

Ep #303: Cultivating Power



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Brooke Castillo

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You are listening to *The Life Coach School Podcast* with Brooke Castillo episode 303.

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 there, my friends. I am sitting in the most beautiful suite in Grand Cayman. And I have the view of the endless ocean in front of me. It is gorgeous. I am so happy that I get to spend the next 10 days here enjoying this beautiful weather.

I went to Punta Mita in Mexico for a week and felt like I was in paradise. Those of you who are in Scholars got to see that behind the scenes video in January of that trip that we did for my friend, Kris Plachy's 50th birthday. So much fun. And then we went to Amsterdam and Copenhagen for the holidays, the four of us, me, my husband Chris, and the kids, Christian and Connor went there. And it was very cold there.

And so now we are at the Caymans. So, we had the warm place, the cold place, and now we're back at the warm place. So, I'm thrilled to be here. I'm about to teach master coach training to 20 potential master coaches. And I decided that I wanted to make master coach training the most fun training that I have. And so, I brought all of my instructors, all my master instructors that wanted to help teach are here. And I think there's 12 of us and 20 students.

And we're doing our team meeting here and I'm doing my mastermind group here. So, it's quite an amazing once in a lifetime trip. And I'm super excited. My kids are here with their friends and Chris is here, so thrilled beyond anything to be here and to be recording this podcast.

The podcast that I wanted to record while I'm here is called *Cultivating Your Power*. And, as most of you know who are in Scholars, in December, we do what we call an impossible goal. And we create an impossible goal for

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ourselves in order to live from the future, in order to generate power from the future, in order to create from the future so we're not consistently just relying on the foundation of our past, which is very limited, in order to create a future.

We want to create a future that is beyond what we're capable of doing right now that requires us to become the next version of ourselves so we're constantly growing and evolving and achieving new levels, while at the same time, maintaining balance and health and peace and comfort in our lives. So that's that 50-50 balance that we're looking for.

And one of the things that I've noticed is that the more powerful I get in the sense that I'm going to talk about today, the more peaceful I get. I think a lot of times, we think power is something that is generated externally and is something akin to force. And I think this may be one of the reasons why power kind of has a bad name. Power kind of has a negative reputation, that the people in power are bad and that it's us against them kind of thing.

And what I want to talk about in this podcast is how do we kind of calibrate that definition so you can generate power in your own life? The real true kind of power that I'm talking about is the power that comes from within, and the most powerful internal work that we can do that generates that power, when we try and generate power externally, we end up forcing and trying to control and trying to hustle and we wear ourselves out.

And one of the reasons why I wanted to do this podcast is because I've been super reflective lately and I've been kind of looking at my life and looking at the world and looking at my peers and looking at my students and trying to make sense of what's been going on. And I think one of the things that I want to make clear and create in my own life is that true sense of desired power that makes the world better, that begets more internal power in a way that serves the world.

The more powerful we can be in our lives, the more of an effect we can have on the world. And ironically, we try to have an effect on the world in

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order to generate power and it doesn't work. We have to generate our power from within, doing our work from within. And that's when we can have more of a powerful effect on the world.

I have some friends who are peers of mine who have been trying to build their businesses and they've been trying to create powerful businesses. And they're worn out and they feel that opposite of powerful. They feel weak and exhausted and frustrated and like they're always chasing something.

And we were having conversations about this and wondering what is the difference between my experience, where I've been able to create more peace as my business has become more powerful and had more of an impact and they've had less peace. And I do think it goes back to one of the most important concepts that I teach on this podcast. And it's one that you might miss because you might not really believe me.

And so, I want to reiterate it here, is when you believe that there is a place out there in the future that will be better than this moment right now, you get desperate, you get needy, you get power-hungry, you get control-hungry and you get to be in that frenetic anxious hurry space. And it requires you to move through the world in a way that literally exhausts your body because you're trying to control and trying to grasp and trying to get a hold of the world in a way that will finally make you feel peaceful.

And it just doesn't work. The only way that I have found it to work, and I have tried it both ways, my friends, I have tried it both ways and I'm always telling my students, look, if control worked, I would be onboard. I love a lot of control. I love to try to control the universe. It's never worked for me without completely destroying myself in the process.

So, the secret is to find that internal control. The most power we can ever generate is by understanding what power is and where it comes from and that you are the source of your power. Power doesn't come from something outside of you. And the power that I'm referring to is the power that helps

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you impact and helps you change the world. We're talking about that internal one.

