

Handling Chaos 2



Full Episode Transcript

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. And welcome to the second episode in Handling Chaos. I wanted to drop another episode so we would have several in a row so you could have some input that is helpful and positive from me into your brain so you can have some other things going on in your brain besides just the news and besides hearing maybe panic and fear from other people.

I personally have been doing tons of coaching on myself today. That's been really helpful. My girlfriend, Kris Plachy, was here today and she was able to coach me as well, which of course was incredibly helpful. One of the things that's amazing about our industry, and recessions, and times that are hard in the world are incredible opportunities for the life coach industry to reveal our magic, and the demand for everything goes up. This is our time.

So typically, our businesses all do very well when things are challenging. Now, that presents another issue, right? Because we're dealing with our own emotional stuff on it, too, and the increase in demand for our services puts an increased demand on our businesses, which is beautiful, of course we want our businesses to grow, but we also need to make sure we're taking care of ourselves first.

So for me, I had an event planned for today that I had been looking forward to and been planning for several months, and I had to cancel it yesterday, literally right the day before the event. I was devastated by that. I had a lot of students coming that had gotten on flights that were going to be there. I was all in. We were all in. We were going to be there. People had coached themselves to be there. And to have to cancel that event was just a challenging set of thoughts that went through my brain.

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So that was kind of like ... My day-to-day was I was supposed to be delivering that event and I was supposed to be with all my people doing what I love doing and sharing all the goodness that would help them run their companies and their businesses. So that's kind of like my C line for today of where I was starting with the event that was canceled.

Both of my kids' colleges have postponed them going back to college, and they're disappointed. Christian's golf season has been completely canceled. So there's like all these circumstances that we're dealing with and then all of our thoughts about these circumstances are really important to pay attention to. Because otherwise, we start attributing our feelings to the circumstances and we see incorrectly that those feelings are inevitable and that we're just going to feel terrible.

Although I really today just wanted to be disappointed and I wanted to allow myself space for being upset ... Also, many of my students were very upset. They were very mad that the event was canceled. They were not in a good way. I wanted to let myself be upset about that, and about my thoughts about that, and how I felt about that. Many of them were blaming me for that, and so I just wanted to hold space for myself and be really compassionate with myself.

I was really lucky that Kris, my best friend, had been here for the event so she came and kind of spent the day with me. It was really interesting. It was like a really dark day and tons of really heavy rain today and heavy anxiety. For me, there was like a rock of almost like depression in my heart because of all of my thoughts around all of the circumstances and not being able to kind of keep up with them. And I just let it be what it is. I thought it'd be okay to be this. This is 50% of my life, and I'm just going to be in it, and I want to recommend that.

For many of you, I know that you're in really disappointing thought spirals. You can fix those, but you can also be in there for a while. I had purchased for my dad, and my son, and Chris tickets to the Masters this year. I had purchased plane rides for them, and a beautiful place for them to stay, and

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tickets to the event, which everything is incredibly expensive. Let's say painfully expensive for that. And I was so excited to give them that. And everything's canceled and no refunds. I understand that. I understand that that's not something that they can control. It's not something that is anything they wanted to do. I totally get it. But our hope is that it's postponed and that they'll still have it and we'll be able to attend at some point.

But at this point, I'm just letting all of it just be, and letting myself just feel all of it, and being okay with being upset about it, and being okay with people being mad at me, and being okay with my kids being disappointed, and being okay with the world being the way the world is right now. I want to encourage you all to do the same if that's what you need to do.

I don't think that freaking out, and panicking, and running around in a huge panic is going to serve anybody, but I do think that allowing yourself to feel your feelings, and grieve the things that you had planned, and be mad about inconveniences, and travel plans canceled, and flying to places where you thought there was going to be an event and have to cancel and just have to fly home, and ...

I had one of my students, Rachel Hart, was flying here for the event, and I had to cancel it while she was in the air. So she literally flew to Dallas. She was on a flight to Dallas and just had to get back on a flight to go back to where she lives. And she was just on this plane the whole time. I was like, "Oh my goodness." And she was like, "No, it's great. I'm just going to be on this plane and be able to focus." She really got her head in that positive mindset. And I just so admire so many of my students that were able to do that in that moment because being mad and upset is a bummer.

But, there are situations where being mad and upset is completely appropriate and allowing yourself to feel that, and be in that. I'm just really disappointed in all the things that have been canceled for my kids and for me. And it's okay. I'm just going to be sad about it, and I want you guys to give yourself space to do that. Not in an indulgent way that doesn't serve

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you that makes you react, but in a responsive way and in a way that allows you to open instead of close. Because if I allow myself to be disappointed and upset, it makes me so much more compassionate and understanding when other people are disappointed and upset. And it just makes that connection so much deeper, and I think that that's a good kind of rule of thumb for all of us to remember not just in times like this but in all of our lives.

