

Ep #198: What it Takes to Succeed (Success Stories from Scholars)



Full Episode Transcript

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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 my friends. I am so excited for you all to have this amazing treat, which is a collection of Scholars who have been successful. I titled this podcast "What it Takes to Succeed" because these are all people who have succeeded in different areas of their life using the tools that I teach on this podcast, and in Self-Coaching Scholars. I am thrilled for you to meet each and every one of them and to hear their stories. I recorded all of them in their entirety and we're not going to edit them, so this is going to be an exceptionally long podcast, but because the last one I did on success stories of my coaches who make over \$100,000 a year was so well received and you guys were so excited about it, I decided that I would do the same here. So please get yourself a cup of tea, sit back, relax, or get your running shoes on and go for a long run or a long walk and enjoy.

Brooke: Okay you guys, I am so excited to have Whitney on the podcast. You guys might remember her from the proposal episode. Whitney was the one that got proposed to and she and her husband have been listening to the podcast for a long time, and then Whitney joined Scholars and has done some amazing work in there. But I'm going to let her kind of start from the beginning and tell you a little bit about herself. So welcome to the podcast Whitney.

Whitney: Thank you Brooke. I am so excited. It feels unreal. Like a dream.

Brooke: It's a dream. So tell me. Let's start from the beginning of when you first found the podcast. Give us a little summary about you guys listening to me in the car and...

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Whitney: Yes, well girlfriend sent me a text message and I was in a pretty low place. I had not heard your podcast. She sent me a text message and she's like, "I thought of you, I know you listen to a lot of self-help, you've got to check out Brooke Castillo." And I remember exactly where I was when I received that text message. I was - I had been crying, I don't know what about, but like laying in my bed in a fetal position just feeling hopeless, trying to do a lot of deep work but not really having any tangible tools. And so the first podcast I listened to of yours Brooke, was on PTSD. And I was like, wow, this is good. Like, she's actually going deep. I have listened to a lot of people and it all seems very surface level, and she's really not afraid to talk about the painful stuff. And so I couldn't - from that point, I listened to your podcast pretty religiously, just really I think I caught it at a really pivotal point for where I was too. It was also - I think soon after that was like hedonism and all this stuff that I was just - my brain could not feast enough on because I was trying to figure this out on my own. So yes, that was the first time and I think that was like, maybe a couple months before I even met Jake, my husband.

Brooke: Even before you met him? Okay, so then you met him and you were always having me on in the car.

Whitney: Yes.

Brooke: And if you guys don't remember that proposal episode, you talked about how - I think I briefly talked about how you guys lived far away from each other so you guys would be listening in the podcast and then I loved how he talked about you guys talking about self-help together and what you were learning from me and applying it in your lives, and it was just such an amazing story. So it was so fun to have him propose to you through the podcast. It's like, amazing.

Whitney: Yes, and it was such a celebrity - I still feel like a little kid with you Brooke. You're such a celebrity in my mind, or like, you know, hero, role model, because before I even met Jake I was starting to do apply this work, just through your podcast. And I feel like - I felt like I was really

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starting to grasp a new mindset in a sense, just through your teaching and so when he and I met, I was like, "You've got to listen to Brooke Castillo", but I was also kind of like a test. Like how well, or how much does he desire improving himself too. Like, is this going to be something that I do on my own or is this something that he's going to be interested in. And it turns out we would do it like you said, together, or we would do it separately on our way to see each other, and then talk about it, just like, feasting on the information. And so, it was so funny when he said I have the best proposal for you, and he had talked to you. I was like, there's no way it would be Brooke Castillo. Like, that sounds impossible.

Brooke: So fun. So exciting. And then you guys joined Scholars and started doing all of that work, and one of the things I want to acknowledge you for, one of the reasons we chose you out of so many people to be part of our magazine and part of one of the success stories is how all in you were. As part of Scholars, it's a volunteer process where you volunteer to be coached and then you, you know, volunteer what you're going to be coached on, and you were always volunteering to be coached, which I think you and I have so much in common there because when I'm with my coach I'm always like, pick me, I'm first, I want to do it all. And so I got so many posts and emails and acknowledgment of how much people had benefited from seeing you be coached, and just in such a fearless way. And so I really take my hat off to you for that because I think - you know, one of the things I've been talking a lot about on this version of the podcast is when you take and make the effort to be successful yourself, it doesn't just affect you. it affects so many other people, and especially in the Scholars environment. You've been such an inspiration. So for those people who listen to the podcast who aren't yet in Scholars, let's - can we talk a little bit about some of the work that you did on your past and how you've kind of applied the model and the work in Scholars to move on to some emotional adulthood a little bit?