So, I will have people who come to me who are desperate to change the world. They're desperate to take power away from people who seemingly have it and get it for themselves so they can do good with it. and I think this is a very admirable thing to want to do. It's just really challenging to try to fight something that is powerful by destroying it is what has gotten us into many problems as a species.

And what I think is so interesting is so many well-meaning people come to me and they want to destroy bad things. They want to destroy the destroyers. And they don't even realize that in their attempt to try to destroy the powerful thing in the world, that they have become destructive. And when you are destructive, you are utilizing the power that you do have to destroy, and that then depletes that power.

When you use the power within you, when you use the power that you can generate to create and to help and to heal, that power is regenerated. That has been my experience. And so, the first question that we kind of need to sit and ponder, and I really want you all to consider doing this, is what is power to you? How do you define that for yourself?

If you want to become powerful, what do you do? What does it mean? How will you know when you are powerful? Where does power come from? How can we cultivate it? Do you have an answer for that?

Like, I really thought about, you know, when you get past all the clichés, when you get past the, "Well, it's prominence, it's position, it's authority, it's who you are in your company, it's who you are in the business, that's where power comes from." When you let go of all those external definitions and you just drop into your own life, where does your power come from? Where do you feel the most power in your own life?

I've thought about this a lot. Instead of Googling the answer, I really wanted to think, where do I find power? And the answer that I came up with that

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kind of astounded me is that the most powerful thing that I do in my life is make decisions. I make decisions about really big things in my life, about who and what I will spend my time with, what I will do in my life, what I believe in, how I want to feel, what I want to create, what I'll say no to.

That is where all of my power is. What I decide to think about the world is how I will generate the most power, the decisions that I make on what to think. And it doesn't sound as sexy as going out in the world and claiming power by destroying other people or destroying other people's power and then laying claim to it, or standing up to other people in power in order to feel powerful.

What we notice, when you really think about going out in the world and fighting powerful things doesn't make us feel powerful. In fact, it makes us feel depleted. Where we generate our power is in the decisions that we make.

And I think that knowing that, knowing that it is a decision is a thought you commit to, then you have to recognize that the first step in all of this has to be self-awareness. We have to know what we're thinking and what we're deciding to think before we can change that. We have to question everything.

So as you become more powerful in your life, as you become more aware of what you're thinking and what you decide to think, you start consciously choosing thoughts that aren't hateful, that aren't judgmental, that aren't victimy, that aren't feeling sorry for yourself, that aren't depleting your energy. And that work, that quiet work that we do when we self-coach ourselves puts us in a position of power.

And I'll give you an example. When someone comes at me in an attacking way and they want to yell at me and they want to put me down and they want to say horrible things to me and they want to rail against me, I am in the power position in that moment because of my awareness.

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When someone's coming from a place of attacking, when someone's coming from a place of fury or anger or wanting to hurt me in that energy that they're coming to me, their brain is completely unfocused. Their brain is completely generating action from a place of negative emotion.

And when I can recognize that and I can recognize what's going on in my own brain, I can make a decision on how to respond. And that is the most powerful moment that we have is in that moment, we get to decide how we will respond to things that happen to us. That's where all of our power resides.

And we can engage in the attack and we can engage in the destruction and we can engage in the fight and deplete ourselves, or we can decide to answer with love and compassion and understanding. And ironically, the perception kind of in society is that those are the soft unpowerful things to do. Those things will disempower us. Kindness isn't powerful. Love isn't powerful. Compassion isn't powerful.

But the exact opposite is true, and that goes for how we treat other people and it also goes for how we treat ourselves. And so when someone's attacking us, if we choose to believe them or fight against them or get engaged with them, we are choosing to deplete our own power. And when we allow other people to be upset and we don't take it personally, we generate all of the strength from that moment. We are the ones who are powerful in that moment because when you put love up against something, love always wins.

It doesn't mean that we aren't hurt and it doesn't mean that we aren't hurt physically and it doesn't mean that we don't take in emotionally. But that choice not to engage in the lower-level action of that emotion, the destruction of that emotion puts us in the most powerful position.

What happens when we become more powerful, by being able to manage our emotions internally by being able to stay focused and make decisions consciously is that we become a target because other people see us as

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powerful. And I've noticed this with a lot of my friends who have become successful in their businesses who have become kind of forces in an industry is that they start becoming targets for being attacked.

