

Ep #285: Giving It Up



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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.

Well hello my friends. I am recording this episode after a quick text from one of my girlfriends, clients, and she sent me a text that said, "Hey, I really appreciate our conversation the other day. It was super helpful. Here's what I did with it."

And so I wanted to record a quick podcast and share the concept and the idea with you because I think it will be super helpful to many of you who are trying to change, who are in the river of misery, who are processing an identity crisis from who you used to be to who you want to be, and this concept may help you through that process.

So here's what happened in the conversation. I was talking about how I went to go to this group of colleagues that I went to go meet with who are very successful entrepreneur, CEO, founders, and one of the things that we did was we went to dinner and then we had meetings. We had lunch and then we went to dinner.

And as a 46, 47 – I think I'm 47 now – year old woman, I don't drink and most everyone in the world does besides me. There are very few exceptions to the drinking. And most people drink reasonably and have a couple glasses of wine and are reasonable adults, and that was usually not me. I would have two to three and then feel terrible in the morning.

But one of the things that is so interesting for me now that I go out with all these people that are drinking and it's part of the celebrating and it's part of kind of the ritual that everyone's having a glass of wine, everyone's having a cocktail, and I just don't. And especially when I'm with a new group, everyone's like, what do you want to drink? And I'm explaining oh, I don't drink.

So I used to worry so much about it because I was so worried what people would think about me if I didn't drink. And I would always make up stories

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and excuses for why I wasn't drinking. It was elaborate, the thought process that went through. But now I'm like, yeah, I just don't drink, I prefer not to.

And one of the things that was interesting is we got into the Uber afterwards, there was like, seven of us, and everyone had been drinking except for me. I was in the front seat with the Uber driver, and everyone in the backseat was having a great time. Very excited, very loud, very having had a drink or two.

And I said to the Uber driver, I will help you get back to our hotel, I don't drink. And he looked at me and he's like, I don't drink either. And like, wanted to fist-pump me. It was so funny. But anyway, I laughed about it and I think he asked me why don't you drink or what's the reason why you're not drinking tonight, and I said you know, I've had enough to drink for a lifetime.

And it was just an interesting way of explaining it, but it's also how I think about it and I think it's really useful for a lot of people who are trying to give up overdrinking, overeating, procrastinating, hedonism. Giving into pleasure in the moment. And I think a lot of us think about it as this thing that we have in our lives that we're having to give up and never have again.

And the way that I want to think about it is it was great and I did that at that time in my life, and I'm glad that I did that and I'm glad that I had that experience, but I don't want that anymore. And it's a great way for me to look at it as a completion.

So I was explaining it to the Uber driver, I was basically saying yes, I've had my fun with that. I used to do that. I'm done with that. I don't want that anymore. And it's kind of like I used to do these things in my youth and now I don't.

I explained it one time on a coaching call where I said it's kind of like once you get married, you don't look at it as if I can't go out with all these other guys anymore. It's like yeah, I used to be someone that would go out with

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lots of guys and date and do all those things, and now I'm married, and I'm happy to not be doing those things anymore. I'm happy not to be going to bars and getting numbers and meeting people anymore. That part of my life is now over. I'm glad I had that part of my life, but now it's over.

That's how I think about drinking alcohol. That part of my life is now over and I'm happy that it's over. I'm happy to have had it and I'm happy that it's over, and I'm complete with it. And that's how I feel about overeating and eating so much food that I feel sick, and living a life of unconsciousness when it comes to food. That part of my life is now over.

And so I was explaining it to my girlfriend when I got back, I was just saying I feel like I don't have any problem when other people drink. It's kind of like if someone was single, I wouldn't have a problem with somebody being single. I'm just not interested in that in my life anymore. I'm just kind of done with that for me personally.

And I want you to consider looking at your own life this way instead of it being something that you're giving up in the present and you will always be longing for as if it's now a missing part of your life. I want you to change your paradigm possibly around it and think of it as something that you're complete with, something that you're done doing.

You're done sleeping around, you're done going out with lots of different guys. By the way, I did not sleep around and go out with lots of different guys, but it makes me sound cool. I'm so boring. I'm done drinking. I'm done overeating. I'm just done with that part of my life. I want that to be complete and to be behind me and be done with it.

And so I suggested to my girlfriend like, it's not a loss if it's something that you can look at in a way that is completely fulfilled and completely done. It's not something you're taking away from yourself. It's something you're just complete with. It feels like a subtle shift in your thinking but it, for the long term, just feels like a freedom and a doneness, and you're not missing out on it anymore because you're done with it.

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So one of the things that my girlfriend did is she sent me a text of her work with it, a really useful way to think about this is to make a list of things that you are complete with doing. You've had an experience of doing it and now you're good. You don't need to do it again. You don't need to keep doing it. It's like been there, done that, done.

