

Ep #224: Lies We're Taught



Full Episode Transcript

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.

What's up, my friends? What's going on? Today is an amazing day, as are most days. One day, this day is amazing because my whole family is away and they're camping, and they're out of the house, and I love - I'm an introvert so I love, love, love being alone. I love watching documentaries, I love reading, and I have spent this whole week working as much as I want and rethinking some stuff in my business and talking to my employees, and it's just been luxurious. And I've loved it and I've walked my dogs like, three times a day even though it's 7000 degrees here. I find the shade and the water so it's all good, my friends. Everything is great.

We're about to do our certified coach mastermind here in a couple weeks, so I've been doing a lot of preparation for that. I'm so excited to see everybody, all my students come back to me, and we all hang out together, I'm really excited for that. We do 100K awards, I do a 100K dinner for all of my students who make over 100K a year. We do an amazing dinner and we do awards for them and then we have the top earner award and then we have - we have a couple other awards. We have the Brooke Castillo award for content, and then we have the Chris Castillo award for the most helpful coach. We have some cool stuff, I'm excited.

And at this one, we're doing some swag. So we've been creating some swag for that. We have some really awesome t-shirts that we're going to give to everyone and coffee mugs and caps and it's awesome. I can't wait. So actually when you listen to this, it will probably already be over, but right now as I'm batching this, it's coming up in a couple weeks.

So today we're going to talk about lies we are taught. Now, I want to be clear about this. What makes something true and what makes something a lie is something that you really have to question because what is true? The way that I define it is that what is true for you is what you believe. And I think that most of us, when we are young, we are being taught what I could

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consider facts, right along with beliefs and we don't have the discretion when we're young to differentiate those, right?

So whatever our parents teach us and that we learn is all interspersed with knowledge that we need to learn to do two plus two is four, and that we need to know that that is called a tree, and that we also need to know what to believe about the world. And so it's all mixed in with our thought patterns. And if we aren't careful, we will assume that everything that we are taught when we are kids is true.

And so so many of my clients come to me and the work that we spend time doing is questioning everything that they've been taught. And so often it's identity-shattering because imagine like, if I told you, "Well, you know that two plus two thing? Not really the case." You'd be like, "What? What do you mean? I've always used that in my life. It's always been something I believed," and I'm like, "Well, I know they taught you that but here's another way of looking at the world." And it's like, your brain like, explodes.

So I say question everything. What you think is an observation may just be a belief that someone taught you to believe that isn't serving you. So I decided to go through and write out some of the most common beliefs that my clients have that cause them pain because here's the thing: we could be taught things that aren't necessarily "true". They're not "facts."

Now, by the way, Eckhart Tolle and Byron Katie question everything as true. Like, is that really a tree? How do you know? Somebody just decided to call it a tree. Does that make it true that it's a tree? And in fact, why should we even label anything? And Byron Katie questions everything. You're a person. Is it true? You're a human. Is it true? You're on a planet. Is it true? Like, you could really question everything and make yourself a little bit cuckoo.

So I'm going to suggest that we don't take it quite that far, but I'm going to give you some ideas, some thoughts that you may think are true that I think are lies, just to help you question maybe some thoughts that you have. So let's get started.

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Number one, people hurt our feelings. We are taught this from the get, from the very beginning. You hurt mommy's feelings, you hurt daddy's feelings, you hurt your brother's feelings. Did your brother hurt your feelings? Did your little friend at school hurt your feelings? All of that. We teach our kids that their feelings can get hurt by other people instead of teaching that feelings are caused by our mind.

What this teaches us is that the way to not get hurt is to control other people, to control what they think about us, what they say about us, what they do about us. So we turn ourselves into play actors, so we try and please other people so they won't hurt our feelings and we won't hurt their feelings. And that's why so many of us feel like we don't even know who we are because we're so focused on what we think other people think about us and we're so focused on what they will think when we say things that we don't even know how to be ourselves.

So it's the most disempowering thing we are taught, and it's a lie, and it's pervasive in schools and families all throughout the world. And we're taught it's important to be kind so you don't hurt other people's feelings. It sounds so pretty and sounds so nice, but it's actually one of the things that gets us into trouble because we end up being kind for the sake of someone else when it's not even genuine for us.

