

Ep #153: Hope is a Problem



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. Now, your host, Master Coach Instructor, Brooke Castillo.

Hey, friends. What's happening? Oh my gosh! Okay, I'm just about to record this podcast and I'm thinking how ridiculous it is to live this life I'm living. It's so ridiculous. Let me tell you what I've been doing.

First of all, just thinking about recording this podcast, I'm totally stoked because I prepared for this podcast weeks ago when I was preparing the study guide for my Self Coaching Scholars. If you're in Self Coaching Scholars, you get a study guide to go along with the podcast. I had to create it way before. I have it all prepped and I've been wanting to talk about this and now I get to.

I've also been recording behind the scenes videos for Self Coaching Scholars, so basically we've been recording in the kitchen how I create, manage, and eat my food. I know that sounds weird, but a lot of people who are in Self Coaching Scholars are working on weight loss and they're all fascinated by what I eat and how I prepare it, how it's so easy for me. I decided to do a whole behind the scenes on that. Then I did some behind the scenes on where I hike with my dogs and how I use my hiking as a way to get exercise but also as a way to meditate and connect with myself and I talk a lot about that in that video. That's another behind the scenes video.

I'm also working on, for March, a whole money lesson and bonus that's going to go in Self Coaching Scholars, where I talk about spending money, earning money, owning money, and committing to it. I will tell you money is fun and money is easy when you understand it and when you know how to use it in a way that serves you. Money can be a huge source of pain for people. Remember, money's just a concept in your mind. The way you think about money determines how much you get, literally. It's not like I'm just going to sit around and wait for money to fall on me, but how you approach and relationship with money really determines how much you end up with. There is no amount of money that is too big for you to imagine. When you do imagine large amounts of money, whatever comes up and gets in your way is the work we have to do. I'm so excited for the March section of Self Coaching Scholars and to talk about money.

There are so many of my students in Self Coaching Scholars that need to work on money and so I'm excited for them.

That's my life, you guys. It's a beautiful, wonderful thing. I'm like so stoked to be able to have such an amazing life and to do what I love and to get paid for it and to be able to do it from home and to be able to manage my life around it. I feel very blessed and ultimately, the way that I want to look back on my life is what is the contribution that I've made. I feel like not only do I get to live the life of my dreams, but it's also a life of contribution. I want you to know, all of you who have posted in the Scholars or emailed me about how much I've changed your life, I want you to recognize that it's you that's changed your life, but I do acknowledge that I've made a contribution by working on my own life and sharing it with you. I love this dance that we're all doing together.

Today we're going to talk about the concept of hope. Now, a lot of you hear me saying that your thought, like I'll point out to you when we're coaching on the calls that your thought is poisonous and it sounds like such a pretty little thought but it's such a poisonous little thought. Hope is one of those emotions and one of those concepts that people think is very positive and it's actually a huge problem for many of my clients, the way that they think about hope and the way they use hope in their lives. I'm bringing it to your attention because it's used so often and it's not recognized consciously as a negative spin and many, many times hope is a negative spin. It keeps us hoping instead of creating. That's why I want to talk about it. I'll say to my clients, "Hey, do you think you'll lose weight?" They'll say, "Well, I really hope I do." "Do you think you'll build your business?" "I really hope I will."

You know the three main things I help people with, I help coaches build businesses and I do that by helping them work on their own minds and get out of their own way. I help clients lose weight and remove the desire for overeating from their brain. I help clients stop overdrinking and I help them remove that desire from their brain. I will say that when I ask people about if they believe that they will ever not want to drink or will they ever be free from the compulsion to eat or will they ever be able to make six figures in their business and they

answer with, "I hope so," I know we have a lot, a lot, a lot of work to do because hope isn't going to get us there.

Think about hope right now. Think about how you feel when you are hopeful, how that feels in your body, think about how that is experienced for you. What I mean by that is our feelings are always fueling our action. I want you to think about, for example, think about feeling motivated, excited, compelled, interested. Think about the action that you want to take from that place. Then I want you to think about hopeful and think about what action does hopeful fuel. It's crazy, right, when you really think about it? Hope doesn't inspire action. Hope is very passive. Hope is, "I hope someone else does that. I hope someone brings that to me. I hope it gets better." Feel the difference between, "I'm committed to making something better," and, "I hope something gets better." I want you to think about that word.

