

Ep #218: Coaching for a Living



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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, what's going on, you guys? I've had such a crazy couple weeks; I'm so excited about it. A lot of you guys asked me, what is it like to be a life coach? What is it like to make your living as a life coach? And so, I thought I'd just do a short fun podcast where I kind of talk about what it's like to be me.

And I would say, in many ways, I'm not your typical life coach, but I do coach for a living. That is what I do and that's what most of my colleagues do. And I think there's a perception of what our life is like that may not be quite like reality. So I'm going to share my experience of what my life is like and what it's like coaching for a living and I'm going to share some of the experiences that I see and my colleagues around me, just to kind of give you a taste and just for fun for those of you who've been asking about it.

I'm going to tell you first of all what's been going on with me lately because it's very exciting. I just did a huge sprint – it's like an extrovert sprint, but I'm an introvert and I did it. It's crazy. I went and did master coach training for a day and then I met with my millionaire mastermind students that are making millions of dollars as coaches. And then I did my quarterly team meeting and then I did a model-thon and then we met with a recruiter to do some integration with our new integrator and then I jumped on a flight and flew to San Diego and spoke at my coach's – Frank Kern's event, which was super fun.

And then I came home and took a nap. And I just met with one of my long-time mentors and teachers, Dean Jackson – just had a great coaching session with him. So that's been this crazy kind of whirlwind that I've just been going through and I'm so excited because I'm on the other side of all of those meetings and all of the speaking engagements and all of those things with a brand-new integrator in my business who is handling all of my

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team. And I couldn't be more excited as to who I got to have come on board and it's funny now, we keep saying to each other, we're like, "This was always going to happen." We just didn't know it.

So I'll share some more details about that after the first 90 days because I feel like everything's kind of brand new. But I have been able to – as you guys know and as I've been sharing with you – the past six months to 90 days I've really been focused on getting processes set up in my business and trying to coordinate with all my employees and make sure that everyone's taken care of and that communication is good and that we have the infrastructure set up in our company and I've read probably 25 books on hiring and firing and managing and infrastructure and processes.

And it's really not been in my main wheelhouse to do that. That's not really my zone of genius and so it's taken a lot of energy. It's really interesting because I've still been doing my regular job, which is life coaching and teaching, but I've also had this other kind of job that I've been doing with my husband and business partner of, like, really building the infrastructure of our company.

And I really do feel like I have the right people in place now and I'm kind of on the other side of that and it's pretty exciting. So I'm kind of back to just being able to do what is my zone of genius, which is coaching and teaching and creating educational material. That is really where my jam is and that's really where I should be spending the majority of my time.

I feel energized what I do that instead of depleted. And I think it's important for you guys to notice that in your own lives, where maybe you are doing a lot of stuff that is outside of your zone of genius and maybe you're in a position where you need to do that, and I certainly was too, but make sure your long-term goal includes maybe delegating some of that so you can really get down to what it is you were put on the planet to do.

And for me, I know that is being a visionary in my business, coaching, and teaching. That's what I love to do and I consider this podcast part of that

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teaching, part of that coaching piece for me. So when I come here, I feel like, "Ah it's home." It's so good.

And we have re-secured land for the building. We're going to start building very soon. We had a little hiccup there. We bought the land, were going to build the building, then we decided we couldn't fit the size building on there that we wanted, then we went and looked all around for other pieces of land. We couldn't find any so then we came back to the same piece of land, bought it again for more money and now we're building a much smaller building but on the same site.

So we're excited about it. We think it's going to work out better. We have a place in there where we can teach classes, smaller classes, and then it's right next to a hotel in case we need a larger conference room, we'll be able to use that as well. So that's what's going down. And I have a couple of things that I have decided to do at the school that are going to be surprises and I will be releasing information on those coming up in the very near future. So I can't wait to share that with you.

So what is the typical day of a life coach and what is it like making a living as a life coach? And I'm just going to say that, for me, what it is about and what it is for all entrepreneurial life coaches is it is about the coaching, but it's also about running the business and it's also about marketing.

