

Ep #175: Problems Are Forever



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With Your Host

Brooke Castillo

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You are listening to The Life Coach School podcast with Brooke Castillo, episode number 175.

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.

Hey. Hey there, how are you guys? Wow, let me just tell you guys something. This has been the year of blowing my own damn mind. It has been such an awesome, awesome year. We have done some amazing stuff in our business, and I always talk about it being my business, but I have a business partner in case you didn't know, my husband Chris. And I keep looking at each other and like - I told him, I'm like, "What if these are the good old days?"

We're just having such a blast with our life right now, it's so, so much fun. You guys know that we moved right outside of Dallas, we're all settled in, we absolutely love it here. It's completely fantastic. Everything about it. Yes my friends, including the weather. And I will say that there are some bugs here, but we have figured out how to manage those bugs. We are living not with bugs. We have figured it out.

But here's what happened. We recently have hired four people in our business because we have been growing literally so fast we can't keep up with ourselves. And I really like having a stress free environment in my business, and I'm going to do a whole episode on how I run my business, what I've been learning, and how I'm making it so it's just very stress free. I have enough people doing the right jobs in a passionate way, that we're able to create the business of all of our dreams.

So as I have been really marveling at our success and what we've been able to create and how proud I am of our business and what we offer the world, it has been so interesting to kind of reflect on - okay, so I'm at my ideal weight, I don't buffer with food, I don't drink at all anymore - miracle number two - and my business finally, I'm not confused about it, I'm not

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indulging in any kind of feeling sorry for myself, any of that. It's just like acceleration in the best kind of way.

And so this is the place that I've wanted to be forever since I can remember. I remember thinking that it would be so awesome to be able to put on a dress and have it fit me and to be lean and to be able to help people in coaching from my home in a white office. And so now I'm living that. I mean, truly, genuinely, that is my life right now. That doesn't get past me, and yet still I have problems.

What? Where are all the rainbows? Where are all the daisies? Where are all the hot air balloons? Why would I still have problems? This is the point where I'm supposed to get to, right? This is the point where everything comes together and everything's great, and I want to say that everything is great. Everything has been great. It's just - this is kind of a culmination of so many goals.

But one of the things that I keep reminding all of my students is that there is no place where you arrive where then you feel good all of the time, and there's no place where then you arrive, and your problems are gone. And my CFO dude, Mark, I was talking to him about it. He said, "Come on", he's like, "What does your brain sound like when it talks to you?" I'm like, "Oh no, it doesn't sound good." When I wake up in the morning, stuff that it says is not nice and I feel anxious.

And you know, problems are created in our minds, this is what I teach, right? Nothing's a problem until we make it a problem. And so one of my mantras has been clean drinking water. And I'll tell you what I do. I have been really working on relaxing into my most severe emotions. So when I feel a lot of anxiety and when I feel a lot of stress, I know that I'm creating that in my mind. I'm very clear about that. I don't get mad at myself for doing that. You know why? Because I'm human. Humans do these things with human brains. Totally good.

But what I've been doing is moving towards it and relaxing. Right? So moving toward the emotion and then relaxing and melting into that emotion.

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That has made such a huge difference, to be able to be present and to know that I'm going to have those emotions and that they're okay, right? We don't have to resist them. So when I'm generating stress in my brain and I'm feeling it in my body, I want to go into that relaxation place.

So what I say to myself is, "Clean drinking water." And I've been telling this to my students lately. I've been saying to them, "Listen, if you have clean drinking water, everything else is a bonus." Everything else is a bonus, right? You're human, you're alive, you're drinking water, it's clean, it's not going to hurt you. Everything else is a bonus.

And so immediately allows me to relax. Like this stuff is just for fun, right? All of our life, what if we could just think about it, it's all just for fun. Like even going to work, even having a disagreement with someone. The struggle that we sometimes have with our life, it's all just - like if we can just not take it so seriously. Clean drinking water, we're all set. Take it all away, don't take away my water, right?

So for some reason, most of us share this idea of a rival. We start with this sense of not good enough and incompleteness, and then we strive for the day when we will finally feel whole. Many of us think we're damaged, we think something happened to us when we were children that made us damaged, and so many of us have horror stories about our childhood that we carry into our adulthood and use that as a reason to believe that something is truly wrong with us.

And sometimes we think it must be because we're too fat, or we don't have the right job or the right husband or something. Something just feels a bit off. So we go out into the world trying to find it. We yearn for the day when our problems will be solved. We are pretty sure a day will come when the good will for sure outweigh the bad, all of the time.