And make a list of those things. And my girlfriend sent me her list and one of the things that she put on there, she has a really long list of the things that she's done that she's completed with that she doesn't want to keep doing, that she doesn't need to keep doing, and one of the things that she put on there was bread, which I thought was so interesting.

It's like, I've had enough bread in my life. I've had enough bread for an entire lifetime. And if you really believed that, like I don't need to keep eating bread, I don't need to keep drinking wine, I don't need to have sugar. I've had it, I've experienced it, I'm good with it.

Can you see how that feels so much different than I can never have it again? And it's such a normal part of life. And I want you all to question kind of the trajectory of your entire life and what's normal for you at certain periods of your life and what you want to continue to be normal.

Because I think a lot of people – people will say when doing my weight loss work, they'll say well, I just want to be a normal person and eating bread is normal. Normal for whom? And first of all, do you want to be normal? And second of all is who defines what is normal for us? The food manufacturers? Do you want them to be in charge of what's normal? How have we decided what's normal for us in our lives?

And by being done with something, like I'm no longer going to read People magazine, or I'm no longer going to watch the news. I've watched enough news for my entire life, or I'm no longer going to have a relationship with this person. That relationship is now complete.

And thinking about completing things and then not having them in your life anymore is very different than feeling like you're giving something up that

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should be or could be a part of your life. And I love the way she did her list, and she just brainstormed the things that I already know, I've already done that I want to be complete with doing.

It's really interesting. One of the things she put on there is debt. And it's like oh no, I've done that, I've tried that, I've experienced that. I'm complete with that. It kind of reminds me of when you are – for example, when we're on the boat in Lake Tahoe and people will say hey, you should go wakeboarding or you should go parasailing, or you should surf.

And so I'm like, I don't know, I don't want to do that. They're like no, you should try it, it's super fun, and you're like, no, no, I've done it. I just don't really want to do it. I'm not interested. I've tried it out and I'm good. It's kind of like that but for your life. It's stuff that yes, you've had an experience with but you don't like the effect of it or you don't like the experience of it. You don't want that to be a current part of your life.

So you're going to make a list of things that you've done, that you want to be complete with. And then on the other side of the sheet, you want to make a list of things you'd like to experience more of. So an example of this may be I have experienced enough of this amazing thing I call drinking alcohol and feeling the effects of alcohol, and I'm done experiencing that and I'm done experiencing the hangover from that.

That part of my life is complete. And I'm done dating. I'm done going on dates with men I don't know and getting to know that and maybe going on second dates. I'm done with that part of my life. I am done with going to school, university. I've been there, done that. I'm done with it.

And feeling that complete. And instead, what I would like to experience is Sunday mornings and Saturday mornings feeling fresh and feeling awake and waking up early. It's almost like I'm done with drinking and I'm excited about early mornings. I'm done with dating and I'm excited about being married. It's the replacement for that thing.

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I'm done with procrastinating and putting things off and hanging out and just enjoying the moment instead of pushing myself to work. I'm done with that part of my life and now I'm really embracing and excited to experience getting things done ahead of time and getting things done on time and following through on what I say I'm going to do. I'm complete with all of the spontaneity of being able to do whatever I want in the moment, and now I'm much more interested in creating the exact life I want by being more disciplined.

And I think the way that she wrote this up was such a useful exercise because you start to see that you're not necessarily losing anything. You in fact are adding so many things to your life, and you've already got to experience the other thing. So it's not like oh, I'm never going to eat bread again. It's like, I am done eating bread. I've had the bread experience. I've had the alcohol experience. I've had the single life experience. I've had enough of it for a whole lifetime and now I want to try something new and different.

I was thinking about this the other day when I was questioning what is the point of all of this, right? What's the point of our lives? What's the point of doing all this work on ourselves? What is the point? If our life is whatever we want it to be, what do we want it to be? Do we want it to be just filled with relaxing pleasures? Do we want it to be filled with becoming more kind and more giving? Or do we want it to be about evolving?

Really, I love to ask the hard questions of myself because I like my brain working on the hard questions. And one of the answers that I came up with when I was kind of contemplating this question, especially the question of money because I've been thinking a lot about what is the point of having money and should I encourage my students to have the experience of having lots of money, and my answer always comes back to yes.

I love coming back to the idea that money can provide us with more freedom and also more experiences, more options. And I think for me, and I'm going to bring this all together, I promise, is one of the amazing things about life is the variety of experiences that we can have, and how so many

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of us, because of our brains stay in a cave of sameness so we can feel safe.

