

Moving Forward 4



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, welcome back everyone. Moving forward. That's what we're doing today. We are moving forward. One of the things that I did with my coaches in our Slack group is I asked them, "Hey, can you guys come together and give me some topics that you hear your clients wanting to be discussed and give me some good solutions that I can offer to everyone on the podcast?"

And I got many, many, many answers from my coaches and it's awesome because everyone's reading it. And it's helping everyone's clients. So that's what I wanted to do today. I just wanted to give you some of my coaches' wisdom because they're amazing, and I will add my own two cents because I can't help myself, and I hope you enjoy this one.

This one is from Lisa Hatlestad. Here's what she says. "One thing I've noticed in my own thinking and from words from others is the sense of suspended animation 'until things get better again or go back to normal.' And one of the things you've talked about already that has been most important to me is not wanting to feel impatient for this to go away or end. I'd love to hear you talk more about that.

This is now and the future that so many are waiting for looks a lot like the before and is circumstance-based. Waiting it out feels so imprisoning. Making the best of it feels so limiting. They imply needing to wait for things to get better. I've been trying to find language to express this, which I'll let myself say clumsily here. This is now. This is our present moment and rejecting it or numbing through it or padding it with hope, which again, invites waiting for something better, is missing such a sweet, raw, vulnerable opportunity to inhabit our lives now, like we never have before.

I'm asking myself, what if this is normal life? What would I be doing then? And it is normal life. I want to be in this. I guess I'm talking about the Model,

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obviously, and I don't think, and others perhaps can hear this enough. Our future exists only in our mind right now. Our bodies and brains are in this moment. How can we live in this moment fully without labeling it as the suspension of the normal?

One way I'm doing this is considering, as I've already said, what I would be doing now if I came to Earth for the first time right now and this was apparently the way things were on Earth, that nothing was wrong, that nothing had to change. Would love to hear more of your eloquence on this, Brooke.

One thing that's really relevant to me is thinking back to 2017 when my dad died suddenly. The period of grief I went through felt as natural and right as anything ever had. I did not question myself. I did not think or even want to feel any other way. I had to relearn my life through grief. "Oh, this is what washing dishes is like when I've lost my dad." I look back on that time as a pivotal moment in my life when I stopped trying to escape and just settled in."

I don't know why but that makes me so emotional. I love that she's asking me to be eloquent when she couldn't have been more eloquent in the way that she wrote that. And I just think it's so beautiful and it's so - I don't know, it just feels me with peace and love for all of us, and what beautiful wisdom.

Lisa, I don't need to add to that. You said everything in that so beautifully, and I feel that so strongly for all of us. There isn't life waiting on the other side of quarantine. This isn't - and even those of us who are really going through different kinds of tragedy and trauma and freaking out, all of that, that is life.

Life isn't when everything's good and normal and safe all the time. That is not what life is. Life is all of it mixed together. All of the amazing, wonderful great times, and the anxiety and the pain and the terror. All mixed together. It's the abundance and the scarcity. It's the fear and the love. It's all of it.

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So thank you Lisa for reminding us that this is life. Life isn't going to start up again. Life isn't canceled. This is our life. So step into yourself within this life. And I love how she said, "If we just woke up and were handed this life, would we put it on hold for a couple months or would we decide to live it the way we want to live each hour of each day? Not until this is over but forever." Thank you, Lisa, so amazing.

This one is from Mary Buffington. "Hi Brooke. I'm a nurse and I coach nurses in burnout. The reality for me and my clients is if things get bad, we could get mandated to work on the frontline, if we aren't already, for our organizations. For the better part of a week, I have felt anxiety and shame because of all the thoughts, dying, losing my chance to have a baby, not being good enough, hurting someone because I haven't worked in-patient in eight years.

People were thanking me for being a nurse and I felt like a total fraud. I stopped showing up for my business, even mused the thoughts about getting out of nursing to avoid this. I've been trying to do models using the thought ladder, but they weren't working because even it could potentially be possible that I won't get forced to work frontline was something I couldn't believe.

