

Ep #18: Weight Loss



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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.

Hi, everybody, what's happening? I am so excited. This summer's been amazing for us. We went to Montana, we went to Seattle and we are just about to jump into the car and drive to Oregon to a place called Sunriver with another family to enjoy a week of just playing in the sun and the water and golfing and chilling in a house we've rented. Then we're back to school, folks. I cannot believe it, it's 104 here. It should never be this hot when you go back to school. Anyway, I just wanted to send out some love to you all. I hope that you're having as great of a summer as we are and I hope you're getting ready for back to school because for those of you who have kids, you know that there are so many great things that come with that. The kids are gone all day, but then you also have to do lunches and homework and all that, so game on I say.

In this episode I'm going to talk to you guys about weight loss and the reason I'm going to talk to you about weight loss is because of one of my listeners, Beth, she has posted a couple of comments on the episodes that I've done so far and because I'm first and foremost a weight loss coach, I'm always referencing my weight loss clients and the weight school that I do with my girlfriend, Susan Hyatt, and we have a blast doing that together by the way. We have the most amazing clients in that group. We just closed registration for that. We offer that once every quarter, but one of the things that we are offering right now are one on one sessions with coaches. If you're interested in getting a one on one session with a certified coach about weight loss, we really encourage you to go to the weightschool.com and check it out.

Anyway, back to weight loss. Beth, one of my lovely listeners says this, "I heard you mention a few times that you had a problem with being overweight and that through healing your thoughts you released the weight. I'm currently trying to do the same, but I'm having a hard time letting go of

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the idea of my trusty food log which I hate to serve as the actual vehicle to losing weight. I can't seem to find any other way to do the actual job of taking off the pounds even though it's brought me so much more negative feelings than any other. I'm trying to find the correlation between healing the mind like you teach and releasing the weight because in my mind I still do not see how healing is going to actually help me take the weight off, although maybe it will prevent any more weight from going on. Since you've been through this already, I was wondering if you could give me some insight to how you handled the actual food and actual eating. Thank you for all you do, Beth."

Well, Beth, thank you for posting that comment and I am happy to discuss it. When it comes to weight loss, I have a very specific philosophy around it and one of the things that I always start off with all of my clients and with anyone I'm talking to about weight loss is how important it is to focus on the cause. What I mean by the cause is what is the reason you are overeating in the first place. The reason why you are currently maintaining your body at an overweight weight is because you're overeating, period. If you stop overeating your body will regulate itself, your body will tell you how much food it actually needs and it will tell you exactly when to start eating and exactly when to stop eating if you listen to it.

Now the reason why this correlates so beautifully with the work on healing your mind and focusing on your thinking is this. Remember, all of your thinking causes your feelings and all your feelings drive your actions. If you think about the action of overeating, that is driven by a feeling and that feeling is created by a thought. When you start looking at your thoughts and noticing the thinking that's driving your overeating you can change that and stop overeating. That is not a simplified explanation, that is the explanation.

Here's the thing, most of us have no idea what thoughts cause our overeating. We are so unaware and unconscious of what's going on inside of our minds that we don't even notice the thought when it happens, we don't notice the feeling, we barely notice the overeating until after it's done and then we beat ourselves up for it. That's the pattern that most of us are

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in. When you start paying close attention you can start noticing that every time you overeat it starts with a thought and if you can become aware enough to notice that thought when it happens, you can use that as an indicator that you're going to probably be driven to overeat.

Now if when you overeat you become curious and interested instead of judgmental and battering, you will start to uncover those reasons why you're overeating. We have a process that we teach called eating two to two and what we mean by that is you start eating when you get that whisper of hunger and you stop eating the minute that whisper of hunger becomes satiation. That's usually a very small amount of food and especially for those of us who are significantly overweight, the amount of food we actually require is not nearly as much as we've been eating to maintain our weight.

Now let me just give you a warning. I've been seeing this a lot lately, but I want to repeat it as often as I can because it's really important to know. When you stop overeating, when you really become aware of the thoughts that are driving it and you can really notice the thought before you're halfway through a bag of Oreos. This will be really an amazing experience for you because it will be an increased level of connection and consciousness with yourself, but it will not be comfortable. Most of us want instant results and we want to be comfortable the entire time. I know this because I used to dream about going into the hospital and being hooked up to an IV and be put into a coma until I lost all the weight I needed. I didn't want to have to experience any of the process of losing weight, I just wanted it to be done for me.

