

Ep #229: Alternative Futures



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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.

Hello, my friends. Oh my gosh you guys, I had the most amazing day yesterday. Still like, enjoying it. Sometimes Chris and I just love just a quiet night and we just - we watched a movie, which is super fun for us. When we say we watch a movie, we kind of fall asleep watching movies. Pat our dogs.

I took the dogs on a walk and then I came back and we just both sat outside and floated in our beautiful pool. Here's one thing I love about Texas. It's like, hot at night. Like, at nine o'clock it's still warm outside so we put our suits on and go in the pool. It's just so gorgeous and I just love it and I just love my husband and I feel like our house here is kind of like a resort. And so just had such a great day. It was so nice. So I'm happy to be back at work, happy to be thinking about so many things.

You guys, I have so many plans for next year. I'm getting really excited about it. I've decided to write two new books. Smaller booklet type books and I'm excited about writing those. I'm creating programs right now as part of my program called Coach Tank. I've talked about it a little bit on this podcast but one of the things that's so great about Coach Tank is like, our version of Shark Tank is I get to work with other entrepreneurs to help them build their businesses. The goal is to get them to seven figures with a partnership with me.

And the one that I'm doing right now is called Entrepreneurial Bookkeeping, and I have learned more about bookkeeping in the past few months than I ever have in my life, and the reason why is my CFO, Mark Butler and I have become super close friends. And actually, he's really close friends with my husband Chris too.

And we, I really feel, have built this business - the three of us have really built this business from - we started working with him, it was at about \$300,000 and we built it to you know, eight figures plus. And - which is so

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crazy to say out loud. Super fun. But I think that the work that I did with Mark and the work that we did on our numbers and the way that we thought about numbers is really a huge part of what made a difference.

So I have recommended all of my clients who make over six figures to work with him. All of my students. And the ones that have just love him because of the way he approaches bookkeeping. And so, so many people ask me about my work with Mark and so I approach Mark, I'm like, hey, let's do a Coach Tank. Let's you and I do the first one together. And Mark's going to help me with all the Coach Tank projects that I have moving forward.

And the deal with Coach Tank, by the way, is if you are a certified coach with The Life Coach School, you can pitch me an idea on any program that you either need my mind help on, my money help on, or my marketing help on, and we may be able to do some sort of partnership to be able to create a great business together.

So I'm doing Entrepreneurial Bookkeeping. The other one I'm doing is called Monday Hour One, and that is a productivity program that I'm creating that I'm super excited about, and the other I'm doing is called One Page Management, which I'm basically taking all of the managing skills that I've developed over the last six months to use in my own business that really are kind of the self-managing company that I've been talking about trying to create, and I'm going to teach that to whoever would like to learn.

So I'm just excited. We're just creating all these new ventures, which now that I have the meta skill of building businesses and I have the Model, there's really no limit to what we can create. So I'm just looking forward to all of that happening in 2019 and being able to focus my energy.

The other two areas where I'm going to focus my energy, which are very related are of course life coach training, where I train life coaches, and also Self-Coaching Scholars, which is where I coach my clients. I try to keep my business very simple.

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So I think of Coach Tank as the backend of life coach training. So coaches go through my training program and if they want to build a business with me, that's an opportunity that they have. So that's what's going on with me, y'all. I hope you guys are having an amazing, awesome, fun-filled summer.

I am excited to talk to you today about alternative futures. I love the idea of thinking about our future and I've talked a lot about it on the podcast. I've talked about how our future only exists in our brain so therefore we can have any future that we want. And I said to my husband the other day, I'm like, "This has been the best year of my life, but do you know what is always going to be the best year? Next year. Always."

Every year, next year's going to be the best year. It's always going to be great this year and then next year's going to be even better. Always, because I'm always going to be evolving and learning more and knowing what I want to do. So I'm even more excited about next year than I am about this year, and this year's ridiculously awesome.

So how can I say that next year is going to be better than this year? Because it only exists in my mind, and in my mind, it exists better. And that is my privilege as a human with a prefrontal cortex to be able to always imagine a future better than my past.

Dan Sullivan taught me that the future is my property. I can do whatever I want with it. Isn't that awesome? Oh my god, I love thinking about it that way.

So I try to imagine the millions of people in the world that just imagine horrible futures. And they feel like they have to, like that's just their default. They just dread their future. But the truth is they're creating that future in their brain and the dread that they're feeling is only because their imagination has created a future for them that they don't like. And if your future only exists in your brain, why would you do that?