And so we start getting into these roles of not even expressing our genuine emotion, not even knowing what our genuine emotion is because it is our goal to control other people's feelings, and I will tell you, unlearning that is really challenging for a lot of my students.

Number two, hard work is what makes money. God, that's a tough one. Because we're taught that the harder we work, the more money we'll make. And I think that that is related to hours, the harder we work, the longer the hours we work, the more money that we'll make. That is not what makes money.

Money is made by how we think, by our human ingenuity and the value that we add. Value makes money. Now, a lot of time, hard work produces value,

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but it's not the hard work that's creating the money. It's the value that you've created with the hard work that's making the money. So I mean, this is one I just want to shout to everyone. You make money based on the value that you create. You want to create as much value as you possibly can and know that that will be returned to you. That is how the universe works. I have proven it. My clients have proven it. It is not about how hard you work.

There are so many people that work themselves to the bone that do not make a lot of money. So it's really important. It's all about the value that you make and what you can charge and what the return will be on that value.

The third one is getting straight A's means you're smart. How many of us have been taught that one, right? If you follow the rules and do what your teacher says and get straight A's, it means that you are smart. And that if you don't, the alternative is that if you don't get straight A's, you're not as smart as somebody that does.

And I think that it's so important for us to recognize that there are so many different ways of being smart and so many of my friends' kids don't do well in school and they don't want to play the game, and they don't want to please the teacher, and they don't want to conform, which I secretly think is very smart, by the way. I try and tell these parents that but they're so caught up in the straight A's and this if you get straight A's and you go to college, that means that you're super smart, and not questioning what kind of smart that is and what that will mean for their future.

And so I think way too many kids think that they're not smart and it kind of goes back to what we learned from Carol Dweck, thinking that they're not smart so they're not capable. And I think when you get straight A's, it may mean that you're smart, it may mean that you work really hard, it may mean that you catch on to what is taught in school really easily, that you enjoy school. It can mean so many things, right?

My kids get straight A's, and we've talked about this before. It's questionable that that determines how smart they are. Because I feel like

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the smartest kids - and this is of course just my opinion, are the ones that want to learn the most, that really - and that isn't necessarily going to show up in the grades. It might, but it doesn't necessarily mean that.

And so I wish that there was a different way of labeling our kids where they were really rewarded for their hard work and their ingenuity and for questioning everything. So many of our kids are punished for all of that.

The next one is the goal is to be happy all of the time. And the way that we're taught this is we may come home from school and be sad. Well, what can I do to cheer you up? What can I do to make you happy? Or let me talk you out of the reason why you're sad. Let me talk you out of the reason why you're upset. Versus just, well, half the time, sweetheart, this is how the world is and it's totally okay and right now we're just going to feel those feelings.

So if your kid comes home from school and they're sad, sad is good. Let's be sad. It's not like, let's get to the place where we can be happy now. It's like, the pursuit of happiness doesn't mean that we are happy all of the time. And in fact, if we were supposed to be happy all the time, there would be no reason to pursue it. There would be no happiness if we were happy all the time because there would be no contrast to it. I think that's one of the one debilitating, you guys.

I know I talk about it all the time on the podcast, but I think that causes more unnecessary suffering than anything. The goal is to be happy all of the time. The goal is not to be happy all of the time. The goal is to have the fullness of the human experience, which includes happiness but also includes sadness and also includes some suffering and also includes disappointment and frustration, and it's all okay.

The next one, winning doesn't matter. Everyone's always a winner. Alright, my friends, this is where we might part ways. Everyone is not always a winner. It's okay to lose a game. So let me just tell you, at my house, we are very competitive. I love games, but I love games because of winning and losing. And I love risking to lose. I do not like to lose. I do not like to

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lose, my friends, and I will go to the death if it's a game of Taboo in order to win. But what makes the win sweet and amazing is not everybody wins. And what makes the loss such a bummer is that you didn't win.

So I don't understand the logic of not letting our kids lose. Half the time we're probably going to lose. The more competitive we are, the better we are at something - my son playing golf, loses more than he wins. Playing soccer, both of them lost more than they win. My son on video games. If him yelling from in there is any indication I'm pretty sure he loses more than he wins.