I called one of my girlfriends and I said, "How are you doing? How are you feeling?" And she was completely devastated, completely upset, freaking out about her life and what's going on with her life. I called another girlfriend who was like, ""This is amazing. I am so excited for the life coaching industry. I'm so excited for the mental health that we get to share." It was just crazy for me to see we're all kind of in this world together and yet we're all in different places. And nobody's right and nobody's wrong.

So for me, I do my thought work. I write down all the situations. So for example, my event was canceled is a circumstance for me. The Masters trip was canceled for my family. They were all going to go to that. My kid's golf season was canceled and we're not going to be able to do that. All of those things, I just put those down as Cs. And then I noticed my thoughts about them, about those Cs, and none of them seemed like unnecessary undue suffering. You know what I'm saying? They didn't seem like this is the end of the world, and life isn't fair, and this is a terrible thing that should never happen and they shouldn't have canceled it, and they did it wrong. It wasn't anything like that. It was just like this is part of life that I don't like, and I choose not to like it, and I choose to be disappointed about it, and that's okay.

For many of you, you share with me because you've told me chronic anxiety, you have a lot of anxiety, and this is just heightening all of that up. And it's maybe causing you to want to buffer, and escape from it, and eat over it, and drink over it. I just want to also say that compassion is not allowing yourself to do that. That is not compassion. Compassion is like,

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"Well, this is a hard time. It's totally fine that you drink. This is a hard time. It's totally fine that you overeat. It's really fine that you escape yourself. It's totally fine that you don't pay attention to your feelings or feel them because this is an unprecedented situation, and so you don't have to pay any attention to yourself."

I want to offer that even though you may have a lot of different circumstances, and a lot of different thoughts, and a lot of different swirling going around, it's not kind, useful, or helpful to justify escaping that emotion. First of all, listen, if I thought you could escape emotion, and get away with it, and never have to feel it again, I might be all in. But I'm just saying that emotion isn't going to go away. Those thoughts aren't going to go away if you don't give yourself access to them.

So for me, it's kind of like being in a pool of negative emotion. It's kind of just being in the thick of that, like a pool that has thick gel in it. You know what I'm saying? And I got the heaviness of that, and it's hard to swim, and things don't seem right, and things seem like they should be different than they are. And what I tell myself from that pool is that I have an idea about how the world should be.

I have an idea about shows going on, and about not having to cancel things, and about how we should think and feel about death, and sickness, and illness. I have all these ideas about how people should handle things, and how I should be able to handle things, and the choices I should be able to make, and the way the world should be, and what our government should do and all that.

I mean, even as I say it out loud, it's absolutely ridiculous that I think I know how the world should be. I don't know how the world should be. And when I compare my world that I'm experiencing right now to some version of what I think it should be, I suffer. And it's so easy to do that. It's so easy to do that here now in this time.

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I posted in my Slack messages, and I said, "I want to share your insight, coaches. I want to share your love. I want to share your wisdom with my listeners. Will you please post below anything you have learned lately, anything you're thinking about?" And I have so many amazing and so many amazing perspectives and approaches that I can't even tell you how impactful they've been, and I'm going to share all of them with you over the next few days.

I'm going to try and keep these next podcasts kind of 10 to 15 minutes. I want to share with you some of these insights, and I'm going to share with you some coaching sessions that I'm going to do in Scholars that will help you by hearing me coach someone else who may be suffering over what's going on in the world.

But one of the posts that just really impacted me the most was one by my friends and colleague Katrina Ubell. Those of you in my community know who she is. She's a physician who is also a weight loss coach who focuses on working directly with physicians on losing weight. She addresses all of the specific issues that physicians have as it applies to losing weight in their profession. She understands their type of stress. She understands their lifestyle. She understands the pressure. She understands their time ... Everything. And she takes the weight loss tools that she learned at The Life Coach School and integrates them and teaches them to physicians to much success and to incredible raving fans.

So if you don't know Katrina, that's Katrina. She posted in our mentoring group when I asked her about this, she posted, I think, the most beautiful reply, and this is what she said. She said, "Well, I'm still here in Dallas." So she had come in to Dallas for the events that I was supposed to give today. So she had flown in for the event, and the event was canceled. So she said, "Well, I'm still here in Dallas. I wanted to record a podcast, but I wonder if focusing on weight loss is the least of people's concerns right now. But I know my people," meaning doctors, "and they are not that worried for the most part. I'm happy to share the physician perspective if that would be helpful."

