

Ep #296: Want Match



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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. What an amazing week I have had. I am about to jump on a plane to go to Miami to hang out with all of my friends from the Women Presidents' Organization. Very much looking forward to it. It's like, 80 degrees there. I can't wait.

But in this podcast, I wanted to tell you about a new concept that I came up with to help my students who are navigating and being very challenged by their relationships. And a lot of what I teach on relationships is challenging for people because of the way that we have always been trained and programmed to believe that relationships are there to make us happy. And we need to rely on our main relationship to make us happy.

And I've kind of blown this out of the water in a lot of my teachings, especially in Scholars and on the podcast where I have taught about the concepts of unconditional love, allowing humans to be who they are, lovability, all of those concepts.

So if you're new to the podcast, make sure that you go back and do a deep dive into those. But really, in summary, what my philosophy is and what I teach is two people come together and connect with each other in a way that enhances their lives.

They are completely independent and responsible for their own emotional lives and their own brain, thoughts, and their own needs. And when they come together and connect, they produce something even better than what they had independently.

This is in contrast to a lot of what happens in relationship where someone feels a deficit in themselves, they feel something is missing, and they're not as happy as they want to be, and so they want to go find a relationship that will fulfill that need and will answer that problem of not enoughness.

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Now of course, when you get into a relationship where you're expecting the other person to make you happy and bring you happiness, you are constantly wanting them to behave in a certain way. There's nothing wrong as they behave that way.

And really good relationships have a want match. And I'm going to explain to you what the want match is. But basically, what it is in a relationship, the way that it feels is like all of the things that you wanted in a relationship are perfectly matched to all of the things you're getting in the relationship.

One of the issues that I think is happening in our society and has happened in our society is as humans, we do have the desire and the need to connect with other humans. We are a tribal species. We want connection, we want to be with others.

And those needs that we have, those desires that we have are often attempted to be fulfilled by one person, by that main partner in our life. So for example, if you have a need to connect to someone intellectually, you want to banter ideas about things with them and have them challenge you intellectually, that may be a connection need that you have.

And maybe you have someone that you want to laugh with, make fun of yourself with, and be able to just let loose and have some sarcasm, have some jokes and enjoy. And maybe there's somebody that you like to work out with and somebody that you like to travel with and somebody that you like to snuggle with, somebody you like to have sex with, somebody that you want to raise kids with, somebody that you want to manage your finances with.

So you have all these needs and desires for connections. And a lot of us are looking for all of those things in one person. And one of the things that I want to share with you and some of the work that we're going to be doing in Scholars this year is about how to get all of those connection desires met by multiple people in your life.

Yes, having a partner who is there for you to love and appreciate and enjoy is very important, but placing all of your connection needs on that one

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person, I think, unjustly burdens that relationship and keeps us searching. So when we can spread those needs out to our friends, to our mentors, to our teachers, to our acquaintances, to our coworkers, there's not so much pressure on that relationship to constantly be delivering what it is we think we want and need.

So that's kind of one of the main points I wanted to make about romantic relationships is it doesn't have to be a one-stop shop. We can decide what we want from our romantic relationship and then what else we want in terms of connection and where else will we get that, and how to really plan for that and think about that consciously instead of letting that be kind of a haphazard thing.

So when I teach about intimate relationships, especially marriage relationships, partner relationship, relationships where you're living with someone, one of the things I like to offer as a suggestion is that you find someone to spend your life with, your days with, who is easy for you to love and their only job is to be there so you can love them.

Because when you have a relationship that's based on love and only love, you always win. And the reason why I state it like their job is to be there for you to love them is so you can understand that you do not receive love from another human being.

Love is not something that is sent your way and absorbed into your skin. It's not. It's not even an energy that you absorb. Love is something you feel because of a way that you think. And your relationships with other people are based on how you think about them and what you think about what they think about you.

It is not based on how they feel. So for example, I'm married to my husband, Chris, and if he feels love for me, if he experiences that vibration of love, then he's the one feeling it. When he says, "I love you, Brooke," he's the one feeling the love.

Now, when he says that, if I think a thought like, "He loves me. It's so wonderful. I love him too," then I feel the love, if I believe that thought and if

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I think that thought, he loves me, then I feel that experience. But it requires my thought.

And this is very easy to prove because oftentimes in relationships, someone will be feeling love toward someone else and that other person will not feel that love, will not experience that love because they aren't thinking the thoughts that allow it to be generated in their body.