When I tell my clients that half of the time life will be negative, they get so mad at me. They negotiate with me and they argue. They don't want this to be true. And because they don't accept it, they spend a lot of their time buffering it away. They pretend their life is more pleasurable by indulging in

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false pleasures, instead of just making peace with the reality of our humanness.

So here's what I want you to think about. If you are one of those people who is trying to eliminate their problems, who is trying to eliminate their negative feelings, what I want you to question is, what is so bad about problems? What is so bad about those negative feelings? Why do we think that that part of our life should be eliminated? Why are you so mad at me when I tell you that half of your life is what makes the good half possible? That we can't know good if we don't know bad, we can't know nice if we don't understand what mean is. Isn't that fascinating?

So why do we push so hard against this concept? This concept has changed so many of my clients need to buffer, to buffer it away, to push it away. When you can embrace it, then you can move forward and get to momentum. Life being negative emotion half of the time is by design. It's the way our brains operate and the way the world presents. It's needed and wanted. All good isn't all good because there's nothing to contrast it against, to know it's even good.

When we are single, we have one set of problems. We get married, and we solve that set, and you know what we get? A brand new set. I coach people from all over the world, every age, all walks of life. Every single one of us, no matter how much money we have, or don't have, every single one of us has problems that we create in our mind and feel negative emotion from.

When we have no money, we have the no money problem. When we get money, we have the having money problem. It just changes flavors. The emotions are still negative. So while we are exhausting ourselves seeking peace from negativity, we miss the lesson that there can be peace in the negativity, that we don't even have to judge the negative as negative. We can just accept it as something that provides the contrast to create all the joy, excitement and exhilaration life truly has to offer us.

Polarity is not something to resist, it's something to embrace. Within everything we deem as negative is the positive we so desperately want.

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We can use this to our benefit. We can use it to plan for obstacles. So one of the processes that I teach in Scholars is that every obstacle to achieving a dream can become a to-do for achieving that dream.

So I'm just going to review that really shortly here. Think about a dream that you have. For many of you, it's losing weight, for many of you, it's quitting drinking, for many of you, it's making more money, feeling better, changing your job, whatever it is. And where you are now and where that dream is, in between, the only reason you aren't there yet is because of obstacles. Things that are in your way of achieving that.

And if you take each one of those obstacles and create a solution or an answer or a strategy for that obstacle, then you will have the path of exactly what you need to do to achieve it. I learned this from Dan Sullivan, one of my mentors and teachers, and I have to say, it completely changed how I felt about my goal. Because it used to be - I would think about my goal and I would feel scarcity and I would feel fear and I would feel doubt. But as soon as I was able to write down all the obstacles and turn them into strategies, I had a clear path to my goal.

So we can use the very things that we are calling negative, or challenges, or obstacles to be the answers. We can use it to accept all negative emotion that we create. We can release ourselves from the self-punishment over negative actions. We can stop resisting half of our life. We can stop being afraid of emotional pain.

Have you ever asked yourself why people buffer? And what I mean by buffer is I mean, go unconscious in some way. Overeating, overdrinking, over-Facebooking, overworking, all of the over-ing that we do. Why do we do that?

The answer is because we don't want to feel negative emotion. We want to escape it. But the problem is every time we press that escape button, we're missing it. We're missing life. And the more we press it and the more we escape, the harder our life gets, the more we want to press it. Isn't that crazy? It's like this built in valve where we get to go back into the matrix,

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but then when we come back, it's even more painful, right? Because we're seeking all these false pleasures at our own expense of feeling the truth of our life, which does include all of the problems that life presents. We're not supposed to be problem free.

And here's the most fascinating thing about accepting that problems are always going to be part of the deal, and emotional pain is built into our humanness on purpose. When you accept it, it's less painful. Please wrap your mind around this. You have pain in your life, and maybe it's a mild annoyance, maybe it's frustration. It feels painful in your body. That's how most of my students would describe it.

And when you resist the pain, you make the pain worse. You're resisting it because it's bad, but your resisting it makes it worse. And when you accept it, it is less painful. When you relax into it, when you breathe it in willingly, the pain that you were so desperate to resist and buffer from becomes less painful.

And this is what I'm trying to teach and trying to sell you guys on the idea. What you think is so awful is your life. What you think is so important to avoid is the experience that we all signed up for, right? Humanness. Accepting and embracing pain makes it so much easier and manageable.

Now, I just coached a woman last night and as part of when you're in Scholars, when you get to six months, you become VIP, and the VIP has a private call. We had one last night, at seven o'clock at night. And she was explaining how she was miserable, and she kept trying to change her life so she would feel less miserable, right? You guys can relate to this.