Here's the thing, the process of figuring out why you're overeating is also a process of becoming more conscious and connected with yourself which is, I think, the point of being on the planet is to really connect with who we really are. Is it fun all the time? Absolutely not. Is it easy, is it a quick fix? Absolutely not, but it's the permanent fix because if you can figure out why you're overeating and you can solve that dilemma then you don't have to constantly be in a struggle against yourself. You don't have to use

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willpower, you don't have to use resistance against yourself because you aren't fighting the symptoms, you're treating the cause.

What happens is as you stop overeating, all the reasons why you were overeating come up. Those feelings are going to come up that you are going to have to learn how to process and metabolize those feelings, that something that most of us who are emotional overeaters do not know how to do very well. We know how to run from feelings, we know how to avoid them, we know how to react to them, we certainly know how to eat through them instead of experiencing them. Let me tell you, the more you are able to willingly experience any emotion that you're presented with and not react to it, the more closely you are going to be at your natural weight.

Let me add something here though because I think this is something that's really important. Your natural weight may not look like Jennifer Aniston's natural weight. Your natural weight may not look like a Victoria Secret weight and it's really important that you recognize that all of us have different size bodies, all of us have different natural weights. We can change what our bodies look like by how much we workout, how often we lift weights. That literally can change the composition of your body, but only to a certain extent.

At some point there really has to be a recognition that this is the body that you were gifted, yes, gifted. This is your gift and you've been rejecting the gift and trying to change it and beating the hell out of it. If you can see it as this is the body you are meant to be on the planet in, this is the one, you can adjust it based on your behavior, based on how much you eat, based on how much you work out, but at the end of the day this is the one. If you are waiting to actively accept your body until it looks like a different version of you, you are going to be rejecting yourself the rest of your life.

What we teach our clients is to find a way to accept the body that they're in right now. Now Beth also posted another comment where she said this was really challenging for her because why would you every want to accept something that you don't want. The problem is you can't reject yourself thin, you can't hate yourself thin and maintain that permanently because

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you will not tolerate it, it's against your grain of unconditional love for yourself. When you learn how to actively accept the body that you're in now and appreciate that it has everything you need to fulfill your destiny and there's a reason why you weigh what you weigh and you are in control of how much you eat, from that space you can have control and create the body that you want.

You can't be rejecting yourself and fighting against yourself and also maintain control because what happens is you're in constant conflict with yourself and so you end up rebelling against the very thing you want. So you say to yourself, I want to eat healthy, but then you're rebelling against that by saying, but I want all those Oreos, right, and so you're fighting against yourself. You have to own that you can eat whatever it is you want. This is the body you're going to create for yourself and owning that and knowing that that's the case is the secret to being able to stop overeating which is the secret to weight loss. It really is that simple.

Now the only way that I have found to eliminating overeating is to increase consciousness and awareness. Now that sounds like some very spiritual, a wonderful thing to do that we would all be very interested in doing, but what I have found is that most of us are not interested in becoming more aware and more conscious because it's more comfortable to just stay unconscious, to stay unconscious of all of the stuff going on underneath the surface. We like to focus on what's familiar, we like to focus on what's comfortable and what's easy and by avoiding negative emotion, by avoiding our fears, by avoiding our discomfort, we think that what we're doing is taking care of ourselves.

That's important to know because a lot of us have very good intention, we're just trying to protect ourselves. What we're doing by not becoming aware of what's going on underneath the surface is we're letting ourselves get into conflict with those ideas. Underneath the surface there's part of us that doesn't want to lose weight because we don't want to be uncomfortable. Then there's this part of us that wants to lose weight because we are already physically uncomfortable and when you have that

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conflict underneath the surface that you're not conscious of, you're constantly fighting against it.

When you bring up your awareness and what I mean by that is you start paying attention to what you're thinking and feeling. You start being willing to look at your thoughts without judgment, you start being willing to look at your feelings and process them and experience them without resistance, really allow that feeling to come in. What that looks like when you are wanting to go into the kitchen and eat, what it looks like is just knowing that you can sit down and any feeling that comes over you it's just a vibration in your body, you can experience it.