Some words and thoughts sound good and positive but when you check them with how you actually feel, you'll find out that they don't serve you. You must expose yourself to this sort of self-deception. You have to be conscious enough to be aware of it. Hope does not inspire action. Hope waits for something good to happen. Hope crosses its fingers. That's probably the only action it's going to inspire. It's passive. It's dependent. Hope is a feeling of expectation. "I hope he calls me. I hope my business works out. I hope I get clients. I hope I lose weight. I hope I can stop drinking." It's dependent. It doesn't take full responsibility.

We are hoping to feel better, be better, for our life to improve. We want and hope for pain to be over. We want to move beyond the human experience to a place called peace. Hope often has us reject the present moment in exchange for some future moment that will be better. Hope is often the promise of something external we can't control. Hope takes the action out of our lives and leaves us waiting and wanting. "I hope he calls. I hope I get some clients. I hope I lose weight." I want you guys to think about that. I want you to compare it to, "I am certain that."

Now, here's what I want to offer you. Hoping for something is rather easy. It's effortless. Hoping for something puts no skin in the game. It doesn't risk anything. It doesn't require anything of you. Saying that

you're certain about something or that you're committed to something is what changes that.

This month, in the Scholars and on the podcast, we're talking about our feelings. Next month, we're going to talk about our thoughts and believing things we don't yet believe. One of the statements that you can practice this with is, "I am committed to a successful business. I am committed to making six figures in my business. I am committed to coaching 20 clients." "I hope I get 20 clients. I hope my business is a success." I want you to notice the difference. It's everything. Notice that hope abdicates responsibility. Notice that hope comes from lack. You can feel it. It comes from scarcity. It comes from waiting to see what will happen in the world, waiting to see what your future holds instead of creating your future on purpose.

We're going to talk a lot next month about creating that future because think about this, you guys, your future only exists in your mind just like your past only exists in your mind. People will say to me all the time, "Well, I can believe something about my past because it's already happened. I believe that it happened. I believe that it's true." Most of what we think about our past isn't factual. It's not based on something that happened. It's based on a meaning that we've given something that's happened. The same is about our future.

There are things we believe about our future. We believe that we will wake up tomorrow but we have no right to believe that. We have no way of knowing that that's true but we believe it anyway because it feels better than the alternative. We don't take it far enough. We believe we'll wake up tomorrow but we don't believe that we'll make the six figures. We don't believe that we'll lose the weight or stop the drinking. We don't allow ourselves to believe those things. We don't commit to believing those things. We hope for those things and that hope leaves us waiting and wanting without responsibility.

We have to give up hope that the human experience should be different than it is. We have to give up the idea that there should be no conflict, that there should be peace and goodness always. We have to stop hoping for peace.

I've been hearing this a lot lately, this, "Hope for peace." I want to say to you that peace doesn't exist outside of you. Peace is an emotion that you create and that you feel based on what you see in the world. Some people see war and feel peaceful. It's crazy. Some people feel like hurting other people. That's what they believed. There are a lot of organizations that believe that conflict is what creates peace. When they see people creating conflict, they feel peaceful. Is that right or wrong? It doesn't matter. What matters is do you feel peaceful? The only way you can bring peace into the world is by feeling peaceful, being peaceful, acting peaceful. You are the one that defines that.

Hoping for peace is waiting for something that only you can create. Peace is something you create. Feeling hopeful is not the same as feeling peaceful and I want you to be really clear about that. I've heard people say, "I hope this all works out." Whether it works out or not depends on your interpretation of what happens. Believing something like, "I hope this works out," is very different from, "I am committed to making this thing work out."

Who I'm interested in working with are people who are interested in creating their futures and not hoping for their futures, creating them on purpose. That is the only thing that creates change in the world. That's the only thing that creates change in our life. That is the only way we evolve. Those of us who commit to change, not those of us who wait for it, not those of us who hope for it. So many people that are hoping for change, hoping for things to be different are very well-meaning, very positive wonderful people in their lives. They're hoping it all works out in their marriage. They're hoping they get that job. They're hoping their kids turn out okay. It's not useful for them because all it does is put them in a place of expectation, of waiting.

What you're hoping for doesn't interest me nearly as much as what you're committed to, what you're certain about. See what I'm saying, how different that is? I want to encourage all of you to think about what you've been hoping for and really do a model on that, think about that. Is that serving you? Is that hope serving you in any way or do you want to change it to a commitment? Do you want to change it to a level of certainty?

We can relax into the knowing that half of our lives will provide contrast, which will make the other half possible. When we stop trying to escape through hope, we can relax into it. The alternatives to hope feel so much better. Certainty, acceptance, confidence and peace, these emotions are available to us right now no matter what the circumstances are. Hope requires us to trade this moment for a better one in our mind. The alternative is to accept this moment fully and have an emotion that creates something to grow into what is possible. This is some deep work, you guys. This is everything, right?

