

Ep #130: Lessons from Jack Canfield



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Brooke Castillo

Welcome to the Life Coach School Podcast, where it's all about real clients, real problems, and real coaching. Your host, Master Coach Instructor, Brooke Castillo.

Hello, everyone. Welcome to 130. What? So exciting. Here's what I want to offer you all today, is Jack Canfield. I know that I've talked about him before. I've reference him before. I actually thought I had already done an entire episode on The Success Principles before, but I hadn't, so that's what I am doing today. This book is a classic.

Between The Success Principles by Jack Canfield and Awaken the Giant Within with Tony Robbins, I think you have all of your self-development covered. I'm going to review this book in a way where I'm going to give you quotes from the book, and discuss some of the concepts within, but this book is ten years old. I remember when I first got it, I was a brand-new coach, and I was so excited by everything that was inside of it, and I used to talk about all the concepts with all of my clients all of the time.

As I was just reviewing it before I started recording, it's amazing how these principles are just ingrained in all of my work. There are some basics that, I think that sometimes we forget, and they're said in a different way in this book than I normally say them, but the meaning is the same, and so I think this will be a really good review. Just think about this in general, the idea of success, and what it means to be successful, and why that may or may not be important to you. It's actually something that I've been thinking a lot about lately, is why even bother? I've been thinking about, why even bother with losing weight when you can just accept your body for what it is, and then eat whatever you want? Why bother with setting goals, and achieving them? What is the point of all of that? Why bother giving up alcohol?

It's because I work with clients all the time that start making progress, and start losing weight, or are not drinking, or getting some success, and then all of a sudden, there's a freak out, and then there's the, "I don't want that anymore. I don't want to dream about that anymore. I don't want to pursue that. I don't want to achieve that anymore." There's so much fear around achievement for some of us, and so much fear around giving up all of those buffers. I've been thinking a lot about this idea that we need to decide what we want our lives to

be. Do we want our lives to be an accumulation of pleasures or do we want to focus more on an accumulation of long-term successes in our lives?

By the way, I don't think the answer is obvious, and I don't think it's the same for everyone. The thing that I have noticed, and I'm going to talk about this more on a future podcast, is when you don't make a decision, and you try and moderate, and run in the middle, I think that's when I get the most miserable clients, is people that are trying to balance their short-term, immediate gratification pleasures with their long-term rewards. What's happening is they're contradicting each other, and there's a constant state of struggle. I think that the people that have just committed to hedonism, they've just committed to, "Look, I'm going to accept my body the way it is. I'm going to eat whatever I want. I don't care about achievement. I'm just waiting 15 more years to retire, and then I'm just going to sit on a beach somewhere."

I think that that kind of decision to do that is actually a much more gratifying decision than somebody who tries to balance them both out. Of course, if you've listened to this podcast for more than five minutes, you know that I'm probably on the complete other extreme. I, for my own personal life, and for most of my clients, I help them pursue the evolvment of overcoming the brain that is constantly pursuing immediate gratification, at the expense of long-term success, and reward, and pleasure that we get from long-term achievement. I am really committed to removing those short-term, immediate gratification buffers that prevent me from getting what I ultimately want in my life, because what I ultimately want in my life is a relationship with myself that isn't based on escaping myself, that's based on the truth.

What I have found is that when I pursue success in my life, and when I pursue connection with myself, and mindfulness, and mind management, and health, I get a level of freedom that allows me to evolve beyond what I thought was possible, and makes my life so much more rewarding, and interesting, and ultimately gives me a much deeper sense of well-being than does the constant escaping, and pleasure traps that come with all the consequences that I then have to deal with and try to overcome. I think that Jack Canfield's

book *The Success Principles* really talks about success being something to achieve on purpose, and not necessarily to get and reap the rewards of that, but to commit to the journey.

One of the things that Grant Cardone says that I love ... He's a sales guy, and I've read some of his sales materials, is he says this, "Successes are responsibility, because when we pursue success, we get over ourselves and we make a contribution." I know that that has been true for me in my life, the more I ask of myself, then the more I give of myself, and the more I feel like not only do I evolve the world by evolving myself, but also I help other people do that same work. I think that is the point of our lives, right, to evolve to the next version of what is possible. The people that are constantly being creative, and pursuing, and creating a life that's beyond where they are right now are the ones that evolve us.