And I really do look at those as three different activities and three very different skill sets. So I think a lot of new coaches coming up the ranks, so to speak, in terms of making money are surprised at the number of skills that they have to learn in order to be successful as a life coach. You have to learn how to coach, right. You have to learn how to coach yourself so you can hold space.

You have to learn how to coach other people so you can help them and then you have to learn how to market yourself as a company. And once you start making some money, you have to learn how to run that company. Now, I think it's the absolute privilege of our lifetimes. It is like two

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generations ago, our great grandparents couldn't have even imagined having the opportunity to do what we do for a living. It is like a dream.

Now, that doesn't mean that because we have the opportunity and because it's an amazing opportunity that is limitless, doesn't mean that it isn't difficult. So I like to always acknowledge myself and acknowledge my students as it applies to the work that is required to build a company and be a life coach.

So let's just break down what that means. So the first piece of that is, in order to make a living as a life coach, you have to really know how to hold space for yourself, which means you have to be able to look at your own mind without judgment and coach yourself because the brain doesn't like new things and it doesn't like risky things. So becoming a life coach or any type of entrepreneur is pulling the brain completely out of its comfort zone.

So if you are unable to coach yourself, you will not make it past the front gate. It will take you a long time to get out of the starting blocks if you don't know how to coach yourself. So I would say that is for sure the most important skill that you have to start with and it's probably what takes a significant portion of my time and my student's time, especially in the beginning and especially when we have big goals.

The second thing that you have to learn how to do and you spend a lot of time doing is coaching other people. And coaching other people, it's the same skill set of holding the space, but you have to have really good communication and you have to be able to have really good insight into other people in understanding what's going on for them.

What it looks like for most of us, just from a practical standpoint, is most of us do our coaching either through a Zoom call or on the phone or through email. It's totally up to the coach how they want to run their company. I spent a lot of time in my early days doing email coaching and I really loved it. I think that when you can put something in writing, and I type pretty fast and I think and write pretty fast, so when I can put something in writing, it

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takes me less time than to talk. And I think there's so much power in seeing the Model in the written word.

So making a living as a life coach looks like writing, talking, and listening I would say. And when I first started, it was all over the phone. And I think there's a lot of benefit to doing it over the phone because you don't see each other's faces and I think that there can be more freedom to not judge what people are thinking when we're not looking at them.

When I first became a life coach, I really enjoyed taking my clients on walks. I was – you know, my niche was weight-loss and so many of my clients really wanted to get that exercise, so we would go on walks and walk next to each other, of course, so we weren't looking right at each other, and I felt like I had some of my best coaching sessions when we were walking.

There was many a time when we had to stop and bend over and cry and sob and really work through some emotional stuff, but it was totally fine. People would be walking by with their dogs and we're like, "Don't worry about us; just having an emotional session here, it's all good." And I highly recommend that for new coaches.

I think that when you're still doing one on one coaching, being able to go on a walk with your clients is amazing. And as coaches get more successful, we end up doing some group coaching because group coaching is such a powerful experience for the clients and it's a better use of time for the coach.

So a lot of people think that the one reason why we do group coaching is so we can utilize our time better. And that, of course, is a reason, but I want to offer too that I think listening to other people be coached is one of the most insightful things we can do. That is what self-coaching scholars is really built upon is watching me coach your friends, watching me coach your friends, watching me coach other people within our community and seeing your own issue on the screen in front of you is so powerful because

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you aren't in your own head watching it. You are looking at someone else say and do the exact same thing that you're saying and doing.

And we talk a lot about how there's no specific issue that doesn't apply to everybody. It's all just thought work. So a lot of us do group coaching as part of our coaching practices and we also do – many of us do teaching, where we teach coaching concepts, which doesn't actually include coaching, it just includes teaching.

