

## Ep #282: Body Thoughts



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With Your Host

**Brooke Castillo**

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You are listening to The Life Coach School podcast with Brooke Castillo, episode number 282.

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.

Well, hello, my friends. Listen to me, if you haven't reviewed the podcast, it's super easy to do, and it delights me to get your five-star review. So if you could go in your iTunes app, and I think you have to hit available episodes and scroll down, it will give you an opportunity to give me a five-star review. Would you do that for me, please? I love you. Please. Pretty please. Thank you.

All right, let's get started. You guys doing good? I'm doing amazing. Of course. It's how I roll. I just got back from Lake Tahoe for vacation. Whoa, that was fun. I met up with my friend Tanya, my friend Angela, their families, my friend Lisa and her family, Laurie and her family, like all my friends. We all came together in Lake Tahoe for reconnection. I just felt rested. We went on the lake. The kids were having a blast, and all the kids and all the friends, and mayhem. My mom and my dad were there.

You guys know about my dad, right? He's the most fun ever on the boat. Maybe you saw him in behind the scenes from Scholars. My girlfriend Tanya told me that I didn't let him talk enough, so we might have to have him back on. Maybe I'll have Dennis, my dad, on the podcast, and we'll talk about all the things. He's hilarious. I love him. He's one of the most energetic, fun, amazing people for being in his 70s. My friend Tonya said, "We can't go on vacations without your parents anymore" which is such a compliment to them.

Anyway, I'm back home. I'm ready to be back home with you all. I'm excited to be here. I actually leave again this week to go to a meeting. I just joined a group called WPO, Women's Presidents' Organization, and I'm going to check it out. I'll let you know what I think. It's for women. This section, it's called Platinum. It's for women who make over \$10 million. So I think it'll be

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a very interesting group of entrepreneurs. I'm really looking forward to hanging out with them.

I'm no longer a member of EO. I think I had told you guys that I was part of Entrepreneurs Organization. Chris is now a member of that. He kind of represents The Life Coach School there, and I'm going to try out this one. Anyway, I'll let you know what I think when I get back.

But today, we are going to talk about body thoughts. This is one of those topics that I'm talking about the body but it really applies to everyone. It's not just about weight loss. I know that usually when I talk about the body it's about buffering, and weight loss, and drinking. But even if you don't have those issues, this topic is going to be very useful for you. One of the reasons why is because we process the world through our mind and through our bodies with the sensations that we have and the feelings that we have that are caused by our mind. A lot of our experience of being alive happens in our body. I think that's kind of a trip to think about because I think most of us think that being in the world means that we are experiencing the world out there somehow, that we're walking through the world and our experience of the world is the world. But really, our experience of the world is what's processed through our brain and through our bodies.

When you think about, "What is my experience?" if you ... Let's say you go outside and you go for a walk What was that experience? How you think about it when you kind of step back and you are the watcher of that experience, you may perceive that you just went out and looked around and saw what was there. But really what happened is you went out and you interpreted what was there and processed it through your very limited brain that filled in lots of the gaps. So when you glance at something visually and then you interpret it through your brain, you're not actually interpreting what's literally there. You're interpreting your thoughts about it. When you think about your body, it's important to remember that you're doing this because there is the experience of being in your body and using your body to experience your mind, which is interpreting the world, but then there's

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also your thoughts about your body that provides you with an experience. It's very meta.

So if I'm using a tree to describe it, it's easier to understand. You look at a tree, and you have a thought about the tree. Then, you process that thought in your brain and then you experience and emotion in your body. Let's say you go and you touch the tree. So you actually physically experience touching the tree, you're experiencing the "tree" but you're also, stay with me and my friends, experiencing your body experiencing the tree. That's true for all things out there in the world. But when we're experiencing our body, that's the double whammy of experience, so touching a tree or experiencing the tree with your body. But when you touch your body, you're experiencing your body with your body. What?

Here's why I find this so important and why I want to teach this. I have to tell you that sometimes when I teach things I watch my students become confused and puzzled, and I have a knee-jerk reaction to want to fix that. I think it's a shame that I do that because sometimes the struggle to understand something creates new neural pathways literally in your brain if you stick with it long enough. I'm going to present this material on the podcast today, and I want you to stay with me even if your brain struggles with it, because it's worth understanding.