I was talking to my son the other day, and we were talking about the iPhone. I was telling him that there was a point in history where they were going to close the patent office down because they thought everything that had been invented had already been invented. We were talking about the whole idea that you couldn't even conceive of the iPhone hundreds of years ago, and yet somebody conceived of that, and then created it, and now it's a mainstay in our lives. I love that. I think that's so fascinating, and what we have to get over in order to create something that's that astounding, and changing our lives permanently and such, I think, awesome ways. Let's talk a little bit about some of the principles that he brings up.

He starts with...the first chapter in the book is really the fundamentals of success, which I think is kind of like the foundation. You have to have a really good foundation before you can start pursuing it, and there are some fundamental things that will make success so much easier if you learn and recognize. These are the things I think we should all be taught, right, by school, and our parents, and our friends, and many of us are not taught any of these things. One of the most important lessons that he starts with is taking 100% responsibility for your life, and I talk about that a lot on this podcast, and the idea that we must own everything in our life so we can feel the most empowered in our lives.

If we take responsibility for how we think, for how we feel, for how we act, and the results we have in our lives, then we will feel motivated to change and motivated to evolve. If we live our lives in blame mode, or at the effect of mode, then we won't have any motivation to change, because we will feel like our life is just happening to us, versus us happening to our lives. I think this is the best news any of us could ever get, is that we get to create our life exactly how we want to create it, despite our circumstances. We do not have to keep the hand that we were dealt. In fact, we can fold that hand, and get a brand-new hand.

I was thinking about this on a walk the other day. I was thinking about a lot of the work that I've been doing lately is researching people that are suffering from addiction, and how so many of us, when we don't understand how our brain works, think that we want our lives to be over, right? I've had a lot of experience and exposure to people who literally drink themselves to death, or use drugs themselves to death, because they think that that's a better alternative than to the life that they have. One of the things that I think a lot of us don't consider when we're really in that state of depression, and that state of really not seeing or having any hope, is that we think about our lives in this all or nothing way, right? We think there's our life, and then there's no life, right?

I don't want this life, so I don't want any life, but really, when you look at your life, that's only one version of your life. You know what I mean? Right now, if you look at your life and you absolutely hate it, the alternative isn't killing yourself. The alternative isn't drugging yourself, or buffering yourself to death, really. The alternative is, you can create a whole new life. You can change your house, you can change all of your friends, you can change your country, you can change what you wear, who you hang out with, what you do every day, your career. You can change your complete life, so you may not like the life you have, but that doesn't mean that the only alternative is nothing. In fact, the alternative is limitless, what you can create.

If you think that your life is based on your past, you may feel as if that life is unchangeable, but the truth is, your past is unchangeable, but the way you look at it is totally changeable, and the way you feel about it is totally changeable. You can change your past just by

changing your perspective, and how you look at it, and you don't have to change one thing about your past to completely change your life, and your experience of your life, and the trajectory. By changing what your past means to you, you can then change your present, and your future, and the options are limitless. Limitless, so I think knowing that, taking 100% responsibility for your life, is the most fantastic, abundant, wonderful thing that any of us can ever know deep in our bones, that at any moment, we can change everything if we want. We can change every single thing in our lives.

We can reinvent ourselves at any point. We can decide that if we're unhappy about something, that we're going to change it. I think that is one of the most important lessons of success because otherwise, we may feel like success isn't an option for us. We may feel like our version of success isn't an option because of our circumstances, and that is never the case. Success is always an option because we have 100% responsibility.

Okay, some of the other fundamentals of success that he talks about are deciding what you want, making that be a decision, and then unleashing the power of goal setting. Our lives can be haphazard, or they can be deliberate. We can decide what we want on purpose, and then go get it. We can achieve it by setting goals and visualizing those goals, and staying committed to those goals, and taking the actions that are required to get there.