But one of the, I think, options that we have and the opportunities that we have is the variety of experiencing our lives on very different realms. And so I feel like I've experienced my life on a realm of just doing what I want to do in the moment very selfishly, meaning drinking what I want, eating what I want, being with whoever I want, doing whatever I want, not necessarily making any kind of contribution.

And I think there's a validness to that experience. I think that there's nothing bad about that. I think that that is the true experience of being alive. But I also don't want that to be my whole life. I want to be able to experience the opposite of that as well, and see what that's like, and then to experience something completely different from that.

So being able to move in and out of experiences because I'm able to manage my mind and I'm not addicted or compelled to do one certain thing in my life. So one of the things with the money and being able to be disciplined enough to earn enough money is that it opens up the possibility for me to have the most incredible experiences.

So for example, I have the experience, the ability to make a donation of a million dollars to a charity that I love. And that's an experience of generosity and help and service that I wouldn't be able to have if I didn't have money. I also have the ability and the option and the opportunity to travel to anywhere I want in the world in a first-class way.

To go to remote places, to ride on the most beautiful yachts if I wanted to, the most beautiful cruise ships, the most beautiful airplanes, go to the most beautiful hotels or homes or mansions or Airbnbs. All of the experiences have now opened up for me to experience those things, which I think adds an openness to my life that I wouldn't have had I not put the work into creating the money.

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I also think that that's true with not drinking. I think it's opened up opportunities that I wouldn't have otherwise. My sharpness of my ability to think and my willingness to listen in a way and hear in a way and process my emotion in a way that I wouldn't have had I not had that experience.

That being said, I had often thought when I was trying to quit drinking that my life would be way better had I never introduced alcohol into my life. And I feel differently about that now because I feel like me being able to be with people who are drinking and having had done that as an experience makes it so I don't feel like I'm missing out.

Do you know what I'm saying? It's like I can be with people that have been drinking a lot and that are slurring and laughing and thinking that they're having such an amazing time and I don't feel like I'm missing out because I've been there and I've done that and I know the experience of that.

And I especially know the experience the next morning when I wake up and I feel refreshed and amazing and clear and I'm with people that don't because of the experience of drinking. It's like I've had both experiences. And I think that's what I want to offer to you here is like, if you've had a lot of experience with overeating food and being overweight and having your clothes be tight, you've had the experience of not caring about a protocol or not caring about a diet, or not focusing on what you're eating or whatever.

You've had that experience. You've had a lot of that experience. And you've also had the experience of beating yourself up and hating your body and trying to starve yourself thin and all of those things too, so what about creating a new experience for yourself and at least trying it?

Now of course, in the beginning it will be challenging. To change is challenging. To give something up is challenging because your body wants to – and your mind wants to stay and do the same thing over and over and over again because of the process of habituation and of streamlining and being efficient. So changing will require a lot more mental energy than it does to stay the same.

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But here's the magic. When you change, you end up with two valid experiences. The experience you had of eating whatever you wanted, which in many ways you enjoyed, and the experience of not doing that, all within one lifetime, and experiencing the effects of that.

And the other piece of that that I think is super interesting is you can always go back. So I was contemplating this with the drinking. I was thinking about how I've given up drinking and in the presence of other people that are drinking, I don't feel like I miss it, I don't feel like I don't get it. I feel like I've already had it.

And that paradigm shift could change things for you as well. So here's the questions that I want you to ask yourselves. I want you to ask yourself, what are you done doing? What have you had enough of? What are you complete with? You're fulfilled with the amount of bread that you've had, you're fulfilled with the amount of sugar that you've had. You're fulfilled with the amount of dates you've had, with the amount of procrastination that you've had, with the amount of maybe moving around or changing jobs or being employed or having a steady paycheck.

And now you want to experience something new, which is the risk of having your own business, or the experience of not indulging or over-indulging in food or alcohol, the experience of having less instant pleasure with food but more pleasure within being able to manage your emotion and not give in to urges.

Make a list. What are you ready to be complete with and what do you want to start experiencing? And I think that that will truly help you understand that you're making a choice for you and not against you. I think sometimes when we give up something, we feel this sense of loss. We feel this sense of missing out. And I think that deprivation, that feeling of deprivation and that desire being unanswered becomes a problem.

And when we change it to no, I'm done and complete with that, and now I want something new, it opens up a brand-new horizon with brand new possibilities. So just a quick podcast to share that insight with you. I hope

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it's useful. I hope you can apply it, and I hope that you'll be complete with some of the things that you don't want anymore in your life.

Close the door on them and say goodbye and recognize that it was wonderful eating all that food, it was wonderful drinking all that alcohol, but now we're done. We're done for a lifetime. We're going to move on. Have a beautiful week everyone. Talk to you soon. Bye-bye.

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