Yesterday, while sitting with one of my lung cancer patients at an appointment where a surgeon discussed options, I had an epiphany. I might not have control over getting mandated, but I do have control over the thoughts and feelings I have.

My intentional thoughts right now: "I can decide to be unafraid. I have survived everything up to this point. I can survive this. My only job in my business is to show nurses they don't have to let fear dictate what they do." From these thoughts, I have felt bigger than I have since this all started. I feel fierce. I feel calm. I feel focused. I'm now focused on showing up, not just for my clients, but for my patients."

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And I think this time for nurses and for doctors and the need for them to be able to manage their brains and to be able to help, I think is tremendous, and we have lots of our coaches helping health workers on the frontlines and I'm so thankful that we have so many doctors who are coaches, who have the Model. I can't even tell you how just overwhelmingly grateful I am for that.

One thing I want to say is that when there are words like mandated, like you are mandated to help people, you are forced to go help people, you're forced to go on the frontlines, your body will recoil from that. That terminology, those words.

I want to remind you guys, and I'm going to keep reminding you of this; there is no emotion without words. There is no fear without sentences. So people have said to me a lot that this is very serious and this topic is very serious, and these things that we're looking at are very serious.

And I understand their intention because they want to get people's attention, and I do think it's effective when people aren't paying attention and being safe and taking care of themselves to say no, this is serious, to get their attention.

But when you are taking care of yourself and you're aware of all of the rules around the virus and you understand the virus and you understand what's going on with it, you don't need to keep telling yourself that it's serious. At that point, it's not helping. You already have your attention on it. You don't need to keep reigniting the startle in your brain.

So I really want to suggest those of you who keep wanting to try and tell others and yourself, who already understand what's going on that this is serious, to just notice if that's serving you or not. I had some of my students get upset with me because they felt like I was coaching people on stuff that wasn't as serious as what they needed to coaching on.

And what I reminded them was, "Listen, no thought is more serious than another thought. No emotion is more serious than another emotion." And

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arguing about that may feel important to you, but I just want you to step back and say, “Wait, what if that is right? What if no thought is more serious? What if someone’s being coached on a topic that doesn’t relate to me but I can use the concept that Brooke is coaching on to relate to my thought? Because her sentence is just a sentence and my sentence is just a sentence, and I think my sentence is more important and more serious and more scary and more deadly than her thought, but what if I’m wrong about that? What if a thought is just a thought?”

And that’s what I want to offer to you here. And first of all, I just bow down to everyone who is a healthcare worker right now. I bow down to them and I want to help them in any way I can with managing their mind. It is normal for the brain to panic. It is normal for you to be freaking out. Doesn’t mean you’re not a good doctor or you’re not a good nurse or you’re not capable of doing this.

And allowing yourself and having compassion with yourself when that is happening, and then sitting down and writing down every single thought in your brain and noticing how it’s affecting you, and then taking the step to notice what is this moment like without words, without thoughts. And you’ll just get a glimpse, you’ll just get a - it’s like a ding.

There is no thought ramming itself in your brain, there’s just nothing. It’s just neutral. Even though the virus exists in the world, even though death and tragedy exist in the world, without a thought, it’s nothing. It’s just peace. It’s just emptiness. It’s just the world.

And then you can start deciding on purpose what you want to think about that. I want to remind you, our ancestors and many people in this world today deal with trauma and terror on a daily basis. This is what so many of us humans have experienced, our ancestors have experienced. This is not new for the human experience. We are built for this, we are equipped for this.

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And we can take the time to really look at our brains. We can decide - she said the thought that brings her peace is, "I don't have to be afraid," but you can also use the thought, "I'm afraid and that's okay. I'm afraid and that's normal. I'm afraid and I can open my chest and my body and my experience to allow room for fear to be here because I need to allow room for myself to be human right now. And then I can decide what I want to think and I can decide what I want to feel right next to that fear. I'm going to feel fear and I'm going to feel fierce. I'm going to allow for that fear to be there but I'm also going to add a little fierce to the recipe, and then I can decide what I want to do. I can decide how I want to help and who I want to help and what I want my life to be."

