

Ep #178: Being Coached



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Brooke Castillo

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Welcome to *The Life Coach School* podcast, where it's all about real clients, real problems, and real coaching. And now your host, Master Coach Instructor, Brooke Castillo.

Hey, friends. Today, we're going to talk about being coached. Having a coach, and being coached. Of all the things you can do in your life, of all the things you can invest your money into doing, I think mental health has to be at the top of the list.

We think our houses or cars are more important than our mental health. We spend more money on our grass, on our lawn, on our plants, on everything but our mental health, and yet our mental health determines so much of our life. Determines how we feel, how we think, what we do, what we create, what our results are, or how we perceive the world.

So I wanted to do a full podcast to share with you what my experience has been being coached as a client. I spend all of my days coaching my clients. You know who you are. If you are a Scholar, I am your coach, and I coach you, right?

You say, "Brooke Castillo is my coach, this is what I do in my coaching relationship with her and my experience with my coaches." So I want to share with you my experiences and I'm not going to pretend that all coaches are the same because I've had so many amazing experiences with so many different ones, and I've talked a lot about my experience with therapy and I'm going to talk about that anymore on this podcast, but I am going to talk about my coaching experience.

So I first heard about life coaching when I saw Martha Beck I think on Oprah. And I thought, "Oh, life coaching, that sounds amazing. I want to have a life coach. I want to have someone coach me in my life, that sounds amazing." And then eventually I want to become a life coach because it resonated with me.

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So I found a coach, they were what they call an international certified coach. Now, there is no regulation in our industry, and the International Coaching Federation - sounds very official - attempted to become a regulating force within our industry. And I remember ten years ago, they kept saying, "Well, regulation is coming and we're going to set the standard and we will be the one, so make sure you follow us."

Now, they had a huge conflict of interest because they were a regulation body, they were trying to be a federation that was regulating the industry, but the person who started the Federation also had a coaching school. So the Federation was approving certain schools for coaching, but they obviously had a bias, right?

So as I did more and more research, it was really interesting to find out that the International Coaching Federation was a for profit business. They were charging money to be a member, and then they were also requiring that schools pay them money to be a member. And they also had their own idea of what the coaching industry should be.

Now, because we're not regulated, which is a beautiful thing, because we get to teach in the way we want to teach and we don't have to follow one person's idea of how coaching should be, this Federation had a very clear idea of what they thought coaching should be, that I completely disagreed with.

I didn't know any of this when I first hired my very first coach. So I hired my first coach and I am not going to give her name here because my experience with her was not good. So I was so excited, and it was expensive. I remember thinking, "Wow, coaching is expensive." It's totally worth it, I was so excited.

Talked to her on the phone, she said it was going to be great. And so my experience with her was I took a lot of tests. A lot of like, personality tests and a lot of you know, cognitive kind of diagnostic tests to say that you're this kind of person and this is what you do.

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And then her approach was basically, you should do things in your life this way in order to be free of anything that's holding you back. And so the concepts of it were pretty good, but basically what was happening in my coaching experience with her was a lot of symptom work and what I call just trying to work on action.

Now, any of you who have worked with me before, you know that I don't just help people change their action. I help them figure out why they're taking the action. I work from the thought-feeling level instead of just the action-result level. But when I first hired a coach, I didn't really know this yet. I was just working, she was helping me manipulate my actions and then holding me accountable was kind of the whole idea.

So I'd get on the phone with her and she'd say "Hey, what do you think about watching less TV this week?" I'd be like, "Okay." And she's like, "Yes, I think that'll be a really good idea." And so I wasn't watching a lot of TV, but I thought, "Okay."

And so she's like, "I think maybe we should try no TV all week." Alright, so then I would do no TV all week, and she would hold me accountable to that, and then we'd have a huge celebration when I didn't watch TV all week, but I didn't really understand the effect of why I was doing that or what was the point of doing that. It was very interesting.

And so I felt like this relationship was a very surface level, and based on her holding me accountable. Now, sometimes having a partner to hold you accountable for certain things is not a bad idea. And there are coaches, writing coaches and accountability coaches that can help with dissertations, stuff like that, to get something accomplished. So I'm not holding that against this coach at all that she was like that.

It's just not what I needed at the time. There wasn't like I was working on a project that I needed help accomplishing, and so I didn't need the accountability, and what it ended up doing in this relationship was creating a very what I call, emotional childhood relationship, where she was being the emotional adult, so she was holding me accountable for my discipline,

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and then I was coming to her in order to get her approval and for her to be pleased with what I had done.