I think that sometimes people don't want to set goals because they don't believe that they can achieve them, but I also think it's because people are afraid to decide what they want, because they're afraid of letting themselves down. What they do is they just let themselves ahead of time. Instead of even giving themselves the chance of maybe getting what they want, and I've always known that I was in charge of creating what I wanted in my life, and being able to see how powerful I am in the world, in terms of my own life, and what I'm able to create for myself, has been one of the deepest joys I've had of being alive and truly understanding the universe. I think at a very young age, I had the sense that if I set a goal, and I worked at it, and I believed in it, that I could achieve that, and I've proven that to myself over and over again.

I think the two components of that that are so important, those two fundamental things to know, is really getting to know yourself, and what it is you want, and then believing that you can have it. I don't think that that's a luxury. I think that's the point of everything. I think the point is, asking yourself what you want, setting that goal, and knowing that there's going to be a lot of adversity and obstacles to getting it, and that is the point of our lives, is to overcome all of the adversity and the obstacles that are in the way of what we have, and what we want. I think what we want, and what we decide to want, is our purpose. I don't think our purpose comes to us in some magical unicorn rainbow way. I think it's a decision.

Take action is one of his fundamentals of success, and I think that that's one of the biggest mistakes most of us make is that we don't take action. We tell ourselves we don't know. We tell ourselves we aren't ready. We tell ourselves we can't, and then we end up immobilized and not taking action. One of the best ways to find out what action to take is to take action and take the wrong action, because then you find out, oh, that wasn't the right action. The idea that the more action we take, the more strategic byproducts, the more we learn, and the more alive we are in the world, in showing up, and being willing to make those mistakes is so, so, so important.

One of the chapters he has is Ask, Ask, Ask, and right after that is Reject Rejection. I love this chapter. I remember reading it ten years ago, and really learning how important it is to have the courage to ask. There are so many times when I've asked for things that the answers been no, and it's a bummer to hear no, but there's way more times that I've asked that the answer has been yes, that I never would've been able to experience all of those yeses if I hadn't been willing to ask. I think that every yes that I've ever received has probably cost me about ten no's, but it's been worth it. I think the more you can practice asking for things you want, or questions that you want the answer to, or things you ask of yourself, the better.

I think that Ask, Ask, Ask is one of the best chapters in the book, and I think that it's one of the principles of life, and ask and you shall receive, right, is ask and it will be given, I think are really powerful things to think about, is if we're willing to ask for something. Many of us are just afraid to ask. We're afraid to ask the universe. We're afraid

to ask ourselves. We're not even willing to put it out there that it's something that we want, so I think that's so, so important. He talks about persistence, and being willing to keep going, and I think this is one of the most difficult things for most of us, is ... I think that some of us have two ideas that get us into trouble.

I think we have the idea that we shouldn't be uncomfortable, and that we're entitled to happiness, and that things should come easily to us. We tell ourselves we want things to be easy, we want to be happy, and we don't want to be uncomfortable. A lot of this is our primitive brain programming, and a lot of this is our culture. We don't persist with things because we think if they don't come easy, and they don't make us happy immediately, then it's something that we should stop doing immediately. I think the opposite is true. I think we need to be willing to move into discomfort in order to grow, and I think anything worth achieving in our lives is going to be uncomfortable, and is going to require us to ask of ourselves, and that's the point, and that's a beautiful thing.

Those are kind of the fundamentals that he talks about in the book, the fundamentals of success. He talks about transforming yourself for success, and basically what he talks about mostly is our attitude towards achievement, our attitude towards our life, and what we are achieving, and how most of our attitudes are negative, and we're not committed to being positive. We're committed mostly to complaining. We're committed mostly to our past, and what isn't working. We don't like change, because it's uncomfortable, and so we have a negative attitude, and we start feeling sorry for ourselves. This whole next section, he just really talks about keeping that positive mental attitude, and how much effort it takes to keep that, and how much value it adds not only to you, but to all of the people around you.

He says drop out of the “ain't it awful club”, and surround yourself with successful people. You want to make sure you're one of those successful people. The next concept he talks about is building your success team, and how important it is to surround yourself with people that support you, and are positive, and believe in you, and that you're contributing to their life by being that same person back to them. One of the really important things that he talks about is focusing on your core genius, knowing what your superpowers are,

and then delegating everything else to the people who have the superpowers that are different than what you do well. I love that concept, because I think a lot of times, we think, oh, I can do that, so I should do it.