So if the person's job that you're married to or you're in partnership with, if their job is just to be who they are in the world and your job is to love them so you can experience love, all of a sudden, you stop trying to control how they behave so you can be happy or feel loved. They just get to be who they are and you get to be who you are, and you get to be loved for who you are.

The concept of lovability is you are 100% lovable, whether somebody finds you lovable or thinks that you are lovable is based on their lovability, their ability to love you, and nothing to do with you as a person. You are 100% lovable, period. And your lovability depends on the people who are loving you and their ability to love.

So I get the question, "Well, that's disappointing that that's what relationships are, so how do we pick who to marry? How do we pick who to be with? How do we pick who to leave? Who to divorce?" And my answer is always the same on this. It's when you're able to love someone and you're able to be happy with someone no matter what, then whether you stay or go is simply based on what you want.

And you can leave a relationship for no other reason than that you want to. You don't have to be in pain, you don't have to think it's a horrible relationship, you don't have to be in a fight, they didn't have to do anything wrong. You have the agency to leave a relationship if you want to. Period. And you have the ability to stay in a relationship because you want to. Period.

If you leave a relationship because you want someone to love you more, you're always going to be challenged. If you leave a relationship because

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you want to be happier, you're always going to be challenged by that because you're expecting that other person in your life to provide that to you.

And it may seem as if someone is providing that to you because when you're with them, you find it easy to think positive thoughts about them and you, and that's why you feel so much love. So there's absolutely nothing wrong with that. You just need to recognize that that is what is happening, is your brain is changing when you're in the presence of that person. That person isn't changing how you feel directly.

So let's talk about the idea of being with someone and wanting them to be different than they are, and wishing they did things differently, and feeling like you have needs that aren't being met. This can be one of the most challenging situations to be in because you feel like you're in this relationship with this person and they're doing things that you feel is making it very hard to love them.

They're maybe showing up late, they're not being attentive enough, they're spending too much time at work, spending too much time watching TV, drinking too much, whatever they're doing. And when I make a recommendation, "Hey, just allow that person to be who they are," that may be infuriating to you because you may feel like I don't want to be married to the person who's doing this and I don't want to get a divorce.

So I think the solution is this person changing. And I always say to my students like, listen, I am in. If we can control the people, let's control the people. If we can make our husbands and wives and partners exactly who we want them to be so we can be happier, let's do it.

The challenge is it very rarely works. So I'm not suggesting that you don't ask your mate or friend or other person that you are in a relationship with, I'm not suggesting that you don't ask for what you want. What I'm suggesting is that you just don't get disappointed if they don't do it.

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Because then you've added your emotional responsibility to that person behaving a certain way. And nine times out of 10, you're going to be disappointed. Especially if it's something they're not actively doing.

Now, some people you will notice are much easier for you to love than others. And I think this is kind of one of those fascinating things to dive into. That's why we're going to do this in-depth in Scholars this next year is to understand why you want people to behave in certain ways. What is it you are desiring? And are you going about it the best way that you can?

So for example, if one of your desires is that somebody surprises you with wonderful things on your birthday and doesn't forget your birthday, and that's really important to you, the first thing I want to recommend is that you tell the person that that's important to you.

You ask the person to do those things. And you do not rely on them to comply. I feel really strongly about this because I think there are a lot of relationship situations where people end up compromising way too much and being miserable in a relationship where they're having to do a lot of things that they don't want to do, and their partner is having to do a lot of things that the partner doesn't want to do, and so there ends up being a lot of resentment.

I'll give you an example of this. If I want Chris to come home early and go to bed with me on time and make dinner every night and tell me I'm beautiful all the time, I can ask for those things. And if he wants to do those things, we have a want match because what I want him to do and what he wants to do match beautifully.

So I can ask him to do those things, he's happy to do those things, it's beautiful. It can go the other way around too. He can want me to do things, the things that he wants me to do I want to do, and so we have this beautiful want match and all of our wants and desires are happily coexisting.

If I want Chris to do all those things and he doesn't want to do those things, those things don't come naturally to him, he's not interested in doing those,

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he begrudgingly does them, they don't feel right to him, they feel contrived, then we don't have a want match. And he's doing these things out of a sense of obligation.

And then he's asking me to do things for him and I want to comply and do them out of obligation for him. And then all of a sudden, we're both locked into this relationship where we're having to do things we don't want to do for the sake of the other person. And so we're a little bit miserable because we're in this relationship full of all this compromise.

And so I don't recommend that you ever do a relationship based on obligation because the propensity of the negative thinking is so high and there's so much of it that the resentment then gets perpetuated. Because if you think about - if your A line is I'm doing something because this other person is making me, you're going to be doing that out of a feeling of maybe frustration, obligation, duty.