And what I found that that did for me in that relationship was perpetuate emotional childhood for me. My own lack of responsibility. And then I felt like in the relationship, her goal was for me to become dependent on her, and she told me like basically what our business model is, the way that we set up our coaching practice is that you will hire me for many years, and that I will be like your personal trainer and that you will just stay in a relationship with me and we'll meet once a week for years and years and years.

That was a no for me. I was like, "Yes, I don't think this is what I want. I want to work with someone that I can work on something, accomplish, and then move on and grow right from that. I don't want to develop a relationship with a coach that's just an accountability partner."

And so it really helped me to see that that was just one way of coaching, it wasn't like the only way to coach, but it wasn't what I was interested in having as a coach and I wasn't interested in what I wanted to do as a coach.

So if you are looking for a coaching relationship, you need to be really clear. Do you want to work on the cause of your problems and then hopefully eliminate your problems, or do you want to have someone help you manage your symptoms? And what I have found in most coaching schools in most of the philosophies - and I've been exposed to lot of them because I have so many students that get certified at other schools and then come to my school and tell me about how our schools are different - if you want to work at a symptom level and help someone hold you accountable for the symptoms of your actions and the results that you're getting, that's one way of coaching.

I tried it, so I know of which I speak, and it was not effective for me and it was not something that I wanted to continue to do. That was my first experience with it. Now, when I told this coach that I no longer wanted to

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coach with them, I was in some ways, like scolded. I don't know a better word about it. Like I was somehow scolded for doing it wrong, and that that wasn't the plan and that I shouldn't do it that way.

And so that was really good for me to see that that relationship was not something that I wanted to continue. Now, I think for me, that was very easy for me to identify because I right when I hired that coach, I had just come off an experience of being in a cult. I think I've talked about that on the podcast before.

I had literally joined a cult, and I had been in a position where I was a total emotional child and the leader of the cult was telling me everything to do, and this coaching relationship felt eerily similar to that, and so that was not something that I wanted.

I didn't want this person and authority grading me on my discipline. That was not useful to me, and if it were useful, it would make me so dependent on the coach, that wasn't something I wanted to do. I didn't like their business model.

The second coach that I had was when I went through my coach training. Now, I've talked about this briefly, but way back in the day, Martha Beck, who wrote Finding Your Own North Star, was on Oprah, and Martha writes an article for the O magazine, and she had just written The Joy Diet, which is a great book. If you haven't read it you should grab it, it's a really good read.

And I went to Martha's website and she was offering a coach training, and it was a three-day training. It was actually two and a half days of training, I think it was \$6000 and you just showed up for the weekend, she trained you how to be a coach, and that was it. It was literally two and a half days.

And I would do it again a million times for the experience that I had. And here's what the experience was that I had. At the time, Martha - first of all, let me just say something about Martha Beck. Her book, Finding Your Own

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North Star and The Joy Diet, I think top 100 books I've ever read, and I've read thousands of books in my life.

Martha has since gone on to write many other books since then, and I think has really kind of honored her own internal passions of what we call going to the woo. She's very woo-woo. She's very spiritual, very into universal energy and guides and attraction, all those things. She went way to the woo for me. Even for me, I like woo stuff but she went way to the woo for me.

So her latest writings haven't resonated with me as much as the work that she did early on in her career. So when I went to coach training with her, she was teaching - the main tool that she was teaching us to use was Byron Katie's The Work. And I have to say that Byron Katie's work is one of the most significant things that I have ever done in my entire life to help myself.

Learning Katie's four questions and the turnaround is really what exposed me to the ideas that our thoughts create our feelings, and that was such a profound knowing for me, and doing Katie's work really helped me understand how my brain worked.

So I left Martha's training, and Martha did a couple turnarounds, as what we call it four question turnarounds, that really had life changing effects on me, and one of them that I still work on the thought all the time was, if I get too big in my life, I won't have any friends.

And I think when I was younger, I was such a big personality and so over the top and so loud and all of those things, that I think I was constantly told, "Simmer down, be quiet, chill out, stop pushing, you're too much." And one of the things that Martha had taught me was really by doing this four question turnaround was that if I don't become big, I won't have any true friends because I won't truly be able to be myself, so anyone I'm friends with isn't even really being friends with me.

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And I will never forget that. That moment of recognizing that I have to become myself in order to have any true friends and the first book that I wrote I dedicated to Martha. I said, "To Martha for telling me to go big." So I spent the two and a half days with her, it was right after she had written a book called Leaving the Saints, which was about leaving the Mormon church.

And so there was tons of controversy around her and there was a lot of like really scary stuff that she was having to deal with. So I basically left that experience with her and dove into Byron Katie's work and dove into Abraham's work and really started to get more knowledge in teaching through that sort of thing.