Many of my clients tell me they're afraid to experience their feelings because they're afraid that it'll pull them into this dark, murky hole that they'll never be able to get out of. What I teach them is that that is an illusion. A feeling is just a vibration, it can't suck you into anything, right, and especially when you're willing to experience it, it flows through you and you can name it and you can experience it fully and then it dissipates.

The only way out of an emotion is through it and when you welcome any kind of emotion you stop resisting them and when you stop resisting emotion your reduction of anxiety and actually depression, depression can be the exhaustion of fighting against negative emotion. It reduces tremendously. I've seen it in hundreds of my clients. Clients will say to me, "Well, if I don't eat that I'll feel deprived." And I say, "Okay, so what's the problem with feeling deprived, what is so horrible about that emotion, tell me what it feels like in your body that you're so willing to go to the ends of the earth not to feel it. Why? What's so horrible about it?"

What they notice is that it brings up these primal fears and these urges, right. I say that's okay, let those come up, right. Let them come up and experiencing them instead of reacting to them by eating a lot of carbs and sugar, instead of giving into those primal reactions that are coming from a place of there's not enough food to eat, I'm going to starve to death, I need to sustain my body which is no longer the case, right, in our world.

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We have plenty of food all around us all the time, but knowing that we have those urges and those primal fears coming up, it doesn't mean we have to react to them, it just means we notice them, we understand them, we experience them without reacting or trying to avoid them. Is this uncomfortable? Yes. Is it difficult? Yes. If you're willing to do it does it get much easier? Yes. Does it help you feel much more control and consciousness in your life? Yes. Is it the only way I know of to have peaceful, permanent weight loss? Yes. It includes opening up your life, creating space in your life for all of the negative emotion that you're currently running away to food for.

Now I hear what some of you are saying, food is comforting and I will give you that when you have a full body you experience less vibration in your body. It's like filling up a glass with water. When filling it you have less vibration when the glass is empty, so yes, it can dull your emotion. Remember it's not just dulling your negative emotion, it's also dulling any positive emotion that you may have. Knowing that and owning that you sometimes overeat in order to dull your emotion is really important.

Tell yourself the truth about it. Don't tell yourself you lost control, don't tell yourself you can't help it. Tell yourself yes, I chose to eat that because I didn't want to feel. Remind yourself that that was a choice because that can be empowering, knowing that you're making that choice instead of feeling completely out of control. Then once you've owned that choice and you own it every single time over and over and over again then you can decide if you want to keep doing it and only then you do it from a compassionate, loving space.

Is this something that happens really quick? No, but if you're in a hurry remind yourself the only reason you're in a hurry is because you want to get into a place where you feel better and feeling better is available to you now. You want to get to a place where you love your body, but the truth is that's available to you now and, in fact, it's required in order for you to work with yourself and be on your same team you have to acknowledge, right, that you are in your body and that you own it and that you create it. Finding

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a way to love it and experience it and be with it is what gives you all of your power back.

Now, Beth, I want to talk to you and to everyone listening about the food journal. One of the things that you said is that you don't want to give up your food journal and here's where I come from when it comes to a food journal. I talk about the new food journal because I used to track all my food and all my eating and I used to write down points and I used to write down calories and I used to add everything up and then I would give myself a grade and I would usually use it as a reason to beat the crap out of myself or hurt myself or tell myself how unworthy I am. What I realized is that none of that was serving me, it was serving as me being the authority figure and then me also being the emotional child that was reeling against myself.

When I started using the food journal as a way to connect, become more conscious and more aware of myself in a kind and compassionate way, I really saw how it could be a way to serve me for more awareness.

Remember, overeating comes from unconsciousness, it comes from not being aware of the thought that's initially driving the overeating. If I write down every single thing I eat and by the way, the most important things to write down are the things you overeat because that's where all the magic is, right, that's where you can discover what I was thinking, what was I feeling, what was going on for me there when I ate that?