Some of you may say, "Well, what about committing to something in the future? Isn't that trading this moment for that one?" No, because what happens when we commit to something, we change in this moment. We change our feeling. We change our action. When we hope, we don't change anything about us, we just trade this moment for the hope of a better one. You need to wrap your mind around what are the emotions, what are the thoughts that cause me to evolve and add that experience to the world versus the thoughts I have that trade this experience for a future one and leave me waiting and wanting, which doesn't add that experience to the world. We don't have to reject this moment to also know that we can create something new. If the only reason we are changing is because this moment is unacceptable, we will be driven by negative emotion. We can fully accept contrast and grow.

Most of us wouldn't think of hope as a negative emotion, but I want you to experience it. I want you to really experience it and see if it's a useful emotion. It may not be unpleasant, but is it useful? Does it contribute to the purpose of your life?

Designing a great future for the sake of evolving does not relieve us from discomfort. Any hope that it will is what will make us quit. We grow and evolve for the sake of the fullness of a human experience. We don't passively hope for things to be different by some external changes in the world or circumstances. We use hope as a way of not asking much of ourselves. We attack the world as it is and then speak of peace as something we can hope for.

I want you guys to hear this sentence again because it sums up what so many of us do in our personal lives and our relationships with

ourselves and our families and our communities in the world. We attack the world as it is and then speak of peace as something we can hope for. In the very act of attacking, we are costing ourselves our peace. Can you guys see that? We don't attack the world and then hope for peace. We bring peace to the world. It's a very big difference. Attacking is the opposite of peace. When we give up hope for peace, we can actually create it in this moment. Peace can beget peace. Being peaceful creates more peace. Being hopeful because we're rejecting this moment and attacking this moment creates the opposite of peace. Hope separates us from the emotion we want to feel from the emotion of creation. It makes us wait to feel it until the C has changed, when in reality, we can create from that emotion now.

Here's what I'm saying here. When you hope for peace, you prevent yourself from feeling peace now. When you hope for freedom from the tyranny of overeating and the desire for food, when you hope for it, you prevent having it now. When you attack yourself for what you currently weigh and hope for a different body in the future, you are hoping for peace and creating the opposite of it. This is the work, you guys. This is it. This is like the nitty-gritty work of it. This is what I was talking about when I talked about commitment and a compelling reason. This is what I was talking about when I was talking about resilience. Don't be a peaceful person who is hoping for peace. You can't. Do you see what I'm saying? You can't say, "I'm a peaceful person hoping for peace." Why are you hoping for peace if you're already peaceful? When you're a peaceful person, then you bring the peace. You're not waiting for it. That's in your life and that is for any success that you want in your life, anything that you want to create in your life.

I want you to go through the exercises. Those of you who are in Scholars, take out your books and go through these exercises. Find out where you are denying yourself success, denying yourself peace, denying yourself certainty, denying yourself a commitment by hoping for it. You may be surprised. You may think that you've been doing something really positive with yourself by hoping for things. What you'll realize is you've actually put a big shield between you and what you want in the world. It is not your fault that you've done this. It's what many of us are programmed to do. It sounds like such a positive thing, we don't even realize that we've done it to ourselves. It's the

ultimate in taking responsibility. Instead of hoping somebody brings you back something from the store, you go and get it. Instead of hoping that you get the job, you just create it. Instead of hoping someone comes up with a pill that makes you skinny, you figure out how to get to your ideal weight yourself.

I will tell you here's the ultimate bonus. Every once in a while, you're going to hope for something and it's going to come true. Someone's going to bring that thing that you hoped for. That is the worst thing that can happen because you know what that does? It creates more dependence on hope. I don't want anything you hope for to come true. I want you to go get it because here's the difference. If you go get it, then you build up your capability. You build up your capacity. You build up your confidence. Then you know you can go get it again. You become more active and more passive. You become more of a creator and more of a contributor and less of a person who's waiting around complaining why things haven't happened yet, hoping for the good to happen, rejecting this present moment, going into more unconsciousness, without even realizing it and with the best intentions.

