

Ep #187: Neutrality of CIRCUMSTANCES



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.

Hello, hello, hello my friends. What's happening? Oh my god, I love you guys. Hey, thank you guys all for listening to the podcast, genuinely. There's a lot of you all. I don't know if you just heard that, that was my dog, holy cow. He heard me say, "Hello my friends" and he just snorted from his dream.

But I am like, super stoked that there are so many thousands of you listening to my podcast. It's so cool. Like, I want you to imagine that you go to work every day, and like thousands of people appreciate it, and really want to participate in what you're doing at work. That is my life. Like, what I do is like, create a podcast and then so many people appreciate it and love it and tell me so and listen and how much better does life get than that? Nothing.

Other thing I want to share with you is my friend Angela Lauria, who's over at the Author Incubator, I talked to her the other day and she's like, "I just want to let you know that I'm super jealous." And I said, "Oh dear, of whom?" And she said, "You and your people." And I said, "What do you mean?" She goes, "I went on iTunes and searched under life coach, and every person that came up - she's like, of course, you were first - but every person that came up was one of your students." She goes, "And like, significantly high listenership and like, legit businesses." Like, that's how we roll at The Life Coach School.

And I said, "Here's what's so cool Angela, is that you are upset because my students are kicking ass." I go, "That says a lot about you" and she wasn't upset at all. She was jealous, but I said, "This says a lot about you, that like, you care so much about how your students do and you want them to do really well that like, you're checking out my students."

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I love that for us. It's like this genuine desire to help people be successful, and like, for sure this is how I feel is that if I coach someone and they are successful because of the work that they do based on my tools, that is almost as exciting as my own success. And like seriously, watching people completely change their lives and stop overeating and stop overdrinking and build businesses and become coaches and change their life is like, the most amazing thing that I can imagine doing with my life.

So just super stoked. Super stoked for all of my students, all of my listeners, for me; I just feel like it's such a collaborative win in the world. I can't imagine anything better, so thank you guys for being here, and I hope to continue to provide you with value so you stay along for this ride.

I have had as most of you know, a pretty amazingly epic year, and I'm looking to just double it next year. Double my contribution, double my impact, and not double my effort. I don't know if you guys know this, but I work three days a week. Scheduling all of my meetings from noon to five on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday, and the rest of the days I schedule nothing unless it's like an emergency, like my assistant knows that - sometimes she's like, "Hey can I schedule in on Tuesday?" I'm like, "Nope." And other times I'm like, "Okay, you have to put that on Tuesday because I don't have any other time."

But typically, I try to keep those days open and hold some space for my brain to think. I spend a lot of time thinking about my business and focusing on it, instead of just being in it. And the same is true of my life and my relationships and my relationship with myself. So that's what the plan is for next year, and I'm really excited, I just wrote all of the content that we're going to be doing in December in Scholars to be planning for the year, and I can't believe how incredibly powerful my planning process was last year to be able to blow my own mind as much as I did this year. Like, seriously, I look at my life and I'm like, "What? This is so awesome." And I want to do the same thing next year, I can't wait.

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So as you know, my goal in life is to be an example of what is possible to have my life be an inspiration, and I especially want to inspire women business owners who want to kick ass as life coaches. So I am doing that you all. A lot of people used to say to me, "The reason you're successful Brooke, is because you're training people to have a career and people are willing to invest in their careers" but I don't believe that's true.

I believe that people want to and are willing to invest in their mental health, and I've really proven that this year and really seen that people want to spend the time to make their lives better by managing their mind, and I have so many awesome success stories that are coming out of Scholars that we're actually doing a magazine. We're doing a self-coaching Scholars magazine that will feature some of those best success stories, so I can't wait to send that magazine out to you all and let you look at - what people have been able to do in a year is so awesome.

So this month in Scholars, what we're working on is emotional management, and we're trying to really reconcile that the world presents neutral things to us and we choose to interpret them positively and negatively. And the goal is not to interpret everything positively. None of us want to do that, right? We don't want to interpret all the events in our life positively.