And if it doesn't feel good, that's what you're creating in this relationship. A lot of negative emotion. And what I mean by feel good is the emotion driving the action is a positive emotion. So here's what I recommend. For those of you who are in a relationship already, and those of you who are looking to be in a relationship, evaluate your want matches with your partner.

So the way that you do this is you make a list of what you want in and from your relationship. I want - maybe you want physical connection and cuddling this much of the time, and you want sex this much of the time, and you want to travel this much of the time. You want to have deep conversations this much of the time and you want to have date night this much of the time, and you want the person to plan trips and outings and surprise you with jewelry.

Whatever it is, just make the list of all the things that you want. And what you do is you test that against what your partner actually loves to do. So for example, you could say, "I love having sex once a day. That's what I want in a relationship." And maybe your partner's like, "I am in. I love having sex

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once a day too.” That’s so great. You have a want, I have a want, we have a want match.

Maybe you say to your partner, “I really want to travel.” And maybe your partner, that isn’t necessarily something they would do without you but they’re happy to do it. They’re happy to travel, they’re happy to plan the travel just because you want it.

It’s like, oh, well if you want it, then I want it. So that’s a good want match. Another example of something like that is sometimes when people text me, I don’t text them back right away. And so they’ll start to feel like I’m ignoring them or I don’t care about them or I don’t love them, and they’ll say, “Hey, would it be okay if you would just respond to my text when I text just to let me know that you got it?”

And that’s not something that I normally naturally do because it’s just something I do, but I’m happy to do it if someone asks me to do it. Of course, I’ll do that, no problem. It’s not out of a sense of obligation, I don’t feel resentful about it, I’m happy to do it. That’s a want match.

So there’s wants that you both naturally want, and then there’s wants that you ask for that the person is happily wanting to do for you just because you asked. And then there’s things that you may want your partner to do, or your partner may want you to do that you don’t want to do. And then we don’t have a want match there.

I want to have a romantic dinner three nights a week, and maybe Chris doesn’t like romantic dinners. They feel torturous to him, he’s not interested in that, he doesn’t want to go out to eat that much. That’s not a want match there.

And so when you look at what you want and where it matches with what your partner genuinely, authentically wants, you can see how many connections that you have there and you can see how many matches that you have there, and it will help you to align with each other.

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If you are just dating someone, it's a really good way to be open and honest ahead of time before you make a commitment, hey, these are the things that I really want in a relationship. Are these things that you really want to give and will you please be super honest with me of the things that you're not into? And that you'll do probably in the beginning of the relationship but then ultimately, you're not going to want to do them because you don't want to do them.

And I think what happens is when you have this honesty with each other and you talk about the amount of matches that you have, if you have very few matches, like your partner wants a bunch of stuff that you don't want to do, and you want a bunch of stuff that he or she doesn't want to do, you run into this problem where you're always both going to be wanting and you're going to need to get those wants and you're going to fulfill those desires in other ways.

And so you have to know what your deal breakers are. You have to know what's important to you. The way not to approach this is to say, "Well, my deal breaker is I need to have romantic dinners three nights a week, and so because that's a deal breaker, you have to do that for me or I don't want to be with you."

Because like I said, making someone do something they don't want to do as part of your relationship, out of a sense of obligation or threat is going to disconnect you rather than connect you. So I'll have clients say to me, "Well, I want to have that romantic dinner because I want to feel connected to my partner."

And what I often say to them, "But if they're doing something they don't genuinely want to do, you're increasing their disconnect because they're feeling obligated and threatened to do something. That's the opposite of feeling connected to you." So if you want to feel connected and you want them to feel connected, it comes from that authentic place.

And if there's something that doesn't match in terms of your desires, there's other ways for you to fulfill those desires and needs. And maybe it's finding

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someone else, but maybe it's finding another way for you to take care of that need for yourself.

And I have to say that I think it's important to have some major want matches. I think if you're interested in being in a committed relationship where there is complete commitment of monogamy, that's a really important want match. If someone's not interested in a monogamous relationship and you are, obviously, that's going to be a huge challenge.

You can threaten them and force them, but if that's not their true desire, there's going to be conflict in the relationship. So I think recognizing what are your deal breakers, what are the most important things to you, and then what are the other things that you want that you may not get from your romantic relationship but you could get in many other ways from many other relationships.

And this is something I've been exploring a lot lately in terms of kind of this next phase of my life, really thinking about what are the relationships that I want to add to my life? What are the relationships that I want to deepen in my life to fulfill some of the needs and the desires that I have that I may not be getting through my relationship with Chris because we don't have a want match there?