But the win is sweet. Everybody is not always a winner, and that's okay. Sometimes we lose and that's okay. So people say, "Oh, it doesn't matter if you win or lose, it's how you play the game." I agree. You got to lay it out, but it's okay to be disappointed in a loss. We need to learn how to lose. We need to embrace the loss, we need to learn how to fail and recognize that we'd rather win but it's okay if we lose. And not helping our kids deal with loss and deal with disappointment I think is a tragedy.

Me learning - I was very competitive in sports when I was a kid and when we lost, I was devastated. And it's because I had so much passion for the sport and I wanted to win. And I want to win at life, and I want to win at Taboo and Pictionary, and I think that there is a beauty to that that is lost when whenever I play a game with someone who doesn't care if they win, I'm like, what's happening? You're not doing it right. So anyway, the truth is not everyone is a winner at every game. And that's okay.

The next one is it's unsafe to love people sometimes. This is kind of, I think, a misinterpreted one. I don't think we're taught this directly, but I think we are taught that sometimes we shouldn't love people if they do things we don't agree with. And I think that's a lie. I think we should always love everybody.

It doesn't mean we spend time with them, it doesn't mean we go to dinner with them, doesn't mean we condone what they're doing, but love is a gift we give ourselves, and by loving the human race and all the humans in it,

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we get to have the richest, most amazing human experience. When you can love the darkest of us and the most lost of us, then you can love all those crevices inside yourself that are lost and that are dark as well.

I think this one thing is what helps more of my clients than anything. Finding a way to love humanity in its current form and in all of its current forms allows us to love ourselves in our humanity, which isn't all goodness. It's not meant to be all goodness. And so if you can't draw the line, then don't. Why draw the line and choose to hate? Because all you'll feel is hate. Even dislike. Why would you choose dislike when you can always choose love?

Love is never dangerous. In fact, the opposite is true. I can love someone deeply and I can love myself deeply, and from that place, I can make really clear decisions about my own safety and my own boundaries and where I want to be. In fact, much better, and from deeper wisdom than if I'm making those decisions based on fear.

The next one is money is finite. It's a zero-sum game, that if I get more, you'll get less. Like there's one big pie that we're all fighting over. And that is not the case and thinking about money that way does not serve anyone.

I talk a lot about money in Scholars and we have a whole money course in there, but one of the things that I think trips people up so much about money, especially my coaches who start to really start building some wealth for themselves into the high six figures start freaking out about that level of wealth, and what I think is so beautiful about money and about having it is that you can help so many more people when you have more money. You can help people solve so many more problems.

You can solve so many of your own problems the more money that you have. No, you can't solve all your problems, but there are a lot of problems that money can solve. And the more money you make, the more money you inspire other people to make, and the more I'm able to help other people make money - like, I think about all my employees that I'm paying very well. That's the opposite of a zero-sum game.

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I have multiplied everyone's income around me by making more money in my own business. Chris has multiplied the money in his life, in his family of origin, all of it because of his ability and willingness to make a lot of money. So I think money multiplies instead of takes away from.

The next one is women have it tougher than men. I talk to a lot of my students, who struggle with this idea that women have it tougher. And you can make a case for that, I think, and why? If you want to help people in general who have it tougher and you want to help those women make their life better, I think that's a beautiful, wonderful thing. But I don't think we need to accept this universal belief system.

I had a student one time say to me, "Well, my husband has it so much easier than me," because she had been taught her whole life like that men have it easier. I'm like, "What are you talking about? No, he doesn't." And she hadn't even questioned it. It was just like, a belief system that she had. I believe the opposite is true just because I choose to believe the opposite. I think women have it all. We have it all, sisters.

I love you, men, too, but I think that our brains are what make life tough. And that's it. And if I think that I am somehow less than then that's how I'm going to show up. But I think we're all amazing. Men, women, all of us, amazing. We have such incredible opportunity to create a life of true abundance and I think it's tough for men and I think it's tough for women, and I think that's okay.

