's really true. We can help people solve problems because what most people think are problems aren't."

If you approach every problem from the process that we teach, you can access a creativity and a wisdom within yourself that is not accessible when you are stressing and freaking out. I got to work on it and I wanted to make it very user friendly.

A lot of times when I teach people The Model, we call the Self-coaching model, the CTFAR model, it takes a minute for them to understand it and it takes some practice to really get it. It's totally worth it. I highly recommend you do it.

I think everybody should understand the model because I think it can improve your life drastically. It does take a little bit to get the hang of it. Typically, I don't teach it to my clients in the first session because it can be overwhelming.

I'd like to demonstrate the power of The Model. Inevitably, my clients will ask me, "How the heck do you help me feel so much the better so quickly? It seems like you're just laser-focused you are able to do it.

When they ask that question, when they start to understand the power of it, then I teach them The Model. My intention with all my clients is to give them the tools they need to be able to go out and coach themselves.

I don't want to develop any kind of dependent relationship on me. Any of my coaches feel the same way. They don't want to create dependent relationships. We want to create independent relationships where we can help give you perspective, teach you the tools and then you can really coach yourself on a daily basis, mainly coming back for just tune-ups and any kind of crisis.

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It's a six-part process that I teach in this program. In this podcast, I'm going to try and give it to you. I'm not going to be able to give you the entire thing in a way that you can get if you get the product.

But I will tell you this, I'm going to give it to you enough that you can start practicing it. If you really feel the success of it and you want more then you can get the PDF with the worksheets and everything, all the videos that go along with it to really help you with this process.

I'm going to give you enough in this podcast that you can get started right away. The first thing you need to do is think about any problem you have. This can be a problem that is severe and intense and you can barely think about it without having an anxiety attack.

Or it can just be some little minor problem that you're having in your life that's kind of this pesky problem. Pick any one you want but just pick one problem. I want you to hold it in your mind's eye and I want you to think about it.

I know you've heard me say this before, it's never really the problem that's the problem. It's how you think about the problem. I can't tell you how true that is. Problems are not problems until we think about them and make them problems. What's a problem for someone is not a problem for someone else.

I have one of my coaches who sent me an e-mail recently. She was telling me that since she's become very successful in her business and gotten much better at marketing and sales, that she's making quite a bit of money.

She and her husband talk about their problems as rich people problems, which of course, I was laughing hysterically because she's saying like, a rich person problem is like, "Oh my gosh, I'm late for my nail appointment."

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Or, "Oh my gosh, we have a rip in our hot tub cover." It's like, are these really problems? These are rich people problems. I will tell you that, I've thought about that so many times since when I'm stressed out over something that's really not a real issue. I'm just making it one.

I think calling it a rich person problem puts it right in perspective. The air conditioner isn't working and my house is dirty. These are not life-altering issues. When you can put them in perspective like that, it's really helpful.

The other thing that you have to remember when it comes to problems is not just how you're thinking about them but also what you're focused on. Most of the time when we have a problem, we keep focusing on the problem and talking about the problem and calling your friends about the problem. Then talking to ourselves about it again and then waking up in the middle of the night and thinking about the problem.

We aren't focused on thinking about the solution to the problem. That's something that in my business, is really important to me is when someone makes a mistake, when something falls apart in our business, something goes wrong, I like to focus on the solution instead of spending a lot of time explaining the problem and talking about the problem or even making excuses about the problem.

I just like to say, "This happens. This is a problem. How do we solve it? Let's focus on moving forward." My husband, Chris, who I work with, would disagree. He would say that I like to talk about the problem too much.

He's actually one of the people that has really taught me to focus on the solution and to really just, "Okay, that happened. How do we make sure it doesn't happen again?" I really admire him for that because I agree. I think understanding why a problem happened can definitely help with the solution but the main focus should be on the solution.

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Those two tips right there can be seriously life-changing. Think about your problem. Notice the way you're thinking about it. Is it helpful or is it not helpful? The second thing is are you focused on the problem over and over and over again or have you put your mind to work on the solution?

Instead of asking the question, "What is the problem? Why do I have this problem? What is the problem? How come I'm so unlucky to get this problem?", you shift the question to, "What is the solution? How can I solve this problem?" It will really shift your mind.

One of the things that I like to ask is the question that I like to ask a lot of my clients - this might make you laugh. This will give you an indication of how I am when I coach. One of the questions I like to ask is, "So what?"

I know it doesn't seem to be very compassionate or empathetic but it really is. Someone will come and have this whole story, "Oh my gosh, can you believe that this happened to me and this happened to me and this happened to me." I will say, "So what?"

It just stops us right in our tracks. It's like, "What do you mean, so what? So what that this happened? Don't you care that this happened?" I just want to know why does it matter to you? What are you making it mean? So what?

