

Ep #279: Failure Tolerance



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With Your Host

Brooke Castillo

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Ep #279: Failure Tolerance

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. Alright, I'm going to warn you, today, we're going to have a little bit of a rant. We're going to have a little bit of tough love for all of you. You know I love you, but sometimes you need some tough love, and this is what today's about. I just had a call with some of my certified coaches and I gave them some tough love. I'm about to give you all some tough love here too.

I have a couple episodes coming up that are based on this concept and we're doing failure tolerance and anti-fragility and we're going to talk about the difference between being mentally tough and loving, being mentally tough and suffering. And in this episode, we're going to talk about failure tolerance because some of you guys have a very low failure tolerance and you give up way too easy and you whine and complain way too much.

So, I'm calling you on it and the reason why I'm calling you on it is because it is costing you your dreams. It is costing you your success. The whining, the complaining, the excuses, it's not a good enough reason not to succeed. And when you indulge in it and when you sit there and blame and point fingers and tell yourself that it's not possible, there's no upside; zero upside.

So the way that I laid this podcast out is I want to talk about the idea of failure tolerance and how you must increase it. I'm going to tell you that you should. I'm going to tell you how to do it and I'm hoping that you will because I've seen way too many people quitting way too early on their dreams and I have kind of a window into people's dreams that most people don't and I get to see them come into Scholars and state what they want.

They want to make money, they want to lose weight, they want to stop drinking, they want to feel better, they want to be better parents, they want to do more in their communities. They come and they kind of make their statement of what they want. And then they want it to be easy.

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So what I've seen happen is that what my students want is the result. They want that R-line. They want to be able to get the thing, that R-line, that result. And they don't want to have to go through the process. They don't want to have to do the work. They don't want to have to climb the mountain and overcome the brain and evolve as a human being. They just want to be able to purchase the result somehow and maybe just with the time passing, maybe with money, maybe with effort, but not with failing.

And I think that it's a shame that this was literally taught to us. We were literally taught to avoid failure. We were literally taught that if you're failing a class, it's better to drop it than to fail at it, that if you get an F on a test, that is the end, not the beginning, and that is a reflection of you and who you are.

And I want you to imagine that if we'd been raised differently, if we'd been taught differently in school, that when you get an F, that just is the beginning. That's just the start. That just means there's more to learn. We have to figure out what we don't know. And if we were taught to overcome our failures and accumulate failures and develop a tolerance for them, how much more we would be able to create in our lives had we been taught this.

I feel like I have so many students waiting for instruction, waiting for me to tell them how to get it done. And what I tell them is you have to figure out how to get it done. And the way that you figure out how is by doing it.

Think about it, y'all; if there is something that's never been done in the world, how do you figure out how to do it? We are taught and we are raised that things have already been done and we'll show you how to do them, smarter people than you know how to do things and know the answers and you just need to memorize them and give them back to us.

But it's the opposite of any true ingenuity, any true creativity, any true big extraordinary possibility is going to come from learning by doing, which is going to mean lots of failure; lots of failure.

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So when I have a student who comes to me and asks me how to do something and I tell them how to do something and they follow those steps and they succeed at doing that, that is one sense of accomplishment. That is the beginning.

But ultimately, what I most want to teach and what I most want to demonstrate is that you're the one with the answers. You can figure anything out. You just have to go and do something and fail. So I want you to increase your failure tolerance because the higher your failure tolerance, the more superpowers you have.

I want you to think about this for yourself and be really honest; what is your tolerance for failure? When you fail, does it ignite you? Does it cause you to do more? Does it make you want to study harder and learn more and practice more and try more things? Or does it send you into quitting, whining, complaining, making excuses? Or do you avoid doing anything so you can't fail?

I want you to grade yourself on a scale of one to 10. Where are you in terms of your failure tolerance? Here's what it might look like. If you're still deciding, "Oh I'm still deciding what I want to do. I'm still deciding on my idea. I'm still deciding if I want to run Facebook Ads. I'm still deciding what kind of protocol I want to have." As long you're deciding, you're avoiding. When you're not taking action, you're not risking failure. You're avoiding failure. Your failure tolerance is low.

When I ask for a volunteer, when I ask for someone to try something, when I ask for someone to risk something and the hands shoot up, that's having a high failure tolerance. Some of my students don't even know what I'm going to ask them to do, but they're all in. They have a very high failure tolerance. They're the ones that learn the most and do the most and accomplish the most.

Here's something that's true; if you never fail, you will never know your limits. You have to push yourself to failure to know where your limit is on all the things, to know what you're capable of.

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If you set your goal too low and you hit it, you'll never know what you could have been, what you could have done, because you never pushed yourself top that failing point. When you set a goal that you most likely will fail at doing, you will instead hit at the point that is your limit at that moment.

But if you set a goal too low, if you don't risk doing anything, you'll never know what you could have been. The only way to find out what you could have been or can be is by pushing those limits, which means you have to be willing to fail.

Now, here's the thing; the reason why I'm really encouraging you to increase your failure tolerance is because I want you to recognize that failure is harmless. The worst part of failure is an emotion, and emotions are harmless when you allow yourself to feel them. Everything I teach comes back to being willing to feel your feelings and recognize that they're harmless.