The next one, your husband, wife, spouse, should meet your needs. Can we all just give this one up? That is a ruiner of marriages. You get into a marriage with someone and you tell them what your needs are and you expect them to meet them, they will not do a good job of it. Guaranteed. You know why? Because it's not their job to meet your needs. It's your job to meet your needs. And I don't know when this lie came out that you get married and it's about give and take.

That does not sound fun. I don't want anyone taking. I want to give, I want to love, but I don't want to take. I don't think we need to take from each

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other in order to have great marriages. Getting married and taking full responsibility for yourself and your own needs and then just loving the heck out of the person is what makes an amazingly fun marriage. Trust me. Test it out for just a week and tell me what you think.

The next one is college means you'll be more successful. Can I get an amen on this one? This is not true. Going to college doesn't make you more successful or less successful. You and the way that you think will make you more successful or less successful. So if you go to college and you believe that you will be more successful because you went to college, then you'll be more successful.

What you believe determines your results. But it's a lie that going to college will make you more successful. And I especially want to tell this to all of my friends who are about to send their kids off to college or who are about to start college and go into college, loan debt. If I am right about this, if you can be just as successful without going to college, then what will you do with your life?

Now, if you want to be a doctor, I'm going to recommend you go to college. If you want to be an attorney, I want to recommend that you go to college. But that is no guarantee, my friends. And question that belief. Question it for your kids and for yourself. That's just like, the locked in one.

I mean, the most recent one I had and I talked about this with money too was that you should always have a SEP or a 401K. I thought that was just the law. And then I started questioning the whole set up and why it was that way, and I really recognize that is something that is not necessarily true and it certainly isn't true for me.

The next one is drugs are terrible. I listen to some of my friends teach this to their kids. And their kids know that they're lying because drugs aren't terrible. Drugs are amazing, drugs are awesome, that's why they're drugs. That's why people get addicted to them.

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So I've always told my kids their whole life, I'm like, "Listen, people will tell you that drugs are terrible, but here's the thing: drugs are amazing and that's why people get addicted to them because they do things in your brain that make you think you're happier than you really are." And they're amazing on the front end and terrible on the back end.

So when kids try drugs and they have this amazing experience with them and they think that you've lied to them, and so I think it's important as parents that we explain drugs in a much more accurate way. We don't just say they're horrible awful things and you should always stay away from them and they're evil because that is not the case.

The case is like, I remember doing drugs for the first time, I was like, what? Don't ever get that near me again. Like, I seriously wish I never would have even tried alcohol because it became such a problem for me. So I've been really open and honest with my kids about drugs and the perils of drugs and you know, my mom always used to tell me that they were terrible, and then I did and I'm like, these are not terrible and I don't want to do them anymore because they're great. Drugs are terrible because they're great, because they make you - you know what I'm saying? They make your brain think that you're great.

And the last one is that the world is broken and humans ruin things. I do not think this is a useful belief system. I do not think we have to believe this in order to do amazingly wonderful, awesome things to injustice and to the negative things in the world. I choose not to believe that the world is broken. I choose to believe that the world is perfect. And that part of it being perfect is that there are parts of it that we need to work on, that we want to work on, that we want to make different and better.

And we can do that from a place and desire of wanting to create something better and wonderful versus having to hate on the world that we have. I think the thought humans ruin things is very one-sided and I think the idea that humans create things and humans solve things and humans can solve the things that they ruin needs to be included in that too. I see way too many people walking around with their heads hanging low feeling bad

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about the world. That doesn't help the world, my friends. That brings more despair into the world.

If you see a problem, you can see it as an opportunity versus seeing it as a reason to hate and moan and cry and feel sorry for us. I believe the world is the way it is so we can evolve into the best versions of ourselves. And I do believe that through the process of evolution, we will not eliminate suffering, we will not eliminate the bad stuff. I think it will always be there, but I think that's the point. I think that that is the experience of being human, and if we approached our lives that way, I think we'd have a lot less suffering about the suffering.

Alright my friends, those are the lies. Can you come up with some lies you were told that you don't believe anymore? Some lies that you were taught when you were a kid that you now want to question? I double dog dare you to do just that. Alright my friends, talk to you next week. Bye.

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