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Corrine replied to her. Corrine Crabtree replied to her and said, "Yes, they are still interested in losing weight because what is happening is so many of the people are still trying to manage stress with food, and so it gets out of control as things get more complicated in the world that whenever our reaction is gets expanded, gets complicated."

So this is what she wrote, and I just love it. She said, "My people are just feeling their compassion tanks starting to empty." I think that makes sense for doctors, right? They're just constantly needing to have compassion and love on their people. It's very similar to any kind of service practice where there's a huge up-cry where people are panicking and it's physician's job to be the voice of authority. So you can see how their compassion would be tested there.

I love this piece that she wrote. This was the piece I really wanted to share with you. "I'm strangely super calm about all of it, my thoughts. I believe in the resilience of human beings. We are going to figure this out, and a lot of things in our world will become even better because of it. There's such an amazing opportunity for new businesses, technologies, and services that I'm so excited about. I've never been so happy to have an online business. I'm so grateful my kids' school is so tech savvy so they will barely miss a beat no matter how long they end up having to stay out. I love how nature reminds me that the world just keeps trucking along no matter how bad our brains tell us things are."

I think she just wrote that just on a whim. She just type, type, type, type, type. I don't think that was like a super thoughtful post that she put together. I think she just shared it. But, I read it super thoughtfully because when I read that I burst into tears. I mean, even just reading it now I want to burst into tears. It's such a beautiful perspective. And because Katrina's a physician, and because she understands viruses, and because she understands health, I just feel like coming from her as an authority to me in this way, I feel held by her. And I want all of my coaches to be able to offer that to all of our clients. I want to be able to offer that to my family, to my students, to my clients, to everyone.

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So many people have said to me, "You're so lucky to have an online business," and I say, "Well, it just so happens that right in the epicenter of this crisis in the United States I happened to be having a huge live in-person event." And I'm okay with that. I'm okay with what happens. I'm okay with everything and all the things and life as it is.

I love what Katrina said about nature. It just keeps going on and on. One of the things that I think about a lot is that sometimes death gets a lot of our attention, right? When there's a pandemic like this, it gets a lot of our attention, and we start thinking about how many people have died from this specific thing without realizing how many actual people are dying every single day. Because you can see how if we focused on that all of the time that we would be freaking out all of the time if we thought about how many ways that we can die, and how many people die per day, and the chances of dying, and the percentage rate, and all of those things. Once we start focusing on it and adding up the numbers, it can freak us out.

So I think for me to just think about all the people that died today not from the coronavirus, all the people that were hurt today, that are in the hospital today, not from any virus that's going on but from just being human living, everything's still going on. Everything that is nature is still going on. Everything that is human is still going on. We've canceled some of our events, but life is going on, and this is life. Just because we're putting some things on hold does mean we're on hold.

Kara, who's also in that group, made a post and she basically said this is like ... Because people are supposed to stay home, it's a perfect time to develop the consistent self-coaching routine that so many of us claim we don't have time to do. So being at home alone, for most of us, plus having all of the constant feed of things that are meant to startle us is the opportunity, it's a perfect opportunity, to hone in on our thought work, to pay attention. And if you feel scared, and you feel awful, and you feel terrible, that is a beautiful opportunity for you to hold space for what you're feeling, to notice your thoughts, to be emotional.

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I've been so emotional today. One of my coaches posted in our Slack group that a bunch of the coaches that had come to the event that got canceled all got together and were coaching each other. They stayed together in a smaller room and coached each other and helped each other through what was going on in their brains. I was just so emotional about it. I was so thankful for the model, and thankful for this work, and thankful for the people that I get to have around me, and thankful for Bev Aron, who is one of our most amazing coaches who I know is literally helping heal the world, who flew all the way here from Canada and just never stopped smiling about her life, and about this work, and about all of it.

So I feel so honored to be able to see the beauty of the human experience even in what's going on, even in hardship, and difficulty, and disappointment. And I want to invite you to listen to Katrina's words and to think about nature going on. So I'm going to end with reading them to you one more time. And I want to tell you I have so many more that are coming, so many more ideas that my coaches have shared with me.

What's so beautiful about it is I put it on the Slack channel and all my coaches are reading each other's and getting so much value from it. Corrine went in there and she's like, "I need to study this thread. This is life. This is a thread I need to study and learn from." And it's just so beautiful that we have this community to come together and talk about thought work.

She says, "I believe in the resilience of human beings. We are going to figure this out, and a lot of things in our world will become even better because of it. There's such an amazing opportunity for new businesses, technologies, and services that I'm so excited about. I've never been so happy to have an online business. I'm so grateful to my kids' school, that it's so tech savvy so they'll barely miss a beat no matter how long. I love how nature reminds me that the world just keeps trucking along no matter how bad our brains tell us things are." I'll talk to you tomorrow.

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