And I find that fascinating. I've spent a lot of time thinking about it. What is it when somebody becomes more prominent and states their opinion more strongly and has more followers, they all of a sudden get the attention and become the target?

And I've seen a lot of people use this as an excuse to quit and use this as a reason to deplete themselves because they don't see it as an opportunity to generate more power. If you understand the human experience that we are inclined to see ourselves either as perpetrators or victims and that we get afraid when we someone who we perceive is in power and we start feeling as if we need to fight against them or protect ourselves against them in a way that is aggressive, that depletes our power.

Now, when the "powerful" person matches that with that same energy, everybody is depleted. And you can see that happening a lot in our country right now. There is a lot of very low-level angry conversations going on right now where people are insulting each other and hurting each other at a very low level in an attempt to be powerful, in an attempt to put down what is perceived as powerful and to be more powerful. And all it's doing is depleting everybody. Everyone's exhausted from it.

When negativity is responded to with compassion, that is our strongest stance. That is the strongest place that we can come from. That's what can generate power and overcome that destructive energy. And if you look at all of the people that we most admire in the world, it's not the ones who won the fight. It's the ones who overcame them with love and compassion. And when I say we, I'm talking about most of the people who would be listening to this podcast would probably have that same perception that I do.

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Power is a skill. Internal power is a skill we have to practice and develop. It's not a one-time win. We don't arrive at a place and then become powerful, truly powerful.

And I'm not talking about forcefully powerful, the kind of external power that comes from being in a certain position. That's actually, when you utilize the power of your position to hurt someone, that is actually weakness. That is not power. That is force. That is trying to control the world. That is force. That is not true power.

And I think that is a very important thing to remember when you are trying to overcome someone you think is "Powerful." You have to ask yourself, why do I think this person is powerful? Is it because of the position that they're in? Is it because of the authority they have in the world? Or is it because of a connection that they truly have with themselves?

And true power never needs to control other people. True power never needs to control and force and put down and degrade the people outside of them because they have all of the compassions and power generated within the. And so, they don't need to put other people down or control other people in order to feel good about themselves.

And that's a huge shift in mentality when you're thinking about power. Power is a skill that requires love to sustain without destruction. True power isn't destruction. Think about it. True power, true internal power is the opposite of destruction. It is creation. It is uplifting things outside of us instead of trying to put them down and control them because the power is coming from within.

When we feel powerful, we're always moving forward to cultivate more, to create more. We don't see missteps or mistakes as failures as much as we see them as opportunities to generate more energy. So, the question becomes, how do you cultivate power? How do you, in your own life, practice this skill?

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And I'm going to go back to that original question and I think the first answer I have for you is that you have to define it for you. You have to answer the question, what is power to you? Here are my answers, but I think it's important for you to decide what power means to you.

And when you read your answers, be careful to notice, are you misunderstanding it and thinking power comes from by controlling the world, or do you truly understand that power comes from controlling yourself, from that internal power.

Power, to me, is first my ability to make my ideas happen. If I know that power comes from my decisions and I understand that every decision I make is about how I think and if I believe in my thoughts, I can make my ideas happen, that is the ultimate in power for myself. So I can think of an idea, I can think of something that I want to do and then I have the power to create it. I'm not depending on the world to change to give me something. I'm depending on myself to generate it. That makes me feel incredibly powerful.

Number two is the ability to take massive action by handling failure. I think the skill of handling failure is one of the most powerful things we can do. It's one of the things that creates the most power because if we don't let a failure defeat us, it strengthens us. We learn from it. We develop strategic byproducts and we keep moving forward from it.

Number three, power is the ability to manage my emotions and not react to them. I think one of the things that took away most of my power was buffering. It was not being able to manage my emotions and giving into buffering instead. And this really kind of flows into number four, which is the ability and the willingness and the freedom to say no, to decide.

So I think, for so many of us, we feel like sometimes our lives are out of control because we're overeating or overdrinking or over-texting or over-dating or whatever, and so we feel so out of control in our lives because we haven't developed the capacity to decide in the moment or ahead of time

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what we want for our lives. We feel so powerless because of that. And so, I think the ability and the willingness to say no is powerful.