And that is when I started being coached my other people, by my colleagues who had also been trained in thought work. So what's fascinating is, I created the model based on all of my research that I had been doing since my coach training, and then I had my friends coach me using my model.

And I have to say, I've had a couple really close friends that were coaches that I would call us and say, "I need you to coach me on this." And they would help run models for me and they would really give me perspective on my life in a way that I hadn't had before.

I remember one coach who was actually a very good friend of mine, I had another really profound moment, and it's really interesting, because you can coach with someone for a long time - like I spent you know, two and a half days with Martha and it was that one thought that changed everything for me - and it's the same with this other coach, that I was really upset about my son. And she asked me a question, which is one question that changed me as a parent forever.

She goes, "It sounds to me like you don't think your children should suffer." And I was like, "Well obviously my children shouldn't suffer." And she said, "Really?" And I was like, "What? My children should suffer?" And now of course that's so obvious. Of course, they're humans. Humans suffer

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sometimes, it's part of the deal. They have to learn how to deal with their emotions, but I will never forget it. I was on the phone with her, sitting outside of a Starbucks and she said that to me. Life-changing moment.

Another coach, colleague of mine. We were coaching together, having a conversation together, and I've talked about her a lot and she was using the model. We were talking about the model and I had this acknowledgment with her that we could put whatever we want in that R line.

I was like, "What? You think we can do whatever we want? We can put whatever we want in the R line?" And it really was true, and that is the reason I created Self-Coaching Scholars. It's almost like you have to ask permission to live your big dreams, right? And I said to her like, "Really? You think I can just do that?" And she's like, "I think you can." I was like, "I think I'm going to do it." And then I did it.

Like what? That's so awesome. So those coaching experiences, my life would not be the same without those people coaching me, without giving me that perspective. Now, I coach myself all the time, but sometimes it takes someone outside of your own brain to help you see things that you can't see from within your brain.

And then I hired Frank Hearn. And I want to say that Frank Hearn changed my life because he was the really the right coach for me at the right time, but also because I went all in with him. I went all in to what he taught me and I didn't second-guess. Kind of like what I was talking about on the last podcast. I didn't start and stop and give up and burn out, I didn't do any of those things.

I just followed his GPS signal, even when I felt I was going in the wrong direction, I just followed the GPS signal, the way that he wanted me to go, the way that he told me to go, and I trusted him, and that's why I got the results that I want.

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So having a coach changed my life because it helped me get a perspective I couldn't get from being inside my own head and being inside my own life. Coaching helps you work on your life instead of working in it, right? Here's the other thing I learned from being coached. My thinking default is negative.

Isn't that crazy? Like if I just leave my brain unsupervised, it just goes to negativity. I also found out I thought I should be happy all the time. I was very confused about that. I thought, "Wait a minute, if I'm not happy all the time then something's terribly wrong with me. I should be able to be happy all the time."

I just had a student in Scholars say to me, "Brooke, I disagree with this 50/50 thing. I don't think half our life should be a bummer." And I said, "Okay, half our life should be negative emotion." She's like, "I don't agree with you on that at all." And I said, "First of all, it's always okay to disagree. You shouldn't agree with anything just because I'm your teacher, just because I say it, just because I'm your coach. You have to believe what you believe on purpose. I don't believe everything my teachers teach at all."

So she said, "But I feel so good most of the time, what do you think that means? I'm always waiting for the other shoe to drop." And I said, "I don't think it means anything except that maybe your goals aren't big enough if you're comfortable all of the time."

Right? And I think if you could hang out at 80% and just coast on 80%, that would be great. But here's what I have found. In almost 90% of the cases, when people tell me that they feel good most of the time, they're usually buffering. Significantly buffering.

Like when I have clients that are clearly obese, clearly overeating, and they're like, "Look, I think like, I'm happy 80% of the time." I'm going to guess that 30% of that time you're feeling happy is false pleasure. Not to say you shouldn't do it, but when you are left to your own devices and you're not buffering, my guess is 50/50, and that's not a bad thing.

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The other thing that I did is I worked really closely with a coach on setting boundaries and you guys kind of got to hear about that process as I went through it on the podcast. Setting boundaries with my mom and really struggling in my relationship with my mom and how to set boundaries and how to really love her from a place of you know, being clean and not blaming her and I got to say, of all the things I'm thankful to myself for, that is one at the top of the list.

Because now, I genuinely love being with my mom. I love my mom, I love calling her, I love talking to her, I love being with her. Setting boundaries really allowed me to love her so much more. I was the one creating the resentment, I was the one creating the conflict, not her.

