

Ep #172: Past Focus Problems



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Brooke Castillo

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You are listening to *The Life Coach School Podcast* with Brooke Castillo, episode number 172.

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.

Hello my friends. Hello. I had to whisper that because my puppies are asleep on the couch and sometimes when I record the podcast and I say hello my friends really loud, they both wake up and jump in the room and start running around, and the last podcast I recorded, they were very loud in the background so I'm trying not to wake up the puppies.

How are you guys? I have to tell you that today has been an amazing day for me. It is actually July 4th, and let me tell you, my son Christian went to play golf, Connor and Chris went into the office to get some stuff done, and I went on a walk with the puppies. We are going to a Rangers game tonight to see the fireworks and to see a baseball game because obviously there is nothing more American than going to baseball. And it's funny, we decided to do this last night because I had these plans for how we were going to go watch the fireworks at Celebration Park because it's supposed to be the most spectacular fireworks display, and then I realized that we had already missed them.

For some reason, they do their fireworks in June, so we totally missed it. I was like, "Oh my gosh, what are we going to do?" So what was really amazing is we were sitting out on our back patio last night, which is July 3rd, and there was - I'm not exaggerating, seven different firework shows going on and we could see them all from our backyard because everything is very flat here, and it was gorgeous, and it's warm here at night so we're sitting outside and like in a tank top and we ordered food from Uber Eats, which my Uber driver had told me about.

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So we ordered this food from Uber Eats and it was from an Italian restaurant locally, and it was pizza, and then we got some mozzarella and I got a salad and it was so good. We were like - our eyes were exploding. We were like what is happening? Like there's beautiful fireworks, it's warm outside, the food is so good, we were all just looking at each other like, is this real life? This is magnificent, right?

So then this morning I went to check out an office that we are going to lease temporarily while we are building The Life Coach School building, and I'm going to tell you a lot more about that because I couldn't be more excited about it, but let me just tell you, they're both in the same place. So the place where we're leasing, it's unfinished so we get to go in and create it exactly as we want. Can I just say white with maybe a little bit of white and a side of white, and high ceilings and glass office walls and white. Did I mention that I love white?

And it's really going to be gorgeous. And then, while we're in the temporary office, we are going to be building our building, all in the same area. And so one of my friends/listeners/Scholars here had told me about this area and I went and looked at it and was like, okay I'm obsessed now. So I decided to go for a walk, I took the dogs down there, I wanted to look at the space again and then I wanted to find a place to walk, which has been one of my missions since I got here.

So check this out. So I'm looking at the space and I notice that there's a trail like right behind the building, and I don't know what is going on with people in Allen, Texas that designed this city, but they are brilliant. They have trails designed into everything, and they have a map of all these trails. So these aren't just wooded trails, these are very wide paved trails. So I see this trail, I'm like, come on, like really? There's a dog trail right outside my office door, seriously? Totally shaded, totally beautiful. I took a video of it, so if you're in Scholars you can see that behind the scenes.

And I walked it and seriously, it was like exploding with gratitude and exploding with joy because it is one of the things that worried me about leaving California and leaving where I lived in California is my beautiful

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places to walk that are all shaded and have a creek and you know, it's what I do every day with the dogs and I know it may sound silly but for me, that was really important. I wanted to make sure I could do yoga and I wanted to make sure that I had great trails, and everyone was so freaked out at me about the weather here, that I started thinking, I'm probably not going to ever be able to go outside, and I'm probably never going to be able to walk my dogs.

That has not been the case. I walk my dogs in the morning when it's still cool and this, and many other trails are completely shaded. So this trail I started walking on it today and I kept walking on it and I kept walking on it, and it was still shaded and there was a creek and it was still shaded and there was a creek, and I kept walking and I kept walking, and then it looked like it was going to loop. So if you don't walk dogs, you may not know this, but we don't like to walk there and back. We like to loop because then all the smells are good, and for me it's just more interesting.