Thank you for sharing that one. So good. This next one is from Angela Mascenik. It says, "Love this topic. I like to think that even if we want to move forward, then we have to accept where we currently are and not wish it were different. Then we can begin to move forward and work towards our goals.

I loved thanking my past self yesterday while I was running because yesterday, my run was pure pleasure. I felt alive and tingling and strong and amazing and I ran fast. But that didn't come at first. I had to accept my not so fast body with extra weight on it before I could move forward with accomplishing my goals. Running, losing weight, et cetera.

So during my run yesterday, I thanked myself for showing up for my goals and for this future run that I would get pleasure from. Moving forward means having a goal or a dream and then taking action towards it. Moving forward is action. Moving forward can't happen if you're on the primitive map. It's required for you to be on your higher mapping system, using your prefrontal. That means managing your mind, feeling your feelings, and honoring your commitments. You have to know where you want to go to move forward."

I love this. So I do a lot of this work personally, where I have a wonderful relationship with my future self. I have a wonderful relationship with my past

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self too, but my past self hooked me up and takes care of me and has provided me with so much. A healthy body, an alcohol-free body, my kids, my family, all of it. I am very thankful to my past self.

But I'm also very thankful to my future self and I love my future self and I talk to "her" all of the time about how I can step up and produce the life that she's currently living five years from now. And so I love this example where she is her future self right now, running in a body that her past self helped create.

So I love to think about what is the gift that I could give to myself. What is the ultimate in self-love that I could give to my future self? Is it a healthy body that I'm taking care of now? Is it weight loss? Is it quitting some terrible habit that's going to get worse in the future? Is it creating a wonderful body of work that my future self can leverage from?

What is it you want to give to your future self? And for some of you that may be your 90-day future self. For some of you it may be your five-year future self. But the point is in order to create that future in the future, you have to be in the present now to start the creation. The creating happens here, right now, for that future.

And if you play with the idea that time isn't linear, that it's all just collapsible and that it doesn't exist, which isn't that cool to think about, especially right now, it's kind of interesting to know that you can be and you are your future self right now. You are that vision of that creation, but it's not because you're escaping there. It's not because you're going there instead of here. It's because you're bringing it all together in this moment.

I love that. That's such a good reminder. Thank you. This is some interesting insight from Diana Murphy. I like this. "Something I said in my group call yesterday was understanding that our future is always uncertain." Not just today, my friends. Always. We just don't panic about it. We just don't think about it.

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“It’s no different than now. We never did know what was going to happen tomorrow. I think diving in and explaining what the brain is doing in uncertainty, the solution I think is looking at our thoughts and vetting them through a filter and being sure we’re believing thoughts that serve us here.

We can always show up in a new future in any way we’re proud of. We always have control over that. Choosing to be courageous, curious, compassionate, no matter what the C’s, can be the constant. Being fully content in ourselves.”

I love this. I think it’s so important that we don’t distinguish realities. And I’ve talked a lot about this on the podcast but I want to talk about it a little bit more. Reality has always kind of been like this. It’s always been 50/50. It’s always been uncertain. But we just haven’t thought about it so heavily and scarily and seen so much of it in the news, so we haven’t been injecting panic into our bodies on such a heavy level.

Because when you look at your current moment right now, listening to this podcast, when you breathe, this moment just is. And when you start thinking about not knowing what’s going to happen in your future, you freak out.

But here’s an interesting thing to think about; I want you to rewind to three months ago. You were pretty certain about your future, weren’t you? Were you pretty certain about what you were going to be doing in March? Did you feel really calm about it and peaceful about it and maybe even bored about it?

You were pretty certain, weren’t you? You were wrong about that, my friends. You were wrong about what your March was going to be. But you, three months ago, worrying about this wasn’t even a possibility because you weren’t spending all your time of all the horrible things that could go wrong, even though horrible things can go wrong all the time.

So you can give yourself that same luxury today. You can think you’re going to know what’s going to happen in three months from now, but as

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we've seen, you don't really know. It's always uncertain. So if you need to get the feeling of certainty by knowing what the future holds, you're never going to be at peace.