What I hope for for you is that you'll stop hoping. I am determined to teach you not to hope. I am determined to teach you to go get it. That's what I have for you guys today. Hopefully we'll have some amazing discussions. If you would like to join me in Self Coaching Scholars so you can be part of these discussions, please make sure you go to TheLifeCoachSchool.com/join and get up in this community with me. We are having some good times. We are changing our lives. We are going to become the creators and the contributors that we know we're capable of doing. We are going to like spend ourselves. That's what I like saying lately. We're going to spend ourselves so we've got nothing left when we're done. We're not going to leave any juice in the tank. There's going to be nothing inside of us that's wasted when we die. That's how we're going to live our lives so I'd love for you to join us. That's what I have for you today.

Now, if you are interested in learning more from one of my coaches, I invite you to stay on after the intro and listen for this. I'm super excited to introduce you all to Rebekah Anderson. Rebekah is a life coach and a weight coach with me who works specifically with people

who want help sleeping and there are a lot of you. There are a lot of us, I should say, who need help with our sleep. She has a great segment that she has created based on some of the tools that she learned at The Life Coach School that you can all apply to an evening routine to help you go to sleep. I want to highly recommend that any of you who are struggling with getting to sleep that you schedule a free session with Rebekah. You can do that by going to her website, Coaching With Rebekah. She spells her name funny: R-E-B-E-K-A-H. Coaching With Rebekah. You can schedule a free session with her to talk to her about her work and about any issues you have with sleeping. I want to highly recommend it.

Please enjoy this segment. It's wonderful. I think that there are many, many gems. Even if you don't have trouble sleeping, if you want to have a really wonderful nighttime routine, it's worth having a listen. Please enjoy. I'll talk to you guys next week. Bye bye.

Hey, if you enjoy listening to this podcast, you have to come check out Self Coaching Scholars. It's my monthly coaching program where we take all this material and we apply it, we take it to the next level, and we study it. Join me over at TheLifeCoachSchool.com/join. Make sure you type in the "the" TheLifeCoachSchool.com/join. I'd love to have you join me in Self Coaching Scholars. See you there.

Podcast Feature: Rebekah Anderson

Hi, I'm Rebekah Anderson, life coach and sleep coach with Coaching With Rebekah. I'm so happy to be here! So glad you're here too. I help men and women feel more rejuvenated and back in control with their lives through better sleep routines. Today I'm going to tell you about my top three mind management tools to stop nighttime anxiety so you can get the sleep you deserve and desperately need. They are the thought download, meditation, and asking questions.

Let me ask you: Do you have anxiety at night and find it hard to sleep? Is your mind spinning and won't stop? Many of my clients and people I've talked to tell me their sleep suffers on a consistent basis from this mind madness. They're not getting to sleep because of anxiety, worry, swirling thoughts that just won't stop. We often don't recognize the reason we're not sleeping properly is mostly in our

heads. Instead, we look for physical ways to better our sleep, which can definitely help, but without addressing the cause of your nighttime anxiety, all the tricks in the world won't quiet those swirling thoughts. The good news is that anxiety and worry are unnecessary and there is a way to learn to manage your mind and not have this mind madness anymore.

Imagine laying down to go to sleep and your mind is quiet or the thoughts that remain are peaceful and enjoyable visions that lull you sleep quickly. As Brooke has talked about throughout her podcast, there are many methods used to work on managing our minds. Yes, it is work. It's a process and requires practice. Which is better? To keep suffering every night with the mental torment and also everyday from sleep deprivation or would it be better to learn the tools to manage your mind, practice them, and start sleeping more soundly and living with more energy and rejuvenation?

As you know, in order to control the mind madness, we must learn to manage our minds. The first tool for managing our minds is the thought download. You've probably heard Brooke talk about the thought download many times. Are you making this a regular practice in your life? Have you tried it before bed to manage your nighttime anxiety? If you're unfamiliar with the thought download or could use a refresher, this tool is a type of journaling. The thought download gets the thoughts that we're thinking out onto paper. The thoughts become less powerful when you can confront them this way.

You'll start with getting a pen and a piece of paper and keep it right next to your bed. Now write down everything you're thinking that's bothering you. Keep writing for a full 10 minutes until you've really written down everything that's on your mind. You can ask yourself these questions that I've learned from Brooke to help you. What am I worried about? What scares me right now? What do I wish was different? What is hurting? What am I struggling with? What is my problem? Make sure to write down everything that is in your mind and don't worry about it making sense or flowing in any particular order. Just by getting the thoughts out of your head and onto paper, those thoughts begin to have less control over you.

One thing we're tempted to do here is edit our thoughts. I know that's something I tend to do. Make sure that you're not judging your thoughts. Through practice and over time, it's something you'll get better at. They're just thoughts. They can be changed starting with awareness.