Whitney: Yes, absolutely. I honestly didn't realize, until I started doing your work, how much my past was affecting my current state of mind, my current

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happiness. And still, I think up until even - it is still a lot of my daily work, but in the beginning, I - there was so much pain, anger, fear, that in terms of like dealing with it and being able to feel like I was going to be okay, and I love how you say there's no emotion that can kill you. For me, I didn't feel like that. I felt like my emotions have the capability of killing me. Because it just felt so surreal, like, so in the raw, in the moment, even though it's years and years ago, but the reason that is what I've learned from you is that I never learned how to deal with those emotions. And so I was suppressing, suppressing, numbing, numbing, and as I was dealing with them, they absolutely were as raw of wounds as they were when they were actually happening. And so doing your work allowed me to have tools to feel like, okay, one, if Brooke can do it, I believe that I can do it because she wouldn't be offering these tools if they didn't really work. And so there was a lot of trust, and then two, I just - I knew I was willing to put in the work as long as it was going to be worth it. And I love how you talk about envision a future self, envision a better future you or your own self, because it gave me something to hope - to put hope in to the future for. And so it wasn't just like, okay, do all this work to feel pain, to hopefully get better. It was like, no, do all this work to feel pain so your life can be amazing, and I really bought into that idea and I believe it and I'm seeing it in my life, and so it's really powerful.

Brooke: So one of the things that I think is extraordinary about you is when you have a childhood like you did that's filled with abuse, it's very easy to identify as a victim, right? Because there's so much evidence that you are a victim. Now, the difference is of course when you are a child, you are a victim, you are helpless in that situation, but now as an adult, you are no longer a victim and yet you kind of came with a lot of that mentality. And so being willing to look at that from in a new perspective I think is some of the most challenging work that we'll ever do because how do we honor ourselves as children and what we went through and yet not give it power as adults. And I think that's been the work that you've been doing, and not just doing it but doing it in front of other people so they can see you doing that work. I think that that was the work of my life, that's the work of so

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many of our lives is really deciding as adults who we're going to be and what we're going to believe and not bringing our painful past with us, and let that - you know, letting that define our future. And so if you could just speak to a little bit about that shift for you and maybe think about the person that's listening to this that still feels very chained to their past and still feels - and what that might sound to you guys listening is well, I'm this way because of my past.

Whitney: Yes, and I can totally resonate with that because like you said, it absolutely, that victim mindset, has been me all my life. I'm 31 years old and my family is still stuck in that. And so I guess I have the blessing and curse of being able to see that and it's something that's stuck with me. I see it as a reminder that I don't want to be 60 years old, feeling like I'm still a victim, not having taken control of my life. And so the shift for me was realizing that if I can change the story that I'm telling myself, if I can continue to uncover the beliefs that are keeping me chained to my past, and if I can continue to become more and more aware of my thoughts that seem so natural, then I can start choosing, okay, you know, for me, my mind automatically goes to judgment, which I hear you teach that that's so normal, but coming from a victim mindset, the judgment feels - it doesn't feel - it feels protective, like I have to be judgmental to be protective, and I think that's probably my biggest shift that I'm still trying to correct is that my default thinking is no longer protecting me, it's keeping me stuck.

Brooke: Yes, that's so important, and that is so hard. One of the things that you said that I think is so important for people to hear, and some of the work that you've been doing is a lot of your thinking is so engrained that it doesn't even feel like thinking. It just feels like the truth, right? Many of us have these thoughts that don't sound like negative beliefs, but they're causing us so much pain, like I was a victim, I was hurt, I was abused, this was a horrible childhood. Any of those things just sound like you're conveying the facts, and yet when they're prominent in your brain they affect so much what you're able to do and create in your life. And so the work that you've been doing does not at all negate what you went through,

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but it lets it go, right? It lets it go and stay in the past where it belongs, and I think that work is so challenging and that's the work you've really done and I've just seen so much of a change, and a lot of people who do this work kind of come to it and retract from it, come to it and retract from it, and one of the things I've seen you do is just constantly open up and be courageous and be willing and present all the challenges that you're facing as an adult because of those belief systems. And I think that takes so much courage, but I think that's one of the reasons why you had so much success. So what would you say to someone who feels trapped and maybe they just started Scholars or maybe they really just want to get to the place where they feel like you do. You're not 100% totally done with this, but you have some perspective on it now.

Whitney: That's such a good question. The advice I would give is to be fearless with the process of learning a new really, tools, but the way that you've taught me so much that I feel like affects the way that I live my life differently is being able to use something that can genuinely change the course of my day just by acknowledging a thought. And so in the very beginning we would do the group coaching calls, I'm like, okay, I want to know from Brooke if I'm doing this wrong because if I'm doing it wrong I don't want to waste any more time being stuck at doing what I know doesn't work right. And so the fearlessness had to be pushed to the front and say okay, it doesn't matter who else is on the call, it doesn't matter how wrong I have it. I remember being on calls where you're like, "Listen Whitney, look, you're not getting the point." Like this is the C line and I'm like, trying so hard and my brain is just like not grasping it, but I got off those calls and I was like, I'm so grateful for your push because if it weren't for my desire to be like, okay, I'm going to put myself out there, and your willingness to correct that I think that that learning process gets kind of - you know, it's easy to maybe get discouraged or be like, I'm not making enough progress, or I'm not making any progress, and that's - man, it sure does take time and just patience.