I think the truth is, just because you can do it doesn't mean you should, especially if you're not super good at it. Focus on what you're really good at, and make sure that that's where you're putting most of your time. The two other things that he talks about is hiring a coach, which I think is one of the most powerful things that anyone can do, and also doing a mastermind group. Being in a group of people where you can talk about your goals, and your success, and where you're heading, whether you're in career path that's part of a larger corporation, or whether you are running your own business. Having like-minded people that are ahead of you in certain areas, and can provide insight to you, I think is invaluable.

The next concept he talks about is creating successful relationships, and being willing to really show up in those relationships as a class act. One of the things that I want to offer here, and something I've been thinking a lot about lately, is not just the quantity of your relationships, because I think a lot of us are spread too thin in terms of how many friends we have, and the relationships that we're trying to support in our lives, versus the quality of our relationships, and really being present for the people like our top five people, really being present, and attentive. Thinking about those relationships on purpose.

I sat down with my kids the other day. I have two sons. I have a 16-year-old and a 15-year-old. He's going to turn 15 next month, and I had them ask themselves what kind of brother they wanted to be, and what kind of brother they wanted to have in each other, and have that conversation on purpose, and really decide how they want to show up for each other, instead of just defaulting to what's easy. My son Connor asked his brother Christian, "How do you want me to be as a brother, and how do you want to be?" It was really magical to see them think about that for the first time, and really make a decision on the kind of brother that they want to be, instead of just noticing how they act around their brother.

It's really changed the dynamic between them, and it's something that I want them to think about, and it's true. What kind of wife do you want to be? What kind of friend do you want to be? What kind of friends do you want to have, and I think that's really important. I was listening to a minimalist podcast, and they were talking about how we go through our houses regularly, and look at things that are no longer serving us, and get rid of them, or donate them, and that it's really important to do that with our relationships, too. Don't just keep relationships around because the people happen to be in your proximity, or because the people were in your past, right? Really, consciously choosing and re-choosing the relationships that we have in our lives, and not feeling like, "oh, well, we've been friends for ten years, so we have to keep being friends." Or "this person's my next door neighbor, so this person's one of my most important friends." That may be true.

My best friend in the world, for sure, is one of my most important relationships, and we've been friends since high school. She's not my friend just because I've known her that long. Would I choose her if I met her today, to be my friend, and the answer is 100% yes. I think that those are the kind of questions you can ask yourself. If you look at the relationships in your life, would you choose them today? Do you have enough in common? Do you have enough to contribute to each other that it makes the relationship rich, and a win-win for both of you?

The next one is success and money, and how important it is to decide what you believe about money on purpose. So many of you have such negative, negative thoughts about money, and rich people, and wealth, that you don't understand how much that's interfering with your ability to be abundant, and to attract money into your life, and to create money in your life. On the other side of that, how are you spending your money? Are you spending in a way that feels good to you, that's on purpose, that's decided ahead of time, or are you just caught up in the spending, and the excess of consumerism? I think that that's such an easy thing to fall into, and going through the process of deciding, this is how much money I want to make on purpose, and this is why. This is how much money I want to spend on purpose, and this is why, is part of that evolving ourselves, and living a more conscious and deliberate life.

The last part he talks about success in the digital age, and one of the things that I think has become the biggest problem for many of us is the amount of time we spend on social media, but it's immediate, and it's that instant hit of being in the know. I think a lot of us are missing out on mindfulness and being present because we're constantly locked up on our phones. It was interesting. I was walking my dogs today, and it was so surprising to me to see how many people were on their phones, talking on their phones, looking on their phones, reading their phones while they were on a walk, and it was such a beautiful morning. I was thinking about how sometimes that's me. I'm on my phone. I hear it ding, and I pull out my phone, and it's a text, and then all of a sudden, I'm in that relationship, talking to that person, instead of being present on my walk.

I think it's important to be deliberate about your digital life, too. Don't just let it pull you away from being present in your life. Just decide ahead of time, because if you let it just take over, it will, right? You need to decide, this is what I want to do. This is how much time I want to spend on social media. This is how much energy I want to put into this, and this is why, and I think that's what's true in all areas of our lives, in deciding what success means, and how we will pursue it. It all comes down to the amount of time we have, and how we spend our time in a day, and are we going to spend our time pursuing our long-term goals, and pursuing something deliberately, or are we just going to let our lives happen to us in a very unconscious way?