So I'm like, I think this might loop around. I am telling you, this walk could not have been more gorgeous, all along a creek, all in the shade, right outside my office door, and was the perfect hour loop. I almost exploded, there were like tears squirting out of my eyes. It's the little things in the world. I'm like, "Come on, this just keeps getting better and better and better."

So I just came home, and I decided hey, I'm going to record a podcast when I am in such an amazing, wonderful state of excitement. And my schedule has been a little bit different this past month because we've been moving and we've been finding office space and interviewing people and we've just had so many wonderful, awesome things going on, that to be able to just have this time and space to be able to record and talk to you all is like, heaven. I love my new office in my house and I can't wait to show - those of you who are in Scholars have already seen it, but I'm going to actually do a tour - a behind the scenes tour with the video so you guys can see the whole house.

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We're still like - we don't have our dining room table yet, and we're still figuring some things out with the couch and all that, but still, I just want to give you a sense of where we're living. I couldn't love it more. Seriously, I'm just in such a state of - let's just say glee. I'm just in glee right now. It's so awesome to be here.

So today, we are going to talk about past focus problems, and I want you to know that I did an episode - episode 33 on how to change your past. It is one of my most popular episodes and it's what we're working on in this month, and I've had some people say to me, well my past is great, I've already been to therapy, I've already worked through my past. And this isn't necessarily something that happened to you in your childhood, you may want to apply this to what happened yesterday or what happened five minutes ago, and I think that's really important.

One of the examples is there was somebody who just posted this in Ask Brooke, saying that they felt like they hadn't accomplished as much as some other people in Scholars. So one of the things that we do is people share their accomplishments in Scholars and in the Ask Brooke section, and we've had some seriously spectacular accomplishment stories, like before and after stories. We've had people that have lost all of their weight and now they've working on building their businesses and making money and they're just striving and creating and the momentum is there and it's very exciting.

And for some people, they haven't had that same level of success and this particular student was feeling really negatively about that. Like other people are doing so well and I'm not doing so well, and that's - a lot of us can show up in our lives like that, right? So we show up and we compare ourselves to other people's accomplishments, we beat ourselves up for not taking advantage of opportunity.

And so one of the things I told her to do was to look at her post, because it was all really negative. Now, she just thought she was conveying the news to me. She just thought, hey, this is what it's been like for me, and the actions that I've taken in Scholars, and what she was really doing was

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complaining about herself in a very negative way. So what I asked her to do is go back and change that story that you're telling yourself about the past six months, because what the story that you're telling about the past six months will have a huge impact on the next six months.

So if you tell yourself a story about the last six months being I'm not good enough, I'm not doing as well as other people, I should have taken advantage of the opportunity more, I should have applied myself more, I should have made the time, then you're going to feel negative, you're going to feel defeated, you're going to feel upset, and that will then determine the actions that you take in the future.

Beating yourself up over your past seems like deserved punishment that will somehow push you into action. A lot of people believe that if they just beat themselves up enough that then eventually they'll start taking action. That has not worked ever for me once in my life. I have never beaten myself into success, beaten myself into happiness, and I doubt that it will work for you.

So that's what this podcast episode is about. It's about looking at how you interpret your past, and when I talk about past it's anything that has happened up until this moment, and all of those things that have happened, all the things that you have done or not done, you are using to define yourself. And one of the skills that I like to teach and that is really important to teach is to start defining yourself by your future, instead of defining yourself by your past.

Now think about that. If you're defining yourself by your past, you're going to create more of your past. That's why when you look at a lot of people's lives, it just seems like you can predict exactly what's going to happen next year and the year after for them because they always live based on a repetitive thought pattern of what they're capable of and who they are. And then you look at some people who are always creating something new, always coming up with new ideas and are always very unpredictable; they're basing themselves on the future.

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Now think about this. Thoughts from the past are always recycled, so you're always thinking something that has always created a feeling that has created an action that has created a result. So if you want to create something new, if you want to implement a new idea, you have to think a thought you've never thought before. And the way to think a thought that you've never thought before is to shift your mind from thinking about the past, which is all recycled, to thinking about the future, which is all fresh and new and clean. But it's also a blank piece of paper out there, it's white.