You know, if we want to be happy all the time we just have to be happy about everything that happens. We're like, "Death, yay", "Puppies getting hurt, yay." That's how we would be happy all the time. But none of us want to do that. None of us want to be happy about all the things that happen in the world. So what we try and do is we try and change the world so it's all good, so we can be happy all the time, right?

So if we can just make the world better, so the world had nothing negative ever happen in it, then we can be happy all the time. But that doesn't work, my friends. We've been trying. We've been trying to make the world a better place. You know what happens? We do make it a better place in

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some ways and then it shows up negatively in other ways and I think it's by design that way.

And I'm not saying at all that we should condone negativity or we should condone bad behavior, anything like that. But what I'm suggesting is that there's a balance to the universe, and that there is this polar opposite experience that is being a human, and when we can embrace that, we can at least let go of feeling negatively about feeling negatively.

We can stop feeling negative about the negative, and that's what I'm going to be teaching - it's kind of like my latest brainchild that I've been really focusing on, so we're talking a lot about that in Scholars. It's a very controversial subject. A lot of people don't like the idea 50/50 emotional balance. They want to negotiate with me 80/20. And what I say is, "I think we should start with the 50/50 so we can stop feeling bad about feeling bad and we can stop being in a hurry to not feel bad", and what that does by default is release so much resistance and so much negativity.

So in this podcast, this is the first podcast that we're studying in Scholars for this month, and it is the neutrality of circumstances, and if you've studied the model at all, if you've listened to my podcast for a long time, you know that all circumstances are neutral. Now, people will raise their hand, they're like, "Wow, wait a minute, what about the fires in Napa, what about Harvey, what about" - and there's like two Harvey's that we need to contend with, right? "And then what about all the horrible things that happen in the world? What about all those things? How can you say that those are neutral?"

And what I will say is that they're not negative until we think that they're negative, and I'm not suggesting that we don't think that they're negative. A lot of times, people will hear me say, "Well if all circumstances are neutral and my goal is to feel happy, then you're giving me all the responsibility for all my negative feelings because you're saying nothing is negative." And that's exactly what I am saying.

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So don't be mad you all at me about this. I want you to think about it. Everything that happens in the world just happens. Some things we interpret as positive and some things we interpret as negative. Not everybody has the same experience of everything.

I was talking to a woman inside of Scholars, we have a board where you can ask me questions, and this woman was asking me a question about how in the world can we take the Las Vegas shootings and say that that's neutral. And she observes the situation as if she was - because the example I used is like a Martian, right? If a Martian was witnessing that happening and wasn't interpreting any of it as is it positive or negative, there would be a gun, there would be bullets, there would be people falling on the ground, there would be people running and people screaming, right?

And she was trying to neutralize that by describing it in a factual way, which yes, that is what I expect you to do when you're doing the model, is what are the facts of this situation. But I'm not suggesting that at any point, any of us would want to think about that in a positive way, or in a way that was to make us happy. That is not the goal of the model.

The goal of the model is really for you to just understand that how you thought about that event determined how you felt about it. So for some people, they didn't think about it much at all and felt kind of indifferent about it. Other people thought about it tremendously and were horrified by it. Some people thought about it in just a very sad way. Some people got very angry and political about it, right? Some people you know, got mad about the gun situation, some people got mad about the mental health situation, right? Depending on how you interpreted that event will determine how you think about it.

Now, one of the examples that I used is that one of the reasons why we're so horrified by events like that happening is because they're brought directly into our consciousness by the news media and by social media and by repetitive talking about it, right? And I'm not saying that shouldn't be

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happening at all, it's not what I'm saying. What I am saying is the reason it's so upsetting is because we're thinking about it repeatedly.

There are 44 murders that happen every single day in America. And that's a stat I got off Google, so we're just going to go with it. It may be more, it may be less, but let's just stay with the 44. Google it, it's got to be true. 44 murders happen. Now, most of us are not horrified every single day about the 44 murders. In fact, most of us are not thinking about the 44 murders every single day.