So what is failure? Where do we put it in the Model? It's line the T-line, isn't it? We can't put it in the C-line. The C-line is just neutral results. It's just data. The only way that it's a failure is if we put it in the T-line, and the T-line is always a choice we're making. And the worst thing that we can do is think that something's a failure and feel terrible. But even that feeling is harmless if we allow ourselves to feel it.

When you increase your failure tolerance, you immediately start doing ore. Your motivation, your inspiration, your energy increases, sometimes 10 times because sometimes we're defeated before we even start, so we procrastinate. We avoid. We don't have any energy behind anything because we're so afraid of failing. But when we're willing to fail, when we want to fail and we want to learn from our failures, all of a sudden, we have tons of energy behind it. We want to do the thing, even if we fail. We don't let that fear hold us back.

So I want you to think about, on your scale of one to 10, where you are in terms of failure tolerance and how much time have you spent increasing your failure tolerance? You've spent a lot of time decreasing it. How many

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times did your parents go, “We don’t tolerate failure around here.” We want you to now do the opposite. We want you to tolerate failure.

We want you to go out there and fall on your face and make the mistake and not hit your goal. We want you to miss the mark and try again and try again and try again and keep failing and increasing that failure tolerance.

What we want to decrease is your stagnation tolerance. I don’t even think that you can call not doing something, that’s not even a fail. It’s like failure deserves more credit than that. You have to actually do something to fail, otherwise you’re just failing ahead of time, which isn’t even a legit fail, it’s just stagnation.

So those are the reasons why you should increase it. Those are the reasons you should focus on if you’re at a three in terms of failure tolerance, increase it to a 10. What would you be willing to do if you were willing to fail more? What if your failure tolerance was a 10? What would you be doing different than you’re doing now? What would you be willing to do?

And I’m not talking about being sloppy and I’m not talking about just doing things for the sake of doing them. I’m talking about planning them, executing them, and paying attention to what you learn from them. What would you be willing to do if you were at a 10?

So that’s kind of the whole first piece of this. I’m trying to sell you on this idea that you should increase your failure tolerance. You’ve got to be with me on that. You’ve got to know where you are. If you’re a three, where do you want to go and why?

And now I’m going to give you some ways to do it, but you have to be sold on doing it first and you have to recognize that failure is just an emotion that you create with your mind and emotions are harmless. So, here’s how you increase it.

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The first thing you do is you change what it means. You separate you from your actions and your results. Where are you in your Model? And this is kind of one of those deep questions that I want you to take a minute to consider. When you think about circumstances, thoughts, feelings, actions, results, when you think about those are the five components that make up our life, where are you in that Model? Where do you land? Pretty deep, right?

And the way that I want you to think about it is that you aren't in the Model; you are the watcher of the Model. You are the creator of the Model. You are 100% purely outside of the Model creating your life. So the results that you create, the actions that you take, the feelings that you have, the thoughts that you have can all be observed by that bigger part of you, by that endless part of you; the part that isn't affected by any of it.

And you have to remember that that is your worthiness, that is who you are, regardless of the results that you're creating or the thoughts you're thinking or the feelings that you're feeling. When you can separate yourself out, then failure is just information.

You don't use your Models against yourself. You don't use your models to criticize yourself, to put yourself down, to feel less worthy. You recognize that you are worthy and that failure, results, are just data, that thoughts are just thoughts. Thoughts about failure are just thoughts about failure. They're completely independent from who you are.

So when you're able to approach your life where there's you 100% worthy, 100% perfection, 100% unable to be harmed by emotions that are simply vibrations, then all of a sudden, you can see the world and life for what it is. It's just a series of models that create different results. And some results will move you forward and some won't.

And here's what I want to tell you; stagnation, failing ahead of time, never moves you forward. But failing does move you forward. Learning and growing and not quitting and continuing to take action always moves you forward.

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A lot of people like to think about success as if success is the only thing that moves us forward, but here's what I want you to see; attempts are what move us forward. We learn by our attempts. We learn by our actions. Our actions move us forward whether we get the result we want or not, we are moving forward.

So when you're able to look at your R-line and recognize that your R-line is just an effect of your action and it becomes your new C-line, then you recognize that it's just neutral. Until you interpret it in a way that's painful, it's just data.

I made an offer, someone said no. I stayed on this protocol, it didn't work out. I tried to stay on this protocol and I didn't. That's it. What can you learn? Take the data. Move forward.

If you find yourself in, "I don't know what to do, I'm confused. I need someone to tell me what to do," just remind yourself, all you need to do is find out something that you can try. Try that thing. If it works, keep doing it. If it doesn't, it's a fail, fine, do something different, that's it.

Do something. If it works, keep doing it, if it doesn't, try something different and try something different and try something different and try something different. It's called massive action. You try different things in different ways until you get the result you want.

So, for example, if you're trying to sell something, you ask someone, they say no. You ask someone else, they say no. You ask someone else, they say no. You change the way you're asking, they say no. You keep going until you get to the yes; that's it.