That's why I think pursuing success is really important if you like your reason. Pursuing success because you think there is better than here will always cause you trouble, because there is never better than here, right? There's always the next horizon, the next thing, but pursuing success can be a really powerful thing because it requires us to think consciously about our lives, and purposefully about our lives, and to be present, and to pay attention. In my opinion, those are all beautiful, wonderful things that we are living a conscious and deliberate life, and creating what we want, and showing ourselves. Like I say to my students all the time, blow your own damn mind, because you are so much more powerful than you think you are.

That is not bragging, and that is not thinking too highly of yourself,

because here's why. You didn't create yourself. You can't take credit for it. You were created by something that is way more advanced than you will ever be, and so kind of playing with your own powers, and playing with what you're capable of, does not mean that you're being too big for your britches. It means that you're actually valuing the opportunity, and the empowerment that you have been given. What a blast, to kind of explore the potentiality of that without necessarily taking credit for it. It's kind of like what I say to my son Connor all the time, I'm like, why do you think you have such a smart brain? He's super crazy, GATE smart. I'm like, do you think there's a really important reason why you've been given these tools of ...

It's kind of like I feel like I've been given these tools of coaching. Why do I think I've been given them? What is my purpose for having those tools, and I'm pretty clear what that is, and I asked my son, why do you think you're so smart? Why do you think you're able to solve puzzles so much faster than the rest of us? Why do you think you can read so much more easily than the rest of us, and understand this, and do video games, and create in a way that we can't? What is that about? It's kind of fun to just look at and notice without, "oh, I'm so great" kind of thing. It's just like, "yeah, I'm great. I wonder what I can do with this greatness." We're all great in our own ways, right, and so if we never think about success, or we never think about pursuing it, we don't evaluate what are the principles for it, I think we miss being able to see what our capacity is, and I think when we explore our capacity, we live in such a bigger way.

I think that's what Jack Canfield is teaching in this book. I love everything that he's been able to do with his life, and the contribution that he's made to the world, and most importantly the happiness and the success that he's been able to create not because he's made a lot of money, and not because he has huge audiences, but because of the relationship that he's developed within himself, with himself. That's what's so fascinating to me. It always comes back to that whenever I'm working with someone. What is the relationship that you have with yourself, because here's what I want you guys to think about. Who are you when it comes to having a relationship with yourself? Right?

There's this part of you that is your personality. There's this part of

you that is your brain, that creates so much of you, but then there's this other part of you that has nothing to do with that at all, right? It has nothing to do with your personality, or your past, or your history. It's kind of the unchangeable part of you, the part of you that watches you be you. When you develop that relationship with yourself, I think what are you really developing a relationship with? It's like the bigger context of everything, and so that's when we feel a part of something. That's when we stop being alone, and that's when we feel like, wow, this is important.

That, I think, has been the most amazing thing for me about the pursuit of success, and the pursuit of being the best version of myself, is to really feel that connection with the power, and to know that there is a power within me that is so beyond anything that I could generate with my little mind, right? It's beyond that. It's something that I create with visualization, and that I create with believing, and that I create with action, and contribution that is so beyond what I could do if I didn't have that good relationship with myself. I highly recommend you go out, and check out *The Success Principles: How to Get from Where You Are to Where You Want to Be*, and why that's an important and worthy thing to do, instead of just sitting still. Go check that book out, and I'll talk to you all next week. Take care. Buh-bye.

Thank you for listening to the Life Coach School Podcast. It is my honor to show up here every week, and connect with people that are like-minded, wanting to take their life to a deeper level, with more awareness and more consciousness. If you are interested in taking this work to the next level, I highly encourage you to go to thelifecoachschool.com/howtofeelbetteronline. It is there that I have a class that will take all of this to a deeper application, where you'll be able to really feel and experience how all of these concepts can start showing up in your life. It's one thing to learn it intellectually. It's another thing to truly apply it to your life. I will see you there. Thanks again for listening.