So most of us would say that most of the murders that happen in a day, we're pretty neutral about. We understand that murder happens, we understand we can't control all of the murder in the world, and so we feel pretty neutral on a day-to-day basis about murder. And the reason why is because we're not thinking about it consciously.

Now, if I were to give you the details of a child being murdered, or if any murder, the details about it and humanize it and make it a person and tell you the story about it, then you would probably think about it and then it would be much more upsetting because your thoughts about it would change. The murder hasn't changed. The neutrality of the event hasn't changed, but your thoughts about it change, that's why you are affected differently by it.

And the reason I bring up these examples about murder and the horrifying things is because these are the questions I get the most. People get really upset with me, "How can you possibly say that this was a neutral event?" They bring up the example of 9/11, "How can you say 9/11 was a neutral event?" The event in and of itself is a fact. How we choose to think about it is what causes us to feel.

Some people thought 9/11 was a successful day. Terrorists celebrated that day. How is that possible? If the event itself is horrific, then everybody has to agree because the event itself is the thing. But that isn't what happens, right? The event is neutral. How we interpret it and what we make it mean will determine how we feel about it.

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Now, that's really important when it applies to the big things as an example. But when it really starts to affect you in your life is when you pull everything in your life, all the facts into your life, and you start paying attention to how you're interpreting everything. You guys know there's people that interpret all the circumstances in their life as negative, and there are people that interpret no matter what's going on for them, as positive.

I look at people who are disabled, people that have horrendous experiences in their life, in my opinion, things that have happened to them that I think are incredibly awful, they have a very positive attitude about. You know, it's so inspiring to see how people interpret certain events in their life, because the events themselves are neutral, they are open up to interpretation. So two people can have the exact same experience, and one of them can use it to have a very positive, wonderful life, and one of them can use it to have a horrible life, and how do you explain that if the event itself is the horrible thing? You can't.

So I want to talk about the term 'circumstance'. Briefly, I define this term as things that happen in the world. Circumstances are things that happen in the world, circumstances are the things that we don't have direct control over from our current position. They are facts.

Now, what's interesting is when you study the law of attraction or Abraham or some of those teachers that I really admire, they would say that we do have control over the circumstances we attract into our lives and that everything we experience is because of our current vibration. Now, this is not something I teach, and the reason why I don't teach it is because I don't think it's as useful as understanding and interpreting the circumstances that are in our life.

I think when you look at my self-coaching model, one of the tendencies that we have is to start blaming ourselves, and to start beating ourselves up. When we start recognizing that we're responsible for all of our own thinking, then we start blaming ourselves for the results that we have in our lives, and I think that's a big enough hurdle to get over than trying to

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understand why we have "attracted" the circumstances that we've attracted into our lives.

I actually don't think that that is a useful exercise. I think what's much more useful is to look at what we've created directly in our lives, and see that everything that we've created directly is an effect of our thinking. I think that's a much more powerful exercise.

So an example of circumstances in the world might include other people's behavior, the weather, the political climate, war, death, taxes, other people's illness, our illness, the mortgage crisis, other people's opinions of us, the past, child abuse, et cetera. There is, of course, many, many more.

Now, Byron Katie would say, "Circumstances are reality, and when you argue with reality, you lose, but only 100% of the time." And what Katie means by this is that it's not the circumstance that is causing us pain, but rather our thoughts about it and our argument against it that's causing us pain. No matter how horrific your past, no matter how horrible the event, no matter how awful someone treats you, the only thing that ever causes us emotional pain is our thinking about it.

Now, the way that you interpret this information, if you try it on and are willing to believe it, is that you are powerful in your world. You are the one that gets to decide what things mean. You are the one that gets to decide how you're going to feel about things. I must note that accepting the things we cannot change is one of the most powerful things we can do. It seems almost paradoxical to think of acceptance as a powerful action, but it is.