It really is powerful. I want you to think about this. I want you to think about your problem that you brought up to your mind's eye and think about the answer to the question, "So what?" How you answer that question is really your problem.

How you answer that question is all of your thinking about the problem. The problem needs to be separated out. When you ask yourself, "So what?", that will separate the thoughts out. If you want to know exactly what you're making the problem about then you write down the facts only of the problem.

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We have a process that we do at the Life Coach School with all of our students. It's called separating out the facts. What you do is you take any issue in your life and you separate the facts from the thoughts.

Facts have to be provable in the court of law. They have to be something that everyone would agree on. Saying something like, "My best friend is mean," that is not a fact because someone may disagree. Somebody may disagree that what she did wasn't mean. Not everyone agrees so that's not a fact.

If she didn't invite you to her birthday party, that is a fact. The way you're interpreting that is she is mean. That is a thought. The fact that she didn't invite you to her birthday party is not a problem at all for anyone until you have a thought about it.

Your thinking about it is what creates the problem. What I love about knowing this is that you decide, you have control over what is a problem and what isn't. If you're making it mean something like "She's mean, she doesn't love me, she doesn't care about me, she's not my best friend anymore," those thoughts are all creating the problem.

I can hear some of you listening to me or rolling your eyes saying, "Wow, that's a stretch." It's not. You get to see that you have the power to interpret anything any way you want.

Let's say that she didn't invite you on purpose because she wanted to be mean to you. That was her intention. That still isn't a problem until you have a thought about it that makes it a problem. Are you guys following this?

What this does is it gives you all of your emotional responsibility back. If you're upset about something, it's because of the way you're thinking about it. It's because of what you're making it mean.

Anyone can do whatever they want to you and you get to decide how you want to feel about it. It is a choice. It's not a problem until you start

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thinking about it. The way you think about it is what creates it into a problem.

Let's think of another example. Let's say you're 10 pounds overweight, according to what you should weigh on some insurance piece of paper somewhere in some scale. Is that a problem? I don't know. It depends on the way you're thinking about it.

If you think, "That scale is ridiculous. I feel great in my body. I don't feel overweight. I'm very healthy. This is not a problem for me that that scale says that I'm 10 pounds overweight." On to the next.

Someone else might see that and they might have thoughts like, "Oh my gosh, I'm overweight. I have no control. I can't lose weight. I have problems. I'm unhealthy." They could choose to think about it that way. Then all of a sudden they have a problem. Same exact circumstance, same exact facts but the way they choose to think about it makes it a problem.

Let's use an example where you can actually make something into a much bigger problem or a much smaller problem depending on how you think about it. I am not, in any way, suggesting that you shouldn't think about anything as a problem. I'm just saying that you recognize that it's your thinking that's making it a problem.

Let's say that a child of yours - pretend with me if you don't have children - takes a \$5 bill out of your purse. Somebody may interpret that as, "I need to talk to my child and make sure that they know that they shouldn't take money out of my purse. If they already know that I'm going to have a little talk with them and we're going to make sure that doesn't happen again."

Someone else could say, "Oh my gosh, my child is a thief and this is a problem and I need to put him in therapy. I'm going to scream and yell and he's going to be grounded for two months. This can never happen again. This is a reflection on me as a parent."



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Can you see how the way I think about it, I have choices, is going to create a certain level of problem in my world based on how I think about it. I'm not saying one is better than the other at all. I'm just saying that you own that you are the one that decides what kind of problems you have.

Some people have no problem when it comes to what their kids eat. Some people have a tremendous problem when it has to do with what their kids eat based on what they're thinking. It's really fascinating to watch the problems that are created by people.

The main issue that I see is that most people don't own that they are the creator of their problems. They think problems are outside of themselves. There's a problem with that. A problem with that problem.

The problem with that is you lose control over solving the problem. If you don't understand that you are the creator of it, it's very difficult for you to feel like you can solve it. But when you recognize that you're the one creating it and you can find peace with that knowing, solving it gives you access to your creativity and to your wisdom.

The second part of this process is all about figuring out what you really want. Most of us don't think about it. We focus on what is really wrong but we don't focus on what we really want. When you think about you are the one that gets to decide what you really want then you can look at your thinking about your problems and decide is that how you want to be thinking about your problem? Is that what you want?

If the answer's yes then you don't really need to change anything. But if it's not what you want, you know you have a choice. One of the great questions to ask yourself is, "How do I want to feel about this?"

When your child takes \$5 out of your purse, how do you want to feel about it? Do you want to be enraged? Do you want to be vindictive? Do you want to be angry or do you want to be understanding?

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Do you want to be curious? Do you want to be open? Do you want to be allowing? There's no right answer there. There's only the answer that you get to choose.