We're going to talk about your body, and we're going to talk about using your body to experience the world, and we're going to talk about your experience of your body. The easiest way to do it is to separate out your thoughts about your body, so when you think thoughts about your body, from the facts of your body. We're going right back to the model. What are the circumstances, what are the facts when you look at your body, and then what are your thoughts about your body?

As you do this exercise, you are going to have to test for neutrality. Here's what's interesting about this when it comes to our bodies for most of us. Most of us can't use terms without them being loaded with judgment and therefore emotion. So for example, if I say to you, "You have a stomach," or if you say to yourself, "I have a stomach," that for some of us is so loaded

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with judgment, because maybe you think your stomach's bigger than it should be, or it's not the way you want it to be, or whatever, you can't just say my stomach without feeling emotions. You need to change the terminology until it's so scientifically factual that it doesn't instigate emotion.

This is worth going through this process because, especially now, it's in the middle of summer. Everyone's out in their bathing suits. One of the things I want you to imagine is that you're walking down the beach, and you're in your bathing suit. Let's say you're in a bikini. You are going to be having thoughts about your body. You're going to be having thoughts about other people having thoughts about your body. But then, you will also be experiencing your body from within through sensations. And if you don't pay close attention, you will miss the experience of actually just being in your body without the thoughts that are providing judgment that are disconnecting you from your body.

The way that we can do this and do this work, which I sometimes describe as climbing back into your body to experience it from the inside out instead of preventing yourself from being present in your body by all of the thoughts that you have about your body. Imagine yourself walking down the beach. What are the facts of your body? You have a toe. You have a toenail. You have a thigh. Now, if when I say you have a thigh you feel yourself recoil in horror by the word thigh, you're going to have to change it. You're going to have to use I have a thigh bone. And around the thigh bone is tissue and skin. You're going to have to go to the place where it can be scientific or factual enough that it doesn't bring up all of your negative emotion.

Then what you're going to do is write down all of your thoughts about your body that aren't necessarily facts, but are thoughts that you have recurring. My thighs are too big. My legs are too short. I'm not tall enough. I have too many wrinkles. My ass doesn't look good. My stomach doesn't look good. I'm not tan enough.

My son said to me the other day, he's like, "Mom, you're getting old lady legs." What does that mean? He's like, "Look at your legs. They're like old ladies." I said, "Why? Because the skin is hanging," right? Because I've

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been much heavier than I am now, and so now I have a lot of extra skin. He's like, "No." He's like, "That you've always had. But look at all the veins and look at all the ... " And he's just making an observation and stating his own judgment on my body. He didn't feel negative about it and all right. He was just like, "Oh, you have old lady legs." I was like, "Wow. Okay, good to know." I have like those ... What are they called? Varicose veins. I have a couple of those behind my knees that are pretty big, too. They look deep.

So anyway, so I was talking to him about that, and I was thinking, "Okay, those are thoughts that people have about their body that aren't neutral." Like if you say, "Oh, I have varicose veins on my legs," most people don't feel neutral about that. They have some negative connotation. So if you do have a negative connotation, those thoughts need to be kept separate from the facts. So now you have your list. You have your lists of facts that are neutral, then you have all of your list of thoughts that create emotion in your body because of your thoughts about your body.

There's a third piece of this which is your experience of your body. There's thoughts about your body, and then there's the experience of your body. One of the ways to describe this is just I'm having thoughts as like a separate activity that you do, literally having thoughts. Those are just thoughts that appear in your brain as judgments about your body. But then there's also experiencing the body without necessarily the thought interfering. This is an important distinction. A thought about my body is I have a thigh. I have a toe. We already talked about that. A judgment about it could be I have a fat thigh, or I have a big toe, or too big of a toe. Anything that creates emotion is considered a thought. Now if you can think I have a thigh without any emotion, then that's considered your fact.

But, the third piece is experiencing your thigh. I want you to feel the difference. I have a thigh is this circumstance if there's no emotion around it. I have a fat thigh is a thought that creates negative emotion. And then there is focusing your attention on your thigh and experiencing your thigh, experiencing it as it exists as part of your body with no thought, just the sensation of your thigh. If you go and focus on your thigh, what does your

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thigh feel like from within? I don't want you to touch your thigh on the outside. I want you to be your thigh and experience what it is to be your thigh.