Many of my clients believe if they accept reality, that they lose all their power to ever change it. But this is simply not true. Specifically, I talk about this with people and their bodies. I always teach my students, "You have to love and inhabit and accept the body you're in before you're ever going to be able to change it." And you can't pretend. You can't be like, "Okay, I love this body, I'll stay connected to this body just so I can change it."

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No. That's now how it works. We have to be in full acceptance that this is our reality and love this position that we're in in order to be able to change it. Accepting the present moment exactly the way it is now without completely identifying with it is where all of our power is.

Eckhart Tolle tells us over and over that the only power we have is in this present moment, is in this moment we have right now. When we are spending our present moment in a fight we can't win by arguing with reality, we're always losing in our present moment. That being said, there is a huge difference between accepting and condoning. Accepting the way things are, does not mean we agree with them or condone them. It just means we're not trying to change something by pushing hard against it. We are choosing not to go to war.

We are choosing not to try and force change with our own negative feelings. We can act from a place of peace and love and still move towards change. There is so much freedom when we release resistance against what the circumstances are. This does not disempower us just because we're not fighting or hating, which feels awful, does not mean we can't be an agent of change in the world.

Do you guys understand what I'm saying here? It's so key. So many people are afraid that if they're not angry, if they're not pushing against, if they're not resisting, that nothing will change. They believe that change comes from standing up for yourself and fighting and not condoning. And what I want to offer is that more affective change has come through peace rather than war. And when we can really see that this is true, when we can find the examples that when did the change actually occur, was when we stopped fighting, when the war was over is when the change happened, right?

So by looking at our lives and understanding that when I stand in hate or judgment or resistance against anything against myself, or any of the people in my world, what I end up feeling is hate and resistance, and positive change has a very difficult time coming from hate and resistance.

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Freedom from the fight in our mind is where we must begin if we want freedom in the world.

Circumstances are always, always neutral. But our brain is what makes them negative. Why? We want to be human. Our brain wants to protect us, it wants to label things as negative, but we need to make sure that we do it consciously. If you understand that everything that happens in the world is neutral and that your interpretation is what defines your experience, what you will start to know is that you are so much more powerful than you ever could have imagined.

The world isn't batting you around. All these things aren't happening to you as if you are a victim and the world is the perpetrator. The world is just doing what the world does. The world is presenting you with lots of neutral things. Some of which you want to interpret as negative, and some of which you want to interpret as positive, and that is a beautiful thing.

Your humanness wants to define some things as negative, and that goes in your thought line, and I'm not suggesting that you change it. But what you want to believe about things is just that, what you want to believe about things. So when you start thinking something out there in the world is bad or negative or awful, you want to make sure that you know you are the one that's interpreting it that way, and you have to decide if that's how you want to proceed.

So when you see that there's an article in the newspaper about child abuse, you will most likely decide that's a horrible, negative thing, and you will most likely decide to feel compassion towards the victims in that situation, and you will most likely decide to feel negatively over that that happens in the world.

But the other things that are presented to you that may not be so black and white, you may decide to start choosing less negative thinking. When somebody cuts you off on the road, or when someone cuts in line, or when someone doesn't call you back, you may decide in that moment that those are all optional negative experiences. If you're in charge of deciding

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whether those are horrible or not, you may decide not to think those are so horrible. You may decide to interpret those neutral events as neutral, if not, positive, if not just part of your life.

That's when you start to get some authority and some power in your life, and that's when you start to take all of these circumstances that are genuinely neutral and interpret them in a way that serves you and the world. And let me just tell you something, when you feel horror, when you feel angry, when you feel hate, you are adding horror, and anger, and hate to the world.

And just make sure you're doing it in a conscious way. Make sure you're doing it in a way that you approve of. Not some knee-jerk reaction that you don't feel like you have control over. You get to decide what everything means and how you will use each circumstance to either serve your life or detract from it. That is completely and totally up to you.

Your circumstances are neutral. What you think about it determines your entire life.

Have a gorgeous day, everyone. I'll talk to you next week. Bye-bye.

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