I'll have clients that say I went on a three-day binge, so I didn't really want to write all that down, but that's the most important. Binges are these big, unconscious things that feel they have a power of their own, but they don't. When you start writing down every single thing you ate, you add consciousness to it and when you add consciousness to it it removes that idea that you are out of control. I chose to eat seven Oreos, I chose to eat three potatoes, I chose to go through the drive through, I chose to do it. Whatever it is you chose to do, when you own that and you know that it was a choice, it takes away its external power and brings it all back to you.

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If you're using your food journal as a way to try and control yourself and beat yourself up and that's why you hate it, I don't blame you. What I want to offer to you, Beth, is to use your food journal as a way of connecting with yourself and being curious and being compassionate. When you look at that food journal and you see that you overate enchiladas and chips when you went out to dinner with your husband, really look at that and say ... One of the ways I like to ask that question is what's the matter, love, what was going on there? Why are you overeating?

Here's the really important question. What would I have been feeling had I not been overeating? Would it have been deprivation, why? Because really think about that. If you're eating when you're hungry and stopping when you're sated, there is no physical deprivation there, right. You're not hungry anymore, so you're not feeling physically deprived. What are you feeling deprived of when you're not eating the rest of the food, not overeating everything on your plate? What is really going on? It's not physical deprivation, what is the deprivation about?

When you're willing to feel that through, you can access the thinking behind it. A lot of times my clients will say things like it's just not fair, they get to eat whatever they want, I just want to keep eating until I feel full and stuffed, so I can't really feel my emotions. I don't want to have to think about this so hard, I don't like being conscious, this feels tedious. Whatever it is that comes up for you, being willing to pay attention to it, reminding yourself that ultimately what you want is to not overeat, right, even though you may feel conflicted about that.

If you ultimately want to lose weight the goal is not to fight against yourself, the goal is just to genuinely not want extra food. In order to genuinely not want the extra food, you have to figure out why you want it now. Extra food doesn't solve problems, right. If hunger isn't the problem, food isn't the solution. What is it you're misusing food for? What are you attempting to do? Not in a judgmental, argumentative way with yourself, but in a curious way. What do you think that enchilada's going to do for you? You're not hungry for it physically, what are you expecting it to do? Because all that

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happens afterwards is you feel uncomfortable physically and then you beat yourself up.

What is the point of the extra enchilada? Help me understand. This is what you're saying to yourself. You're getting to know yourself in that way and that's the way that you can genuinely stop overeating, right. You ask does this help me lose weight? Absolutely, because as soon as you start eating according to your body's signals you will be really, really alarmed and possibly disappointed with how little food your body actually requires and then you'll be left with all of that non-eating time, all of that time that you would be eating that you're not and all of that emotion that comes up, that anxiety.

Remember, when that emotion comes up, maybe it's deprivation or fear or anxiety. When it comes up your pattern will be to avoid it, resist it and eat. Knowing that is really important. When you are changing any habit or any way of being in the world, you have to notice that and notice why you're wanting that. I've had clients say the whole reason I've been eating when I come home from work is because I feel lonely and I don't want to feel lonely, so I eat. I say first of all, why don't you want to feel lonely? That's what's real for you, that's what's going on for you.

You're thinking about your life and about your partner and about your lack of partner, that's what's creating that loneliness. That's what's real, so why are you rejecting that? Why are you pretending that that's not what's real for you? Why are you avoiding that? They'll say because it's unpleasant and I'll say yes, but half of your life, half of your emotions are going to be unpleasant and if you're constantly trying to avoid all of your negative emotion, you're really going to miss half of your life. You're really going to check out and be unconscious, half of it.

What if you're not supposed to feel positive emotion all the time? What if half the time you're supposed to be processing negative emotion? What if you could get really good at that and you could get good at not reacting to negative emotion and you could get really good at not avoiding it? Then there would be no reason to be overeating, there'd be no reason for yelling

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at people and screaming and shouting. There'd be no reason for hiding from people, right, because you would be able to process any emotion that comes up.

You get good at what you practice and most of us emotional overeaters are very good at eating instead of feeling. That's what we've been practicing. What we need to learn how to get good at and the new skill we need to learn is how to feel negative emotion without freaking out about it, right. Lonely when you really experience it is just a vibration in your body and when you sit down and really describe what it feels like it's pretty benign. It feels like emptiness, it feels hollow, you can feel it in your throat a little bit and when you really go in there then you can find out why you're feeling that way.