Your certainty and your feeling of certainty cannot come from what will happen in the future because unfortunately, we can't control the world. And can we just take a minute and talk about how much that sucks? I want to control the world just as much as the rest of you do.

I keep fighting that the world should be different than it is in my brain. The world always reminds me that's never going to happen. So we have to find another way to feel certain because it's very important for our brain to feel certain. Because uncertainty means death in so many ways to our brain.

And even though death is inevitable, we don't want to be thinking about it all the time because it prevents us from living. So what can we be certain about right now in this moment? Our certainty can't come to the future. It can't come from what we want the world to do in the future. But our certainty can come from who we want to be and how we want to show up and how we want to evolve ourselves and how we want to choose to respond to whatever happens in the future.

This one's from Angela Robeck. "A part of moving forward for me has been forgiveness. Forgiveness of others, but more importantly, forgiveness of myself. When coaching school leaders about the current situation they're facing, they're having to make several decisions quickly with the information they had and have at the time.

As new information emerges, they find themselves regretting or beating themselves up for a decision they've made, or they stew in worry about making a wrong decision. They also get criticized for something no matter what, and I speculate the worst criticism is yet to come. Understanding how to forgive themselves and others will be essential in moving forward and continuing to make the best decisions at the time with no regret as new info comes to their awareness."

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I talked about this on one of my recent podcasts when I was coaching someone about how important it is to have your own back. And going into your past to beat yourself up or beating yourself up now for a decision you made in the past, no upside. Zero. And when we criticize and judge and yell at other people for the decisions that they're making because we think we're better at making decisions than other people, we lose that connection with humanity in that moment.

So many of you are going to make the wrong decision half of the time. And what I mean by that is you're going to look back on decisions and see, with retrospect, something you could have done better or differently. And it's not fair to do that to yourself and I don't even think it's fair to call it a wrong decision.

One of the thoughts that has been really helpful is, "There are no wrong or right decisions right now. I make the decision that I make with the information that I have, and then I move on and I move forward, and I make the next decision." Because if you're spending all your time right now beating yourself up over a decision that you made back then, you're never going to have your own back and make a new decision moving forward.

This is something that happens a lot with grief. A lot of us are experiencing that right now. We try to bargain with decisions that we made that we think could have prevented the world from being out of our control. I shouldn't have gone to that place or I shouldn't have been with that person, or I shouldn't have forgotten to wash my hands that one time, or I should have had less contact, or I should have listened to the news and paid more attention to what was going on in China. I've heard it all. Not useful. Not helpful. Do not do that to yourself.

This one is from Amy Watson. "Something I'm working on for my podcast episode on scarcity and abundance is the idea that we have a scarcity mindset about our ability to suffer, as well as our ability for resilience." Come on you guys, that is so good. I'm going to re-read it.

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“We have a scarcity mindset about our ability to suffer, as well as our ability for resilience. I coach moms who’ve lost a baby during pregnancy or infancy, and they say things like, “I couldn’t handle another loss. I’ve already lost my baby. I couldn’t handle if my grandma gets sick and dies too.” So I want them to know that we have an infinite capacity to suffer, as in clean pain, as well that we have the infinite strength within us to grow and continue forward, even when the unimaginable happens.

It’s this idea that lightning shouldn’t strike twice, when we know that it does and often. Or we think other people can handle hard things but not us. This is similar to when people who have not lost a child say, “I wouldn’t survive that,” but people do it every day. People lose children and they survive.

So we can believe in ourselves and our strength to overcome. In a nutshell, the problem is scarcity of capacity to suffer and scarcity of capacity for resilience. And the solution is believing in yourself and your ability to navigate this human experience. I think finding evidence and inspiring stories of strength in a struggle can help us believe that it’s possible for us as well. That’s what’s very interesting about this experience with corona. We’re all going through it together around the world.”

And that collective capacity of us as humans to suffer and to be resilience together is one of the most beautiful things that we will get to witness in our lifetime. Have a beautiful day everyone. I’ll talk to you tomorrow.

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