So you have to be creative to create it, and it's much more effort to think deliberately, to think about your future, to create your future, than it is to just recycle your past. And most of us don't even know that the thoughts that we're thinking right now are just recycled thoughts from our past, and we just think they're reality.

So to be able to first become aware of that thinking and then next to decide deliberately to think a thought you've never thought before requires a tremendous amount of energy compared to not doing anything. And so that's what I'm asking of you. I'm asking you to think a thought you've never thought before, to create life that you've never created before for yourself, just for the sake of it. Just for the fun of it. Just because it's amazing to evolve your brain beyond thinking that it's already thought before.

And that's why so many of us love reading books and so many of us love getting new ideas and getting exposed to new insight, and what we do in Scholars and what I am really trying to do with my own life is not just to have the new insight, not to just have the new thinking, but to have it in a way where I'm feeling it and acting on it and creating new results.

The way that you know if you're thinking deliberately consistently is you will consistently have new results in your life. If you are always getting the same results, you're always thinking the same thoughts. Thoughts create feelings, create actions, create results. So if you feel the same feelings, think the same thought, you're doing the same things, you're getting the same results, it's because you're not thinking deliberately enough.

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And yes my friends, it does take energy. It takes a lot more energy to think a thought that you've never thought before. So here are the problems with being past focused. Number one, you limit your potential by what you've been able to do in the past. Number two, you explain your life by what happened in your past, your identity is pre-defined and hard to change. Number three, you explain current behavior by your past and make it hard to change. You make excuses based on past experiences. Number five, you may use evidence from your past to identify as a victim.

So many of my very strong, capable, successful clients have no idea how much they're identifying themselves as victims until we coach with them, until we point it out to them. They would never - and this is true for me in my own life, I feel like I'm a very strong, independent woman, and then there are so many areas of my life where I slip into feeling like a victim and identifying as a victim and feeling sorry for myself, and it's really hard to identify in my own self because I would never say, oh look at me, the victim. But we do that with our thought processes, right?

Number six, you don't think about your future enough or create from your future. What do I mean when I say create from your future? What I mean is you think thoughts about your future that you've never thought before, and therefore you take action from a thought that you've never thought before.

Number seven, you ignite your primitive brain by focusing on lessons only from the past and not growing. Number eight, what you know comes from past learning and not from up to date information and possibility. Now, in my book, *If I'm So Smart, Why Can't I Lose Weight?*, that was the first book that I ever wrote about 10 years ago.

Do not go buy that book right now. If you've never heard me talk about that book, do not go buy that book. I have recently re-written that book to include all of my new research, all of my new content on weight loss. I will be giving that book away for free.

Actually, I'll probably be giving away the hard copy for free, probably just shipping and handling and maybe the e-book. I haven't fully decided

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exactly what I'm going to do there, but you will be the first to know. And what I wrote in that book - and remember, this was 10 years ago. The chapter was called do not be past focused. Now, it was a weight loss book, but if you don't have an issue with weight, just insert whatever your issue is into whenever I talk about weight.

“Often I hear clients say that they want to get back to a weight they used to be. They want to weigh what they weighed in high school or before they had the baby. I always discourage this type of past focused thinking.

I like to have clients focus on the future and on a body they would like to have in one year or five years from now. Furthermore, the past body you had ended up here, overweight again. It wasn't your permanent solution. This time, things can be different, and this time can be the last time.

Many of us have pasts filled with pain and negative circumstances. Many of us feel we've had many failures, especially failed weight loss attempts. When we define ourselves and our future abilities by these past attempts, we become discouraged and filled with regret.

I like to look at my past as if it were perfect. It happened exactly as it was supposed to, and there were no mistakes. Just lessons and preparation. I don't see any reason to argue with my past or wish it was different. It's a waste of emotional energy. I choose to take that energy and focus on my future – something I feel I can have an impact on.

The truth is that you can't go back. The past is over. For some of us, this is a blessing. The good news, however, is that the future is yours for the taking.

You can create a future that is better than your past. Many times if you ask a past focused person what their plans are for the future, they have no idea where they're going. They're being defined by who they used to be without taking control of who they want to be.