So for me, what my week looks like, and most of you know this, is that I work on Mondays and Wednesdays and Thursdays. I take Tuesdays and Fridays off. I usually start my workday at noon and I go until about five or six, depending on my schedule. And usually during those three days a week, I will have meetings with either my team or my executive team or somebody, a contractor, to talk to through something about my business. Or I will have a coaching call. Within Scholars, that's where I do all of my coaching, is I have a regular call that I do once a week with everyone in the community and then I have a VIP call that is just me coaching all of our VIPs, who've been in Scholars for six months or longer.

And then I have my diamond advanced call, which is me coaching all of my diamond students, who have been in Scholars for more than a year. So that's usually a pretty advanced coaching call. And that's really how I coach. Those are on my schedule, I jump on Zoom and we just go to work. And I will tell you that that is probably my most favorite part of the week is being able to get on those coaching calls and really use the tools that I've created to help people change their lives. Like, that truly is such an honor.

So not only is it an honor and a privilege to be able to work from home and to be able to make my own money and to be able to make it on my own terms, but it's also such a privilege to be able to make a living helping other people, like literally helping them live better lives is really the honor of, I think, any life coach's lifetime. That is really what – most of us come into this industry because we have a servant heart and we want to find a deeper purpose of contribution and we want to be able to give back and really help heal people that are suffering.

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And so I do feel like that is my honor and privilege that I have been given the opportunity to do because of the time in which I was born, which I think is the best time in the history of the histories. So I basically do that on Monday, Wednesdays and Thursdays, and then I don't work on Tuesdays and Fridays and I don't work on the weekend, but I do spend quite a bit of time thinking about business and thinking about my clients and thinking about my students and how we can help them.

It's interesting, I think this is something that people don't understand about life coaching – when somebody hires me – let's say they hire me for five sessions, that would possibly be five hours that they would hire me for, but it's not just five hours of my time that I'm spending with that client, it's all the time I'm thinking about them in between sessions and processing and coming up with ideas and deciding what I want to use for them for the next session and preparing for that session and trying to understand what's going on.

Like, I think about – I'm doing this a lot with my master coaches right now – I'm thinking about them and what they're going through and how I can help teach them to coach at a deeper level and making sure that I find new ways to approach and new metaphors to teach so they can learn it on the level that is the next level for them. So I think that's kind of an important thing to talk about when it comes to life coaching because sometimes we only have 20 hours' worth of actual coaching, but the other, you know, ten hours are spent thinking about our clients and kind of pondering on their situations and coming up with really good approaches for how to help them work through some of their own issues.

And the other piece is, of course, our business and marketing. And for me, what that looks like in my business right now is really kind of just supervising my team and making sure that they're, you know, getting what they need to be able to do their jobs. We have set up our business in such a beautiful way that it has so many processes that are fully developed, so it's just a matter of documenting everything, making sure everything's documented so people can follow through on those processes. And

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everyone on my team has been here with me for a while now, so they're pretty trained and they know what's going on.

I brought on a new integrator who will be the president of the company and then we've also brought on a new executive assistant, who will kind of be in charge of supporting everybody on our team. I could not be more excited about that. So really, my job, as it applies to my business, is just kind of that handoff and that transition over.

For most coaches, it's just them. They're the only ones running their company. They're the only ones in there, so they have to manage all of that themselves. And the way that we like to teach it is it is all different roles within that business and you want to make sure you understand which role you're working in when you're doing that role. So when it does come time to hire someone, you kind of know what those job descriptions are.

So it will look like, you know, when are you doing your executive assistant work, when are you doing your marketing work, when are you doing your process management work, when are you doing your bookkeeping and your finances, and kind of separating those jobs out even though you're the one doing them all.

And, of course, the last piece – and this is something that I work a lot on – is my marketing, which is really developing a relationship with my clients before they ever pay me any money. And I spend a lot of time marketing and working with people and educating people that will never give me money, and that is part of the service that I want to do. So when I think about marketing, I think about that service. I think about – it's the offering and giving results ahead of time.