The second mind management tool is meditation. There are many different types of meditation and trying out the different types will help you find out what works best for you. The purpose of meditation that I'm recommending here is to quiet your mind and experience stillness. I learned about this type of meditation from Tom Sterner, author of the book *The Practicing Mind*. Tom was a speaker at the mastermind conference that Brooke hosts each year for all The Life Coach School certified coaches. Tom explained that being in the present moment is what leads to a quieter mind and meditation for stillness is one of the best ways to achieve that. He also reminded us that this is a practice that will evolve over time. You'll go ahead and find a comfortable place to sit or sit up in bed before going to sleep. I also like to set a timer for at least 10 minutes for this tool too. Then close your eyes and take a few deep breaths. Here, some people might want to connect with their inner selves or universe or God. You can also remind yourself that your intention for this time is to be in the present moment.

Now, about those swirling thoughts and the mind madness...begin to let yourself detach from those thoughts. You can even start to watch them from a watcher or observer perspective. Brooke has talked about the watcher concept. This concept is about how we can watch and observe our own thoughts in a conscious position that's kind of like stepping outside of ourselves. As the watcher or observer, we can look at our thoughts as separate from who we are. Our thoughts are just there as a separate entity. We can observe the thoughts we're thinking without judgment and then decide if we want to believe those thoughts or not.

As you watch your thoughts, you can choose to let them go. You'll purposefully acknowledge having the thought then go back to focusing on the present moment and quieting your mind. Sometimes focusing on deep breathing or a mantra helps to quiet the mind and stay in the present moment during meditation. You could choose a

short affirmation as a mantra such as, "I am okay. Everything is okay." That's one I've used many times and has provided me with a sense of relief and peace. It's a very neutral go-to versus, "Everything is wonderful." That's less likely for me to believe in that moment.

The third tool for mind management is asking questions. As Brooke has taught us, our brains are programmed to ask questions and then seek the answers to those questions. When we purposefully ask the right questions, this is a powerful tool to learn to manage our minds. A few helpful questions that we can ask ourselves are: "Is this thought serving me?" If the answer is yes, then it's a thought worth keeping. If the answer is no, then it's worth considering further whether or not you want to keep believing this thought. "Why am I choosing to think this thought?" Many times, the answer is that we've been thinking the same thought for so long that it hadn't occurred to us that it's a choice to think it. Or asking, "So what?" When we actually take the time to answer the "so what" question, it can sometimes be a scary place to go at first. When you get to the end of the "so whats," you'll likely realize it isn't as bad as the worrying leads us to believe.

For example, I've had several clients tell me they worry about their parents' health. We start with finding the worrisome thought. In this case, the thought could be, "My dad is sick and might die." So we ask, "So what?" "Well, I'll be sad if he dies." Then you ask, "So what?" again. "I'll miss him." You ask, "So what?" again. "I'll miss him but life will go on." By going through that process, you do take yourself down that path of feeling sad and missing him, but then you realize that is the worst of it. There's no purpose in worrying. You've also found a thought that might be more useful: life will go on.

Choose one of the thoughts that keeps you up at night. You can look at your thought download for help. Then ask yourself these questions around the thought. My own example is I used to feel anxiety around thinking I had way too much work and not enough time to do it. This thought really made me feel what I used to call a super high level of stress. I would have a hard time going to sleep because the thought and anxiety would just keep spinning through my head. When I learned these mind management tools, it was a lifesaver. I would ask the question, "Is this thought serving me?" I decided that it wasn't.

Now, what's interesting is that the thought can still feel true, but also not be helpful. I asked, "Why am I choosing to think this?" I hadn't even realized it was a choice. I was completely thinking this thought by default. Then I took the thought down the "so what" path and discovered at the end of the road, I could ultimately find new work that didn't place these demands on me. I might get fired in the process, but I would ultimately end up okay and even better. Whatever I was choosing to worry about is seriously not the end of the world. Helps put my problems in perspective. The "so what" question brings me tremendous peace.

To recap, today we've talked about the top three tools for learning how to manage your mind and stop nighttime anxiety: the thought download, meditation, and asking questions. You may have heard them before, but repetition is a huge factor for learning and maybe you've never thought about using these tools in the context of getting better sleep. I put all this information together for you in a free PDF called The Sleep Better Guide: Top Three Mind Management Tools. To get The Sleep Better Guide with all this info, please go to my website CoachingWithRebekah.com/sleepbetterguide. Rebekah is spelled R-E-B-E-K-A-H. Once again, it's CoachingWithRebekah.com/sleepbetterguide. You can learn to stop the mind madness and sleep better today.