Most of us - some of us, I should say, will get enraged by that but we won't want to be enraged. We feel like that's just the gut reaction, that we don't have a choice there. When we really think about all of our, quote, unquote, "problems" in our life, we can ask ourselves, "How do we want to feel?" And "Why am I not feeling that way?"

The reason why you're not feeling the way you may want to feel is because of what you're thinking. Then you can ask yourself, "How would I need to think about this problem? How do I want to change the way I'm thinking about this problem so I can be in a different emotional state?"

For me, when I think about my problems, I like to be in a place of creativity, of wisdom. Whenever I'm dealing with a problem, I want to access the part of me that feels creative, that feels wise, that feels peaceful, that feels calm.

When I access that emotional space within me, I'm able to solve problems like a champ. I'm able to come up with ways of approaching them, ways of thinking of them, solutions in a much more effective way that say, I'm enraged or frustrated or anxiety-ridden.

When you think about your problem, think about how you're feeling and recognize the reason why you're feeling the way you're feeling about your problem is because of how you're thinking about it. Problems aren't problems until we think about them. Thoughts about problems are choices.

Even as I'm saying this to you, it's like blowing my own mind because it's the most powerful place to be. Even if you don't fully believe me yet, take a little nuisance problem. Take like, you're in the house and there's a fly buzzing around, it's just bzzz-bzzz-bzzz-bzzz-bzzz.

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There have been times when I'm just like, "There's a little fly, it's just chilling in the house. It doesn't bother me. It's not really a problem." There's other times like if I'm really trying to focus or it's extra hot in the house and that fly is buzzing around, I'm like, "I can't get anything done. This fly is so annoying. This is so hard. I can't do this. I need everyone to be quiet."

I get myself into this thinking pattern that makes something into a much more of a problem than it ever needed to be. It's not the fly that's the problem, it's the way that I think about the fly that is the problem.

Knowing that gives you everything back. You've seen this. Certain people are just pretty non-reactive when it comes to certain things and you're like, "How do they do that? How do they just chill in the face of that?"

It's because of the way they think. That is something I think everyone should learn. I think we should all be taught that, that how we think about things will determine how we act and ultimately, our result.

The third part of the process is to really evaluate what you're doing when it comes to your problems. Are you reacting? Are you feeling out of control? Are you avoiding and not dealing with what's coming up? Are you paying attention to your thinking? Are you paying attention to your feelings or you're just pretending it away.

Are you blowing up at people and yelling at people? Are you walking around with intense anxiety all the time? What are you doing when it comes to your problem?

Remember, all of your actions are coming from your thoughts and feeling, too. You want to pay attention to why you're doing what you're doing, which will reveal to you your thoughts and your feelings, which of course, are the more important part of every problem because it reveals your thinking.

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When you think about a problem a certain way, you're going to feel a certain way and you're going to act a certain way. For example, when I'm thinking about the fly and I'm like, "That's the most annoying thing in the whole world." When I say that then I feel annoyed.

My action is to stop what I'm doing and to chase the fly around the house and yell at it and be angry at it and to try and kill it. That's going to give me one kind of reaction.

If I'm trying to get something done, that's not really serving me. It has me focused on the fly and then the fly really is the most annoying thing because it's the only think I'm focused on.

If I'm working on something and a fly is flying around and I realize this fly has no effect on me until I focus my energy on it, until I look at it, until I turn away from my work and start focusing on it, then I can stay in a more peaceful, productive state and keep working and realize that one fly in my house has no effect on me until I allow it. Until I give it that power and I start focusing on it.

That is just one of those little pesky examples that you can really see the effect of it if you focus on it, focus on the different thoughts that you can have and how those different thoughts really lead you to different actions.

What are you doing in relation to your problem when you feel annoyed or when you feel curious or when you feel focused? How do you react? How do you want to be reacting? By looking at your own actions, you can really see how your thoughts and feelings are affecting you.

A lot of people, when I teach them this concept, they love it. They think it's totally fascinating and they want to learn more about it and they want to keep talking about it.

One of the things that you really need to do, and if you do this program I really recommend that you print out the PDF and fill in every

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single word of it because it's only powerful to the point where you actually apply it.

You're not just entertaining yourself with it. You're actually applying it to your own problem. When you think about your problem, what is your thought about your problem? What are you feeling when you think that thought and then what do you do?

Is what you're doing serving you and solving the problem from that negative space? Is there a way you could think and feel and do with that problem that wouldn't be causing you to react from a negative space or to avoid from a negative space?

What I have found is that the answer is usually a resounding yes. We can change the way we're thinking. If we're aware enough to find it then we can change the way we're thinking. When we change the way we're thinking, we solve the problem immediately because what happens is it no longer is a level of problem that we've created it to be.

It's now just something that we are working on. It's not a problem, it's a solution. We're working on the solution. I will tell you what, that's a game-changer. Game-changer for sure.