And I love that work and I've heard many a CEO, very successful CEO say that you should never give up the marketing of your own business. I've read a lot about Steve Jobs and Apple and how he was always very involved in not just the engineering and the design, but also the marketing of his product. And so, for now, that really feels compelling to me. It feels like a huge piece of what I want to do.

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I really have always been geeking out about business and I love business, but what I've recognized is that it's not so much growing a business, it's not so much the infrastructure and the employees and managing that as it is the vision for me and also the marketing and understanding how do we reach out to people who we know we can help and offer them help in a way that they would be open to receiving? That is really the question that I'm doing right now and the question that all of my students who have become life coaches really spend a lot of time doing. How do I utilize and apply marketing tools in a way that serves me in my business?

And here's one thing I want to say about that, and I think this is kind of one of the privileges of being a life coach and an entrepreneur is that when you first start, nothing really works the way you want it to. Nothing really – I've never really seen anyone have everything just fall into place, click, click, click, click.

Even my clients that really follow those directions that I give them in terms of building their businesses still have to do some testing. They have to go out there and see what works and what doesn't. There's no other way around it. And so, you are guaranteed to have failures, you are guaranteed to have things that you worked very hard on not work. And so, I think that's when that self-coaching comes back into play and you have to remember, okay, I have to self-coach myself through this process so then I can show up for my client and coach my client and then I can go build my business.

So it's kind of this circle that we go through where we're focused on our client, we're focused on our self, we're focused on our business – oh, that didn't work; back to being focused on ourselves. So I would say that those are the components of making a living as a coach and coaching for a living.

I can't emphasize enough how delighted I am that this is a career, how delighted I am that this is something we can do and use to support our families and to pay our bills, but also as a way to have purpose and contribution and serve other people in their lives. I wanted to do this podcast to share kind of what it's like to coach for a living, because of a lot of people ask me about it and a lot of people wonder if they would like it.

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You know, I had someone say to me the other day, I just can't imagine, you know, listening to people's problems all day long. And I was like, what? I'm like, oh my god, that is not how I think about it at all. I think about showing up and being of service and making contribution and having something that can like genuinely help other people is how I look at this business. And I wouldn't have it any other way.

And, of course, it's not for everybody. It's not something that everybody should or would want to do, but it's definitely something I want to do. And I do – I wanted to also do this podcast just to like do a shout out to opportunity. And a lot of us struggle as we first become life coaches in overcoming our own selves and our own identities and I always just want to remind everybody, let's not forget – like, yeah, it's hard, but it's possible and that it hasn't always been that way, that something like this was possible.

So if we stick to it, we can realize something that maybe nobody else has ever had the opportunity to realize. And that's what I see my life being able to do as a coach, is I couldn't have realized this level of success in any other avenue, I don't think.

I can't think of any other career where I would have been able to create what I have created in the way that I have created it and in a way that just feels like such an important mission, such an important thing to do. And so those of you who are kind of on the fence and have questions about it and don't know if you want to sign up to be coaches, I hope that this will help you and I hope that I have the – I can send – maybe I did send you to this podcast to listen to it if you're asking is that something I should do. Or maybe this answers a few of your questions of what it's like to be a life coach and what it's like to go through each day coaching.

And I want to remind everybody that it's not just the clients while we're talking to them, it's the clients that are in our minds and in our hearts as we like go throughout our lives thinking about how we can hold space and support those people who come to us who genuinely need it. I think that we

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are just warming up in this industry. I think there is an epidemic of people who really want and need mental health support.

I think we have gotten to the place in our evolution where we are going to have to start learning how to overcome our own brains in order to survive and I think we will and I think we will with the help of the work that we're doing as life coaches.

So if you are a life coach, please know that I bow down. This is not easy work. This is hard work for us to do and whether you're employed by an organization where you get to coach or you run your own company, I honor you; I really do. We are quite a crew all of us life coaches and I'm just super proud of us.

I'm super proud of our industry and I'm super excited about where we're going. Alright, my friends, have a gorgeous amazing week. I'll talk to you next week. Bye-bye.

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