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I can tell when someone I'm working with is past focused or defined by their past because they will say things like, "that's how I've always done it, that doesn't work for me. I've tried it, I've always had this issue my entire life. This is just how I am. I'm not the kind of person who can do that. I've always been overweight, it's just me. I'm not a very good athlete."

When I hear this kind of talk, I know the client is being defined by the evidence of their past. Evidence that they have been unconsciously looking for in order to prove their terrible belief systems. Although I do believe we need to learn from our past and grow from our mistakes we've made, I never recommend that you define yourself by what you haven't been able to accomplish yet.

It's time to turn your head around and start focusing on the road ahead. The past is over and gone, you cannot go back there and change it or be younger again. Your past set you up to be the person you are today. Love it for what it did and say goodbye. It's time to get excited about your future."

So that is my request of you today. It is to start creating from your future and stop creating from your past. Your past will pre-define your future unless you step in. You get to decide who you want to be. You can do that by default and you can blame your past and you can blame your circumstances and you can blame your current belief systems, but that blame will be misplaced because you have the power right now to create exactly what you want in your future.

Your past may be unrecognizable to your future self. And in fact, just today I was thinking about this. The amount of time and energy I used to spend on trying to figure out how to stop overeating, trying to figure out how to feel better, trying to figure out how to stop overdrinking, trying to figure out how to be less anxious, trying to figure out how to be different than I am, and I don't think about any of that anymore.

I don't argue with who I am or what I struggle with, and in fact, I just create from a place of knowing that I have that power, and I want you guys to think

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about this. The way that Dan Sullivan teaches this is that the future is your property. It is your property to do with whatever you would like.

So I want you to think about that. If you could, and you can, have any future that you want, what would it be? Now, some of you may be a doctor, you may be in current practice. Many of my clients are. Maybe in your future you don't want to be a doctor. You don't have to be a doctor anymore. You don't have to be a therapist, you don't have to be a coach, you don't have to be married, you don't have to be any of the things that you don't want to be anymore.

You don't have to be grumpy anymore, you don't have to be in pain emotionally anymore, you don't have to feel like a victim anymore. You can define the future that you want and live now into it. So let me just review. The number one concept is your thoughts create your feelings, which create your actions, which create your results.

In other words, your thoughts create your reality. They create what you create, and they also create your interpretation of what already is. Knowing that, you have to ask yourself, where do you want to think from? Do you want to think from your past, or do you want to think from your possibility? Do you want to think from your future? From a place where you get to be fully creative, fully aligned, fully in your zone?

Now, I hear you asking me how do I do that, and I'm going to keep it really simple. Every thought - when you do a thought download, when you write down all of your thoughts, you're going to ask yourself, does that thought come from my past or does it come from my possibility?

I'm not good enough, I'm not strong enough, I can't do that, I've failed too many times, I've never been able to lose weight, those are all thoughts from your past. Anything is possible. I can lose weight, I can be free in my body. I don't need or want alcohol. I don't need or want food or overeating in my life anymore. Of course you want food in your life but not food that you overeat, right?

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From that place, you will create a completely different experience of the world, and you will also create completely different results. This is not just rhetoric. This is not just me saying feel better, yay, be positive. No, this is happening, my friends. This isn't just happening for me, this is happening for my students. Example after example, after example, after example of people changing their lives by consistently applying these principles month after month. So that's what I'm inviting you to do. I'm inviting you to learn how to think from your future and how to re-define your past in this moment.

Now, notice when I redefine my past, when I say my past was perfect, I'm rewriting that story and thinking in a way that's brand new, and that's why my results will all be brand new. And I have already done this work on my childhood, but I just need to continuously do this work on my experience of last year, my experience of last week and my experience of yesterday.

I need to make sure that all my thoughts about my past are serving me in my present and in my future, and that's what I'm asking you to do. If you're in Scholars, I want you to do the questions that I present in this podcast for sure, and I want you to start on page 18 and I want you to work through those questions. Okay my friends, I'll talk to you next week. Bye-bye.

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