Understand your thinking, understand your feeling, understand what you want to be feeling and then ask yourself, "What am I doing to solve this problem and what could I be doing?"

The fourth part of the process is really the manual work that we've talked about before on this podcast. If you haven't listened to the podcast on the manual, go check it out because it talks about how other people are often what we call our problems.

The reason they're problems is because we have manuals for them of how we want them to behave. That really takes all of our power away. Understanding that concept relieves us of so many problems because we

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don't have to blame other people for the way we act and for the way we feel.

The fifth part of the process is really who is in charge of you. Are you being controlled by external circumstances or are you really being controlled by your own mind? Are you allowing yourself to be in charge of everything you think and everything you feel?

When you have thoughts like, "People can hurt my feelings. When they act this way it upsets me. It's their fault I feel sad. They cause my misery," you are not being in charge of you.

You're delegating your emotional responsibility to someone else you have no control over. I would say like half of our problems could be solved if we stopped doing this because problems that are other people, we cannot solve.

We cannot change other people's behavior. When we take back responsibility for our own problems and when we give ourselves the responsibility for being in charge of ourselves and our feelings, then our problems become much less intense because we recognize that we are the ones in control.

The final piece of the process is really deciphering the difference between do you want your future or your past? A lot of our problems come from thinking about our past and trying to renegotiate our past. We want to rewrite it. We want it to be different.

We want to go to the friend that didn't invite us to the birthday party and we want them to invite us. We want to argue with them about why they should have invited us. But the birthday is already over. The party is already gone and we're still trying to make it right. We're still trying to rewrite it.

The way that you rewrite your past is by rewriting what you're making it mean. You can't change the fact that she didn't invite you but you can

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change the way you're feeling about her not inviting you by changing the way you're thinking about it.

You can't change the way you were raised. You can't change how your parents brought you up or how they disciplined you or whether they got divorced or not. But you can change the way you're thinking about it now.

One of the things that I teach my students is that there is no thinking that is old. There's no past thinking that you're still thinking. It's always a current thought. Your current thought may be about your past but there's nothing in your past that's currently affecting you.

The only thing that's currently affecting you is your thought that you're having right now about your past. You don't need to change your past to have it affect you differently. You just need to change you're thinking about it in this moment. That concept right there could change your life if you let it.

I want to repeat it one more time. Nothing in your past needs to be changed in order for you to feel better about it, to feel healed about it, to feel peace about it. The only thing that needs to change is the way you're thinking about it now.

You don't need anyone to apologize to you. You don't need anyone to change what they did because they can't. It's already done. All you need to do is decide that you're going to feel differently about it because you're going to change the way you think about it.

You guys got that? Let that blow your mind. If you believe you had a horrible childhood, you're going to feel horrible. But you don't have to believe that. You can believe something different.

In fact, I grew up believing I had a horrible childhood and I changed the way I thought about my childhood and it changed my experience in this moment.

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I changed it to I had the exact childhood I needed to have to become who I am today. It couldn't have been any other way for me to become who I am. I was supposed to struggle. I was supposed to be faced with the things that I was faced with.

I wasn't supposed to have this idyllic perfect childhood. That wasn't my journey on purpose. Now I can be thankful for my childhood instead of constantly arguing with it and being upset about it.

I really want to invite you to look at the thoughts you're having about our past and do the same. The next thing that I want to invite you to do is to start thinking about our future in a really positive, excited way.

One of the things that I talked about at the very beginning of this podcast was to focus on solutions instead of problems. Solutions can be found in our future. When you think about your future, are you thinking about it in a way that excites you? Are you even thinking about it at all?

Many of my clients come to me, they don't even have their head turned towards the future. When you start thinking about your future and you start getting excited about it, there is no limit to what you can create. That can get you excited. That can get you focused in a way that is very, very solution oriented.

I've gone on and on a little bit too long but I wanted to give you everything I have about how to solve any problem because this really is something you can start applying right today and start changing your life in small ways in the ways that you're looking at things, and the way that you're dealing with your problems that can be mind-blowing.

Next time your boss comes in and starts talking to you about problems, you just come right back with solutions. When somebody is acting the way that you don't want them to act, just know that you get to act the way you want to act. That's what you do have control over.



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I would love to hear how you guys apply this material to your lives and how you work on it. Could you please go to the comments, episode 17, [thelifecoachschool.com/17](http://thelifecoachschool.com/17). Tell me, how are you looking at your problems differently? How are you thinking about your problems in a way that's serving you, that's helping you access the solution instead of just focusing on the problem.

I know that you're going to love this as much as I do. I actually created this product and then started using it on myself every day. I'm so excited to have created it because it rocks my world, literally, every single day when I apply it.

I remind myself, "Brooke, it's not the problem, it's how you're thinking about it." And that, you can change. And so can you.

Have a wonderful week. I'll talk to you all next week. Take care, bye-bye.

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