We want to make it complicated, "Well I'm very confused about this..." No, there's nothing confusing about it. How do you do something? You try things until you find the thing that works. This is a self-correcting process. Here's what I mean by that; if you do something and it doesn't work, try something else until it works.

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So if someone says to me, “That process doesn’t work,” of course that’s not true because the whole process is to keep going until it works. So if you say that it doesn’t work, you just haven’t been doing it long enough, that’s it. What if I’m right?

What stops us from moving forward is we have a low failure tolerance. We make it mean something super negative about us. Failure is simply an emotion we’re trying to avoid. By the way, we create the emotion with our mind. We’re the ones creating the emotion with our minds.

So I want you to think about the number of fails that you have purposely created for yourself over the last couple of months. If you’re in Scholars, you probably have way more than most because one of the things that we do is have you set an impossible goal and set up opportunities to fail, to increase your tolerance for failure, to increase your ability to not get the result you want and to keep moving forward because so many of us don’t get the result we want and we quit. We don’t get the result we want and we hide in shame because that’s what we were taught.

We were taught that an F on a paper is the worst possible thing. Think about this, we aren’t taught, “Hey, you got an F on this paper, let’s read the paper and find out why. Let’s look at all the questions and find out which ones you got wrong and why.” We just say, “That was an F. That’s embarrassing. Put that away. That’s not good.”

If you get an A and you did everything right and you know how to do something, that is what you’re rewarded for. But I just want you to notice that that is the exact opposite process of what it takes to become a success. You literally have to fail your way to success when you want an extraordinary success, when you want to do something that doesn’t have a clear path, when you want to do something that has maybe never been done before.

I want to offer that confidence, the feeling of capability, the feeling of confidence, of being able to experience any emotion without fear of experiencing that emotion – that’s how I’m defining confidence – gets

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stability and foundation and evidence by a pile of failures, by a willingness to be uncomfortable.

And I want to say that I think sometimes we look at other people's reckless failures, we look at other people's going all in on something and being reckless with something and not being thoughtful with something, blowing all their money or something like that, we use that kind of a, "Hey, don't do that. Don't fail. Make sure you take care of yourself. Make sure you don't risk too much."

And I want to add, I really do agree with that. I don't think that failure means that you throw caution to the wind and that you just be willing to do really stupid things and hope that you can have a chance of winning. I don't recommend that you go the casino and put \$100,000 on red and lose that money and say, "Oh yeah that was great. That was a failure. That's fine." That's not what I'm saying.

What I'm saying is be willing to do the best version of what you know how in order to learn. And then keep doing that best version of what you know how, even when you don't want to, knowing that the reason why you don't want to is because part of you doesn't know if it will work.

And being willing to put yourself out there and try something and then continuously improve it, continuously work on it until it works is what creates success and is ultimately what will get you the knowledge that you need, the strength that you need in order to get to the result that you ultimately want.

And I started this off by talking a little bit about how a lot of you want the result without the process. You want the money, you want the weight, you want the freedom without going through the process. And I think it's because you haven't really thought about what it means to be you as a human with your brain going in the direction that you're going.

Because if someone's just handing our results to you, what is the point of your life? If you just get in line and someone gives you success and

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someone gives you, you know, the money or someone gives you the perfect body, haven't you completely missed the point? Maybe you don't think you have. I think you have.

We sign up for the big goals for the journey it requires, for the failure it requires, for the strength it requires, for the resilience it requires because that is what grows us. I'm always saying, let it be hard. It's supposed to be hard. The harder it is, the stronger you can get. The easier it is to quit, the more proud you'll be when you don't.

So I want to encourage you all to step back from your result-driven brain for just a minute and also sign up for the process, sign up for the failures that it will require, not just the end result, not just the quick fix, not just 100% on the first try. Are you willing to get an F on that test six times before you end up with a B-minus? That's when life starts getting really interesting.

If you only take the classes that you can get an A-plus in, you're never going to ask anything of yourself that will require you to grow. You'll have no failure tolerance. You won't try new things. You won't expose yourself to new adventures. You won't learn more because you always want to be in perfection, you always want to be getting an A-plus.

So, I often feel like the teacher that's handing out fails. I'm like, "No, you didn't do that right, do it again." And sometimes, my students just crumple and cry and whine and make excuses. But sometimes, they don't. Sometimes, they go, "Yeah, you know what, I'm all in and I'll do it again until I get it right and I admit that I didn't do this right and I admit that this didn't work and I see that I didn't apply myself and I see that I wasn't as careful as I could have been and I see that maybe my messaging was wrong or I see that I maybe didn't write my food down ahead of time and I acknowledge all of that and I'm willing to learn from it and move on."

And that's when your brain changes and that's when your life changes and that's when your thoughts change and that's when you start feeling better. And ironically, that's when you have more failure tolerance so you're willing to fail even more.

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So I feel like I've been selling you in this podcast on failing in order to succeed, and that is exactly what I want you to buy from me. It's exactly what I want you to try on and accept. What would happen if you had an incredibly high failure tolerance? How would your life change? Go out there and increase your tolerance and find out. I'll talk to you guys next week, take care.

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