A lot of us have thoughts that we are creating and thinking that we're not even aware of, thoughts that are illogical, that don't make any sense, that end up creating results in our life that we don't even want. When you start ... I had a client that started feeling loneliness and she found that the reason why she was feeling it is because she was having the thinking no one's ever going to love me, I'm always going to be alone. Those thoughts are not necessarily true and they're not serving you in any way and you're unaware of them, but they're underneath that surface creating that emotion and that you're trying to escape through with food.

What's so fascinating about it is that by eating and eating and eating and becoming more and more overweight, you're perpetuating the idea that you shouldn't go out, you shouldn't be seen by people, you shouldn't introduce your people, no one's going to be attracted to you, right, because you're so overweight and that just perpetuates that whole cycle. If you could find a way to be in that emotion and not be eating and be present with yourself and experience what it means to be alive which includes all sorts of emotions, that's when you can start changing the fabric of your cognitive and your emotional life.

That is when you not just resist the idea of overeating because resistance feels terrible, you genuinely don't want to. The example that I use all the

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time is if you're a non-smoker and someone brings a carton of cigarettes into your house, you're just genuinely not going to want them. You're not going to be tempted by them, you're not going to open them up, you're not going to smell them, you're not going to light them, you're not going to do anything like that because you genuinely don't want them.

We want you to feel that way about food, extra food, right. We want you when you're done eating, you're done, right. When there's extra food in the house and you're not hungry, it doesn't matter, you're just genuinely not interested in it. You're only interested in eating when you're physically hungry because that's what food is for and the rest of the time you're not using food to escape yourself, right, and you're not using food to try and get your own attention. You have your own attention, you're inside yourself and you're aware and you're paying attention. What I want to offer you, Beth, moving forward is keep using that food journal, but you have to tell yourself you are not allowed to be mean to yourself around that food journal.

At the top of each day, write this journal is for curiosity and compassion only. You don't write down foods just because ooh, I did such a good job today, you write down foods because you want to understand yourself, you want to see why am I overeating? You're not focused on calories and points, you're focused on your body and when is your body hungry? What is it genuinely hungry for? How does that food feel in your body? Is it serving it, is it giving it energy, is it giving it everything it needs? How do you feel after you eat? Do you feel you could go job around the block or maybe do a yoga class? Do you feel light enough to be able to do that?

All the other times when you have the desire to overeat, when you feel that kneejerk reaction, are you willing to listen to yourself and hear yourself out before you eat? What's the matter, love, why are you wanting food when you aren't hungry? What's going on in your mind, what's going on in your body that you're wanting food? Remember, food can't solve any problem except for hunger, so what is the problem and what's going on in your mind and what's a better way to solve it? Because when we use food to solve problems that can't be solved with food, we create additional problems

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which is extra weight on our body, low self-esteem, a really conflicted relationship with ourselves and our body. That's not a reason to be upset with yourself, that's a reason to be curious and compassionate.

I have a program called the 42-day jumpstart that's included in the weight school and one of the things that we say in there, in one of the very first chapters is stop the beatings. If nothing else, if you want to find a way to reconcile with your body, to connect with yourself, you have to stop beating yourself up. You have to stop hating on yourself, that is step one. Step two is being curious, compassionate and aware. If you only implement those two things, if you commit to doing that for at least 30 days, I promise you you will be different at the end of it. Your body is the exact body you're meant to have to fulfill your destiny. There is no mistake, nothing has gone wrong.

What are you going to do with it now? Are you going to keep approaching it with hate and disgust or are you going to start turning compassion and love towards yourself and seeing what you can create from that? What you have been doing hasn't been working. I suggest you try something different. It doesn't mean that your body won't change. In fact, in my experience it has meant the complete opposite.

Again if you're interested in getting some one on one coaching, please go to the weightschool.com, check us out. You also can ask me any questions about weight loss, my philosophy, how I lost 70 pounds myself, any of those challenges I'd be happy to talk to you about over on the web site. That's at the thelifecoachschool.com/18. I hope you all have a beautiful week and I'll talk to you next week. Take care, bye-bye.

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