And as long as I was blaming it on her, I was missing the opportunity to change that relationship with her, and I did change that relationship with her and I am so happy that I've done that because now I can like genuinely feel nothing, nothing, nothing but love for her. And I will tell you that that was not true for a long time. I was suffering, and I was blaming her for it, and coaching really set me free from that.

And the other thing that I really learned, and this was especially what I learned from Frank, was he coached me on money to help me change my thoughts about it and one of the ways that he did that was not so much in his coaching, but by being an example of what was possible. Being an example of thoughts to think around money.

So being around him on a regular basis let me watch how abundantly he thought and how well he managed his thoughts about money, and it taught me how to generate and be comfortable with wealth that I earned. He taught me concepts about business but more important than that, I think he was an example of what was possible.

So it's kind of like coaching versus self-coaching is like the difference between school and homework, right? You coach and you go to school, and self-coaching is really your homework. I think that what I offer my students from being a student and from also being a client is that you learn

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concepts when you're being coached, and you learn concepts when you're being taught, but it doesn't mean anything until you go home and practice them and apply them on a consistent basis.

So I did everything my coach told me to do. I coach myself through all of it and I didn't make one excuse. It was math when I took out the drama, and it worked. This is what I've discovered. We cannot be the ones deciding what is possible because our brains will make excuses and confuse and overwhelm.

So we need to make sure that we have someone in our life who can coach us, and coach our potential and coach where we trip ourselves up, because if we rely on our own brains, we're never going to get to that point where we could, where having a coach can help us.

So I want to make sure that when you're being coached or when you're being taught that you separate the following. There's learning and listening. Then there's applying. There's getting help and being coached, and then there's doing your homework and coaching yourself.

Do not mix those all up into one thing. My Scholars are always telling me, "I used to listen and consume the podcast and now I live the podcast." Right? It's very different to learn the concepts and think, "That's pretty interesting" and to then actually live the experience of what it is like to be coached.

So often when I'm coaching someone in Scholars, they will be like, "I never thought about it that way." It's like a whole new perspective, and I want to say - I laugh about this a lot when I'm coaching people because they're always like locked into their story and they want to convince me that their story is true.

Now, here's the problem. If they can convince me that their story is true, now we're both screwed. We both believe their story that isn't getting them the result they want. So I'm often like, "Okay, stop talking. Stop talking, stop it." That's how I coach people.

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And they stop it. Here's where you're wrong about yourself. Here's where you're underestimating yourself. Here's where that thought is not serving you. It's so clear to me because I'm not in your life. That's what a coach can do. A coach can offer you something that you can't see from within your life.

So I'm going to leave you with this. If you have never been coached before, do yourself a solid and get a coach. Even if it's just for a month. You want me to be your coach, join Scholars and I will be your coach for a month. If you want to have just one-on-one coaching, hire someone off my Life Coach School website.

Make sure you get a casual coach, make sure you get someone that focuses on causes and focuses on the brain. I had a client one time who said, "I don't like negative people. Negative people are awful, I can't stand them. They're just so negative." And I said to her, "Wow, you're pretty negative about negative people." She was like, "What? I'm not negative." I'm like, "No, you are very negative about negative people. So you're a negative person when it comes to negative people."

And she was so blown away. She was like, "What are you talking about? I hate negativity." I said, "Could you hear the irony in what you're saying?" And she couldn't. She couldn't see it, she never even noticed it before.

And it's the same when I have clients that don't like dramatic people. They're creating a bunch of drama around dramatic people. Sometimes you can't see that stuff in yourself. So I really want to encourage you to give yourself the gift of not just learning. You need to separate out just learning and listening, which is what you do on the podcast, and you need to allow yourself to be coached, so everything you've learned and listened to you can then think about in terms of your own self.

Then go and apply it and get the different results in your life and then coach yourself. That is the best gift you can possibly, possibly give yourself. It is my honor to be coached. I love being coached. I love someone taking the time to look at my brain for me. A lot of people feel like, "I didn't volunteer to

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be coached by you Brooke because I feel like I should know this stuff yet." I'm like, "Well, I don't know all this stuff yet and I've been at this a lot longer than you, so maybe we should give up the idea that we're ever going to be done with being coached."

Being coached is something that you should commit to doing on a regular basis. Yes, coaching yourself is important, but make sure you also have someone in your life that will coach you, and then listen to what they say and try what they say and hear what they are saying and apply it.

And only after you've done all of those things do you decide whether it's something you want to continue or not. That is a beautiful gift you can give yourself. I hope you guys have an amazing week, I'll talk to you soon. Bye-bye.

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