So let's think about making decisions. I love the idea of taking any point in time where you're making just an easy decision, or even a difficult decision,

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and the way that we make decisions is we create alternative futures. We create alternative outcomes in our mind. So the question is do you want to take this job? Do you want to become a life coach? Do you want to join Self-Coaching Scholars? For example.

And so you're trying to make this decision. So as you're considering the decision, you are imagining alternative futures in order to make that decision. Now, you think you're making your decision based on facts, but there's no such thing as being able to do that. You can weigh the pros and cons and you can consider what you know right now, but the truth is we're making our decision based on an imaginary future we're creating in our mind and an alternative one.

So if I'm someone that's super afraid and super insecure, and I'm considering maybe signing up for life coach training, one future that I'm imagining is that I overcome my doubt and I overcome my insecurity and I become a very successful life coach. And that's what gets me intrigued to consider it in the first place.

But then I also imagine in my alternative future is that I don't learn enough and that I can't do it and that I'm not going to overcome my doubt or my insecurity and I'll never be able to get clients. And so I am making a decision based on these two alternative futures that I've created in my own mind, based on my own belief systems and based on my imagination.

So when you think about what are the ingredients of our future, the ingredients of our future are always the facts of what is happening currently, our interpretation of our past, which includes our belief systems, and then also our creativity and our imagination.

Now, one of the tragedies in my opinion of what happens in our school system is we train our children to not be creative, to not question authority, to not imagine the possibilities, to never daydream. What we train our children to do is to feed us back what we told them and to follow the steps that we tell them to do.

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Well, when you're imagining a future, there are no steps to consider. There is no structure to that. You can imagine whatever it is you want. You can daydream whatever it is you want and that is just as real as imagining what you did yesterday. Neither one of them are real, right? They're all just in your mind.

So knowing that, why do we consistently choose to project onto our future a version of our past that may not even be as good as the past was? It's so depressing. When I ask people about their future, most people haven't even considered it because they haven't gone into their imagination, they haven't gone into their creativity. What they'll say to me is, "Well, I'm not sure what will happen to me."

So they're imagining their future happening to them instead of imagining their future as a possibility, as something we create. So there's no limit on your future. And no one can tell you that you're doing it wrong, and no one can tell you that it's unrealistic because it's in your mind.

So if you're thinking about your future with a default lens, you think you're being realistic, but maybe you are, maybe you aren't. You can't possibly know because you know don't what you're going to create in your future yet. You're just imagining it.

So if you think about your future with unlimited possibility, with unlimited creativity and with unlimited imagination, what comes up for you? I recently had one of my best girl friends come and spent some time with me and she brought her boyfriend with her and I asked him, "What is it that you want to do in your future?" And he told me what he wanted to do with his business.

And I said, "Now, imagine that anything's possible." And he went, "Oh, if anything were possible," and then he gave me a completely alternative future. And I looked at him and said, "You know that anything is possible, right?" And he went, "Oh yeah, whatever, you life coaches."

But the truth is there are no restrictions to how you imagine your future, and how you imagine your future is what you will create for yourself. Now,

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something tragic could happen. We could get hit by a bus, we could all be paralyzed, we could all be non-functioning, we could lose all of our money, but we don't imagine that. We feel justified in imagining a future that is just like our past. We don't feel like there should be any restriction to believing that.

It's "likely" or not, depending on what you're going to put yourself in what situation on purpose. But here's what I want you to think about: what if you imagined a future way bigger than your past? What is the downside? Your own disappointment? That's what most people tell me.

And I said, "Well, look at how you're feeling now, you're just disappointing yourself ahead of time. Why not at least give yourself a chance to imagine it?" My son plays poker all the time. I don't really know how to play poker but I love watching them play. I like to play 21 and pretend like there's skill involved, which there's really not, but I pretend like I'm an expert at 21.

But I watch them play poker and I watch them bet on their hands and take chances on their hands, hoping that their hand will end up being good because of the next card that's going to come. And so they're willing to put money on with the chance that it will. They're betting on that alternative future for themselves.

And sometimes they win and sometimes they lose, but if they're never willing to bet on themselves, they're never going to win if they're always folding, folding, folding. If you fold then you can't lose, but you can never win. It's like losing ahead of time if you constantly fold.