She lost weight, that didn't work. She got a job, it was amazing, that didn't work. She quit her job, that didn't work. She has kids, she has a husband, she has two houses, she has plenty of money. None of it was working, she was still feeling miserable, and that's what most of us are trying to do. We're trying to change the world to change how we feel and it never works.

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We have to figure out what we are thinking causing our own misery, but here's the rub, here's the catch. We can't normally find out all those thoughts causing all that pain until we allow ourselves to be present with the pain. We have to be present with the misery to understand exactly what is causing the pain.

Without problem and without pain, we are not human. We are sociopaths. I was just talking to my friend on the phone, and she was like, "Why do I have to care so much about my son?" And I said, "Because the alternative means that you're a sociopath, and that's kind of creepy." And we laughed for so long, it was so good.

Sometimes caring for someone so deeply feels so all-consuming and feels so painful, right? When they're in pain, it's crazy sometimes where like, I just wish I didn't care so much. And when you say it out loud, it sounds insane. We know, right, we know that we are signing up for pain when we fall in love with someone. There is a chance that our heart is going to be broken, and we do it anyway, because that's the human experience.

We know that people are going to die, we know that we are going to die, right? That is the human experience. We're going to be afraid of stuff. Our brain is going to tell us we're going to die five times a day, and we still sign up for it. That is the experience. So stop trying to press that escape button all the time, nothing's gone wrong.

When we don't have negative emotion, we're sociopaths, we don't even cry or grieve or miss our loved ones. We don't get mad at injustice, we don't ever worry about our children. That's not what any of us want. That's not the experience. We don't want to just be like, "Oh, everything is positive in the world. Everything's fine."

Every single problem we have can be put into the model. This doesn't mean something has gone wrong, we don't put our problems into models so we can eliminate them, we do it so we can understand them. Now, this is a huge distinction, especially when I'm doing really intense work with my

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clients on childhood abuse, childhood sexual abuse, any kind of physical abuse, anything like that.

I always want my clients to work their thoughts through a model, especially if it's something that happened to them years ago. The intention is to neutralize and factualize what happened so we can set ourselves free from it, and a lot of people just want to feel better immediately and to get over it immediately, and that is not useful. What's useful is to understand and have that self-awareness of how much our thinking affects us in those experiences.

When we inadvertently give our power away, we don't recognize that we are identifying still as a victim, so many years later, when we could be free from that. And so it's very important to know that the model isn't about a quick fix, it isn't about feeling better. Get a new thought, get a new thought, feel better. It's about understanding our pain. It's about being present with our pain, and then maybe once that has been processed all the way through, then maybe changing our perspective about it and knowing that that's within our power.

There will never come a time when we no longer have to do models. Models don't permanently solve problems, and when they do, we will get a brand new one to work on immediately. It is never done, and that is a beautiful thing.

I have achieved many of my goals this year. I have exceeded many of my goals this year. My husband and I are giddy right now with happiness and every day I get a success story from a Scholar. An incredible success story, not just, "Hey, this helps", "This works." This is like, "Here's how my life changed", "Here's what different", "Here's what's happened."

It's so fun to read all of those right now, and yet I now that we will all keep working together and we'll all keep going to that next level and when we get there, right, when we dive deeper into our humanness, there's still going to be problems.

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And so I said this to a student the other day, she's like, "Why should I keep growing? Why should I keep trying new things? Why should I keep creating?" I said, "You don't have to do it, but if you know that you're going to have half of your life be problems anyway, wouldn't it be fun to just have new problems instead of the same ones over and over and over? Don't you want to experience more of the being humanness and not just the one flavor of it?"

And by the way, I don't think that everybody answers yes to that question, and I don't think everybody should. But the people that I am working with, that is kind of their goal, is to find new problems. Not to eliminate problems, but just to have a different flavor and a different experience. So I know the title of this podcast may be kind of like, "What? That sounds like a bummer."

But to me when I say problems are forever, it immediately lets me relax. I'm not in a hurry anymore. I don't need to get there, get there, get there. I don't need to lose all the weight and stop drinking right now, and do all these things right now because then life will be better. It will just be different, right? There's no rush. It's all going to be fine. It's all going to be full of problems. Here it is, and there it is too.

When we relax into it, then we can truly know what it means to be a human on the planet, living fully consciously without constantly pressing that escape button. That is my wish for you. Have a beautiful week you guys, talk to you next week. Bye, bye.

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