There's been so many times in my life when I wanted to say no to something or someone in my life that I thought was so powerful, and I didn't do it because I was giving my power to that thing or to that other person instead of saying no. And that's not to say that if someone in my life wasn't trying to force me to do something, that it was my fault because I didn't say no. That is not what I'm saying at all. But the opportunity and the ability and the freedom to say no is mine.

I can't control that person, but I always have the freedom and the power to decide what I'm willing to do and what I consent to do and what I will do in that moment. And by defining that for myself, I do not want to drink alcohol. I do not want to overeat. I do not want to let this person do something to me, then I can say no. That is true power. Force is trying to control other people in the world and power is creating yourself in your own world, mentally, physically, and emotionally.

You will know when you're utilizing power because you will not be too attached, tense, or anxious about the outcome. You will realize it's already 50-50 and you'll be 50-50 when you arrive at your goal. Things that happen to us, we can't control. Things that happen in the world, we can't control.

That doesn't make us powerless because we can control our thinking. We can control our feelings. We can control our actions. That's where all of our power resides. We get confused when we think power is in our ability to control things. Power is in our ability to think things.

A lot of people want money because they think money will make them powerful. They think they'll be able to buy the things, that that will make them happy, or they'll be able to pay for people to behave the way they want them to behave. And unfortunately, the opposite is true. So many people get money and become so disappointed that money doesn't do

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what they want it to do, money doesn't control the world, money doesn't take away their pain, money doesn't change their thinking.

And it actually puts them into a depression. This has happened with some friends of mine, is they feel like, "I thought when I was going to get here – I've been chasing this for so long, I thought when I was going to get here everything was going to change." And the truth is you want to change everything before you get there.

So, some of the thoughts that I think that help me to feel powerful – and this is something you'll want to think for yourself – what are the thoughts that you can believe that will generate the feeling of power for you, so you can practice thinking them and feeling them and practice making those decisions in your life?

When we succumb to decisions that other people have made for us or we succumb to societal decisions or societal expectations, when we succumb to decisions of our past that weren't made consciously, we deplete our power. When we redecide our lives, when we choose again everything over and over and over again and choose to not have some things and to choose to reignite some things and have some of the same things, we get to generate that power over and over again by not just being a passenger in our own life, but by taking control internally of our own decisions, and then having those thoughts and feelings generate actions that show up externally.

So, here are some of my thoughts. I create my life from future possibility, not from my past. This makes me feel incredibly powerful because I'm not limited by the decisions of my past. I get to decide what is possible for me. That makes me feel incredibly powerful. I can just use my creative imagination to decide what is possible.

My capacity to evolve comes from action, regardless of success or failure. Moving forward creates results. And results are what ultimately produce success. When I am willing to fail, I feel powerful. I'm not afraid. I'm not

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scared. I'm not hiding. I'm out there knowing that everything I do, every failure I make will generate momentum forward.

Loving myself generates power. Love is powerful. Loving others unconditionally generates power for me because if I look at someone and no matter what they do I love them no matter what, that gives me so much power. They can't make me hate them. They can't make me feel hate for them. They can't make me drop to the level of their negative energy. They are not that powerful. I get to decide what I think and feel, period. No matter what they do, the power is mine.

My capabilities are growing with each action I take. It's okay to change my mind and my past. I am never limited by my past mistakes. There are no wrong decisions. I'm already 100% worthy, and I always will be, no matter what. That's no matter what I've done, no matter what I'm doing, no matter what I will do in the future, no matter what I've accomplished, anything. I'm already 100% worthy.

And when I believe that, and I know that I am not the one responsible for my worthiness, that that's just a given, that's just intrinsic, that's just my birth right and situation, then I can release all the stress and all the pain. I can open myself up to the world and know that I don't need to control the world.

When I need to control the world, I feel very weak. I feel powerless. When all I need to control is how I respond to the world and what I put into the world and what I create internally, that is when I know that I am at my most powerful.

So, this is work I want to challenge you to do for yourselves. I want to challenge you to decide for yourself, what does it mean to be powerful? What are the thoughts that you have that generate power?

We're going to spend a whole month in Scholars talking about how to make decisions, how you have made the decisions of your past, how to remake

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all the decisions that you're currently living from, and how to make decisions about the possibility of your future.

I hope you'll join me in Scholars if you're not already there to do that. And if not, only doing this one exercise can change everything for you. What does it mean for you to be powerful in your life? What is it you want to create and how do you want to create that power to generate those results? Alright, my friends, enjoy. I will talk to you next week. Bye.

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