And I feel like so many of us are doing that in our life. We're just folding so we don't have to have someone else take our chips, so to speak. And I want you to ask yourself if that's what you're doing in your life. What does it mean to lose? What does it mean to "get it wrong?" When you're playing poker and you think that you know, you're going to win the hand and you don't, what does that mean? It means you had so much to learn. You had an opportunity to learn there.

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And yes, you may have lost some chips but the opportunities are still endless, and you can always just buy back in. That's what I think is so fun. I hear them talk about, "Oh, I'm just going to buy back in." I'm like, why don't we do that in our lives? Why don't we buy back in?

We take our money and we go home instead of buying back in. But my son, Connor, he was playing with them - Christian's the one that really likes to play but Connor's like, "I had to buy back in twice and then I won everything." I'm like, wow, how many of us don't buy back in twice? How many of us don't bet on an alternative future for ourselves? So many of us.

So here's how I want you to think about making decisions, and here's how I want you to consider considering alternative futures. I want you to imagine that both futures that you're imagining in your mind - now, the first step is you have to imagine alternative futures that are both amazing. There's no reason to imagine a negative future unless you're deciding whether you should do something self-destructive. That's not going to end well, right?

But I'm talking about a decision that you're making for yourself. So people say, should I quit my job and become a life coach or should I stay in my job and get a promotion? And the way that I want you to consider that situation is there are two alternative futures, and I want you to imagine the best case in both.

So best case future if you stay in your job and you get promoted as many times as you want and get that pay that you want. That's option number one. And then option number is you quit your job, become a life coach, and you have to imagine yourself being the most successful life coach you could possibly be.

So when you imagine both those alternative futures as amazing, then which one do you pick? Because a lot of people want to come to me and ask about making a decision and they want me to help them make a decision, but they're creating alternative futures that are biased, right? So they'll say, if I stay in my job, this is what will happen, and they have no idea, and if I leave my job, this is what will happen. And they've created a

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story in their mind that's based on their own self-doubt or their lack of knowledge that they think will make them insecure or whatever.

But the way that I like to make decision is first of all, there is no wrong decision, so either way, I win. Now, if I win in both decisions, which one do I want? Or like, choosing between two men to marry, right? If I marry either one I'm going to have an amazing, wonderful, awesome marriage. No matter what because that's on me. I get to decide that. Now, knowing that, which one do I want to marry?

And people will say, "Well, the only reason to make a decision is to avoid pain." Like, they'll say if I love my husband and I can imagine a great future with him, why would I leave? It's like, well, I want you to imagine the best possible future you could have with your husband and then I want you to imagine the best possible future you could have on your own, and once they're both amazing and you believe them, then decide.

Where we get into trouble is we make a decision because we think that an alternative future will make us happier. But we're the only ones that make ourselves happy, so we have to create the future and know that we're the ones that create that solution for ourselves ahead of time. And then we can go about creating it. And if we have our own backs and we don't ever beat ourselves up over decisions or we don't ever say that was the wrong decision, then we never have to experience a wrong decision again, ever.

Isn't that crazy? Like, if we stopped judging things as right or wrong, and we start always saying, "Of course this is the journey I'm supposed to be on. How do I know that? Because this is a journey I chose and this is the journey I'm on and I'm going to make it the best journey I possibly can," then you will end up with the future that you want.

And here's the other thing. If tomorrow is always better than today because tomorrow's always in your mind and you can always make it better than today, then no matter what decision you make, you can always keep making it. You can always keep creating it in your life. You can always

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decide today that tomorrow will be the best day. Today is the best day and tomorrow's going to be even better.

What if you believed that for yourself? So I want you to think right now about your future 10 years from now. And I want you to imagine two alternative futures. Do not look at the trajectory of your default life. Do not make that an option. Make it better. Why not? You may love everything you have in your life. Just take it to the next level in your mind. For fun. Make yourself like, evolve to that next level of fun-ness.

So if you're not just looking at your default life then what are the alternative futures that you have for yourself? If you make this decision, what could you create in terms of possibility if your imagination? And if you make that decision, what can you create in terms of possibility for your imagination?

And enjoy those alternative futures for just a minute before you decide. And then decide on one, and know that the other one would have been great but this one's going to be the best. How do you know? Because you chose it and you decided that on purpose.

Alright, my friends, I hope you're having a gorgeous, wonderful week and I'll talk to you next week. Take care. Bye-bye.

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