And he's been talking to me about the same things. Like, what are some of his desires that he can get met through his guy friends and traveling on all those rugged - he wants to do all those competitions where they go through mud and all this stuff. I have no interest in doing any of that.

Now, I'm sure he would think it would be fun if I would do that stuff with him, but I'm not - he's not going to force me or threaten me to do those sorts of things, so how can he get that from someone else, in another way from one of his buddies? That sort of thing I think is really important.

So first and foremost, you need to know, what is it you want? And why? And do you like your reason for wanting that? A lot of times, if we have wants and desires that are based on insecurity, what we'll find is that it won't matter if the other person is willing to do those things. It will never

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give us the affect of feeling secure if we haven't done the work on our own insecurity.

So that's why it's really important to ask what your desires are, but also why are they there? Are they coming from an abundant place? Are they coming from a place of healing? Are they coming from a place of growth? Or are they compensating for some work that you still have yet to do in your life and in your own mental dramas?

I know for me, when I first met Chris, I had to do a lot of work on what I thought I needed and what I thought I wanted because it was based on my fears and my insecurity that had nothing to do with Chris. And there was no way he was ever going to be able to solve those for me no matter what he did.

And so I feel like my relationship with him really healed those parts in me and then made it so that wasn't even a want anymore that I needed from somebody else. It was something that I was able to provide for myself from a place of security.

So if there's something that you wish your partner would do, it would be so great if they would do it, I want to encourage you to ask them if they would want to do that. Not if they would do it, but if they would want to do it. Would that be something fun for them?

And be truthful with yourself in how they answer the question. And it's not a reason to be disappointed or upset or frustrated. And sometimes you may be really surprised. They may be like, "Totally, I'll do that, that's no problem, I love that." Or they may say, "No, that doesn't feel good to me. That doesn't feel right to me," and that's okay too. You can find another way to meet that.

I recently did this work in my journal, what I want at this point in my life. I've done this a lot. I've done a lot of want journals and included a lot of the things that I already have and included the things that I don't have yet. And I feel like almost like every five years, that list changes pretty significantly.

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And because I feel like I'm kind of going through this identity shift in my life right now, a lot of my wants have changed. And some of the things that I want, I feel like this delicious longing for them, and because I'm really good at my own self-care and taking care of myself, I know how to find them.

And what I mean by that is I know how to find people that want to do those things too. I don't only satisfy all my own needs with myself. The goal is not to be your own best friend and be your own mate and be your own tribe. That is not the answer.

The answer is if I really want someone that I can have an intellectual debate over mental health with, if that feels important to me and someone I want to riff ideas off, I don't want to be mad that my husband doesn't want to do that with me. I don't want to be frustrated that I wish he was more involved in mental health so we could have that conversation.

Because that just creates a wedge in our relationship that doesn't make any sense. But I still have that want, so I don't have to go without that just because Chris doesn't want to do that. I can go find someone that's totally into that, just like I am.

A friend or a mentor or a teacher, and have this amazing full life where I'm taking care of a lot of my own needs, my relationships that I've chosen are taking care of a lot of my needs, and the collective of all of that is perpetuating my desire for even more for myself and for my life.

And so I wanted to offer this perspective and this way of looking at your wants and thinking about your wants and asking for what you want from a place of abundance. And if your partner doesn't want to fulfill a want or doesn't want to follow through on something that you want, don't stop there.

Find other ways to get your needs met. Obviously, you must stay committed to the promises that you've made in terms of like, you don't want to say to your husband, "Well, I'd like to have sex three times a week and you only want to have it twice, so I'm going to go have it with someone

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else. I'm going to go ask someone else if they want to have it." If you have a commitment to monogamy, that's not going to work.

But if you ask yourself why is it that I want to have that third night, why is it that I want that, what is that underlying need and is there another way for me to fulfill that, whether it's with my partner or with someone else, you're going to start noticing that your self-care will just go up a level and you will start feeling so fulfilled and so motivated by all of the desires within you.

I believe that our desires are our roadmap to the life that we're meant to live. I believe that just like pain is a part of being human, desire is a part of being human. And when we clean out all the false desires and we tap into our true desires, we have a map for where our life is supposed to go.

And so I want to recommend that you honor those wants and find your want matches out there to be able to create the most fulfilling relationships and the deepest connections that I think are possible for us as humans. I hope you all have a beautiful, amazing week. I hope you have many wants that are matched by many people who would love to fulfill your wants.

Have a beautiful week everyone. Talk to you soon. Bye-bye.

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