Now, what you will start to notice as you do this, as you experience your body as your body, and it's very important that you break it down per body part in the beginning because then you'll be able to apply it to your whole body, is you'll recognize that your direct experience of your body is not negative. It can't be. When you remove the judgment about how your body should or shouldn't be and you just experience your body. What you realize is that being in your body is a neutral experience if you're able to be in it. We're separating out your body thoughts, which are your thoughts about your body, which is you having thoughts, from the experience of being in your body. It doesn't matter how much you weigh. It doesn't matter what you're looking like in the mirror. Your experience of your body is totally separate from that.

Here's a way to think about it. If you are cold and you experience feeling cold, that is one thing. If you're cold and you think about and talk about being cold, that's another thing. You guys with me? Your brains are like ... Trying to like grasp on to it. So if I feel cold and I say to someone, "Hey, I'm really cold. I need a jacket. We need to go somewhere warm. We need to get out of the cold. I don't like the cold. I'm freezing cold," that's just my mind thinking about being cold producing emotion in my body. Do you see what I'm saying? So not only am I physically cold, but now I've created complaints about that and then created anxiety about the coldness that I think is the experience of being cold. But really, if I drop all the thoughts about being cold and I just go into my body and experience the sensation of cold, it's a very different thing.

So why am I telling you all of this? Why does this matter? Why do these distinctions matter? Well, first of all, if you are someone who is trying to stop buffering, if you are someone who is trying to stop overeating, or overdrinking, or taking drugs, or doing anything that's overstimulating your brain, you are going to have to climb back in and be able to be present in

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your body and experience sensations in your body without fear. What most of us are attempting to do when we buffer is get out of our bodies. We don't want to experience emotion. We don't want to be experiencing the world from the inside out. We want to be just pounding ourselves from the outside in with thoughts and with products to consume that take the pain away.

If you think about overeating, we are using externals to feel better. So we'll look for food, or we'll look for a comfy couch, or a hot tub, or a cuddle from a friend, or something external that can provide us with a different experience. But what I want you to do is to be able to generate that from within, to experience your body from within, and be able to be present with whatever is going on within your body from a neutral experience and be able to change that as needed if wanted from the inside out. One of the things, and one of the best ways I know of how to get present within my body and not be focused on my thoughts about my body thinking that that is the truth of my body, but actually being inside of my body and experiencing the truth of my body directly, the best way I know how to do it is to write. I write about the sensations in my body with very clear description. I record them directly, and then I keep an eye on my mind and notice if I slip into interpretation or opinion.

For example, if I'm sitting here and I experience hunger, I can simply describe what that feels like in my body, where it's located, whether it feels hot or cold, what the experience of it is. That doesn't include any judgment. I shouldn't be hungry. I just ate. I should eat later. Oh my gosh. I should get some food. I'm really hungry for this food or that food. That's all just thought, mind stuff. When you experience hunger, you're simply just conveying the facts of what your body is doing and what it feels like when your body does that. That is being in your body without judgment.

Being in your body is not positive or negative. We create positive and negative with our brain, with our interpretation, with what we should look like, or how much we should weigh, or what we should feel like, or should we be comfortable all the time. That's all mind clutter. When you're in your body, you're simply conveying what's going on in your body without



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judgment. The way that I want to describe this is you are becoming the watcher and the feeler from within. Instead of just being the watcher witnessing yourself, you are being the watcher and the feeler to fully experience what it is like to be you.

Eckhart Tolle, I love the way that he describes the experience of nature because he talks about how because we have language we go into the world and we look at words in our brain and confuse those words for the experience of the thing. For example, if I go outside and I see a hummingbird and I say, "Oh, that's a hummingbird," and I label it, I actually am seeing the words, and how to spell hummingbird, and what I know about humming birds, and what I've learned about hummingbirds, and I'm interpreting, seeing that hummingbird with all of those languagey things that are creating my experience of the hummingbird. But if I go outside and I look at a hummingbird and I don't know that it's a hummingbird, I don't know how to label it, I don't know anything about hummingbirds, I haven't read anything about it, I don't have any language around it, then I experience it directly.

That is exactly what we want to practice doing from within our bodies. We want to start experiencing firsthand, not secondhand, but firsthand what it means to be in our bodies. It's kind of a trip to think about. It's like the difference between seeing a hummingbird and then interpreting it with all of the thoughts that we have about hummingbirds, so we're experiencing actually our knowledge of a hummingbird instead of the actual being present with the hummingbird. But then there's also our bodies. We experience our bodies based on our thoughts about it. It's all very secondhand versus just being in our body, experiencing our thighs from within, experiencing our stomachs from within, experiencing our wrinkles, our savviness, our skin, our faces from within without judgment. That is the ultimate in presence. That's being able to be in your body without letting all of your thoughts interfere with what it means to experience being alive.

Now, the reason this is so important for you to practice is you will start to understand how much your experience of the world is through your very

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flawed mind. The reason why your mind is flawed is because it learns, and then whatever it learns it takes as the true truth of an experience. Now, if it was 100% accurate, that would be a beautiful thing, but it's not. What we've learned is based on society, and misinformation, and things that are painful, and lots of judgments. So for us to experience our body directly is so challenging because we have all of these judgments, and thoughts, and worries, and concerns about our bodies that we can't even make it past all of that to be in our bodies.

Now, for those of you who want to stop buffering, being in your body and being able to experience the emotion from within your body is the secret to allowing urges. It's the secret to non-judgment. It is the secret to true presence with yourself. And you can go to that place anytime you want. So if you're in a situation where somebody says something to you ... Let's say you're talking to maybe your husband, and he says something to you that you are then going to interpret with your brain and then experience a sensation in your body. You may feel like you're completely out of control over how you feel. But when you recognize, "Wait, I remember that work I did on my body thoughts, I can apply that here. There's a thought I'm having about what my husband said, and then there's the direct experience of just being here and being present with him that has nothing to do with that," and once you can do that, once you can get space between your thoughts and being alive, that's when there's magic.

I've taught you how to do it from two different perspectives. I've taught you how to do it by being the watcher, by being outside of your model and watching your life from the outside, which you're able to do with consciousness and with your brain. You're able to separate yourself from your brain and watch your brain, and that's from the outside, the outside of consciousness, the outside of your body. And now I want to teach you how to do it from within your body to be inside and experiencing the sensations of your body and what it means to be human without being at the effect of your brain.

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There's thoughts about your body, and then there's your actual body. Consciously thinking about your body and choosing what to think is a beautiful thing. I've taught you guys a lot about having beautiful thoughts about your body that create wonderful emotions. This is something I do suggest. But I do want you to differentiate that from being within your body. Body thoughts, even if they're positive, are different than being within, so it's almost like ... I want you to imagine that you're inside your thigh looking out or you're inside your finger looking out. And then, I'm going to ask you, "What is it like to be in your finger? What is it like to be in your thigh? What is it like to be ... " And I'm not talking about being in the veins or being in the blood. I'm talking about the experience of the thigh. What is your thigh experiencing? What is your finger experiencing?

What you'll notice is that when you experience your body from the inside out, there is no judgment. It's all just neutral facts of sensations. Sensations are not good or bad. Even cold, even pain, it's all just descriptive. So if I say to you, "Well, I'm in pain," that is not me describing what it's like to be inside of my body. I need to describe exactly what the sensation of pain is in a scientific way. That removes all of the judgment from it.

The reason why, just to reiterate, the reason why this is so important to be able to do is it gives you two options on how to separate yourself from your brain, which it's so easy to start believing that that is the real world. I sounded like the Matrix there, the real. Somebody just said to me recently, "Hey, whatever your favorite movie is, it's because you see yourself as the main character." And my favorite movie, by a mile, is The Matrix. I guess I'm Keanu Reeves. I'm in. I'm in. Love him. I love him in that movie. I feel like I want to be Trinity in that movie, but, hey, if I'm going to be Neo, I'm in. And my bestest friend, Chris Plachy, hasn't seen that movie. I feel like you guys should send her emails and encourage her to watch it because it's so good, right? Are you guys with me?

So anyway, it's like the real. And if you know that movie, they're all connected up to these pods where their brains are active, but they're not actually experiencing the world. They're only experiencing their thoughts

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about the world instead of actually being alive and experiencing the world through the inside out. So we can experience from our above consciousness, but it's also really important to experience it from within.

I'm going to leave you with one final note about this. For those of you who are really struggling with your body images and you feel like you're in the wrong body or your body's too big or too heavy, has too much fat on it, I want you to notice that when you experience your body from the inside out, when you experience your thighs, and your stomach, and your butt, and your arms, and your shoulders from the inside out, there is no judgment. There is a release from all of that, and there's a presence inside of your body that you can truly love, and accept, and realize that all the judgment about the body is just the brain misfiring. Just thought errors. Your body is perfect. You're alive. You're a human. There is no judgment about extra skin or extra tissue on your body. Your body is perfect, and you're 100% worthy. All right, my friend. I'll talk to you next week. Bye-bye.

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