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Brooke: I'm so glad you brought that up because I think it's important for us to talk about that a little bit because a lot of when I'm training coaches especially, one of the things that they're worried about is when a client is upset they want to have empathy. And your story is so painful to you and it's so real to you, so when you're trying to explain your story so I understand your pain, which is what we do, right? I agree with your story, I agree with you in that victim role. And so my job as a coach is to make sure you always know that I'm on your side but that your story sucks. And so that's the game that we're kind of playing in the middle of a coaching session. Like, listen, I love you but you're wrong. I love you but you're wrong. And that is challenging, and I'll tell you that even when I'm coaching myself and I'm negotiating that, it's like there's part of us that we're so identified with the painful story that we have that even though it's painful it's familiar. And so we kind of have to pry it away from ourselves. And so I think that that's something that we've had to do with you a lot because what we said earlier, you don't even recognize that your thoughts are thoughts. Like a fish doesn't understand they're in water, that's totally what it's like. And so I love what you said, that you know, just being patient, being willing to push your fear to the front and let it be there instead of trying to push it away, like let it be there, be honest about it, I think that that's such a guide for anyone who really wants to do this work. So what would you say was the most challenging part for you?

Whitney: Oh goodness. The most challenging, I think the past. Your past is not your future work. It seemed like the more I - everyday, that month that I woke up feeling like I was putting on my - I was suiting up for the Brooke Castillo work, it felt like things kept coming at me that were so challenging. Like, I think it was that week that my dad went into ICU, just a lot of different family things that my mind was really - it was really tempting, and often did go back into victim mindset, or this is my story, all of what you had just mentioned, and that month on top of the work with the events, I really got to see kind of an outside perspective of how intense it is when we don't all allow our space, like you talk about, that watcher posture. And so I really got to practice it a lot but it was painful, and I think it was like seven months

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in, so I was really beating myself up that I wasn't further along in your process.

Brooke: I'm so glad you brought that up. I know so many of our students go through that, and so many of my coaches, master coaches that have gone through this process, they're like, "Wait, I still feel pain. Wait, I still make all these mistakes in my models and I still get mad and angry and lose my mind and I still buffer", and all those things, it's all part of this process. But being aware of it seems to make it more intense I think because you're living such a more conscious life. So give us an update on your marriage. How is that going?

Whitney: It's going great. I am so grateful for the man that Jake is. We're currently business partners. He quit his teaching job, so that's...

Brooke: That's so scary and big and huge.

Whitney: It is, it really is, Brooke. And without your work, without your guidance, there's no way I would have probably quit my nine to five, he would still be teaching after 20 years. But you know what, I am currently dealing with a stepdaughter, and that's been a lot of I would say, kind of hand in hand work that I'm doing with my past and my future because now being a mom to a 12-year-old, I'm constantly going to a place of comparing our childhood, and that brings a lot of vulnerability, a lot of fear, a lot of different emotions, and so I feel like I'm starting your program some days just from the beginning. So, I just love that you remind us Brooke that even you wake up with the feelings of discomfort with all the things that you've received through doing your own work and being able to coach yourself. I love that transparency that you gift us with.

Brooke: I think it's so important to remember that we do this work and it does make our lives better and it does make us more successful, and we come so far, and we're still human. We still experience all of the things that aren't perfect in our life and all the areas where we do have shortcomings, we don't show up in the best version of ourselves, and if we can just always

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have our own backs in that process, I think that's what keeps us moving forward, because otherwise, we just curl up like you said, on the couch before you found my podcast and we just cry about it. And that doesn't help anyone. It doesn't help your stepdaughter, it doesn't help you. But when we can see like, hey, this is a challenging situation, this is bringing up all my stuff, then we can step in and you had mentioned you wanted to talk about this a little bit and I think it's a great way for us to end is just how - and maybe you relate it to your relationship with her. How has becoming more of an emotional adult - none of us are emotional adults all the time, right? But how has - and what we mean by that you guys is like just taking more responsibility for how we feel and how we think and how we show up in the world. How has that helped in your marriage and your family life and being a stepmom?

Whitney: Oh my gosh, night and day difference. And it doesn't feel like it all the time, but I believe that I'm able to show up for her in a way that will make our relationship possible. Maybe, maybe not sooner, but I believe that I'm helping be a positive role model for her by dealing with tough circumstances, being able to be vulnerable, that's something I try and practice, but choosing how I want to show up rather than allowing my emotion to dictate how I show up.

Brooke: Oh my god, that's so beautifully said. Because then sometimes we just want to act like the crazy people that we feel like we are in our head. I'll show you some crazy. Or we could just keep it right there in our brain where it belongs. That's so good. Well I love, love, love your story and I'm so happy that you and Jake are both in Scholars and that you're doing this work together. I think it's so amazing and I love that you know, you've shown up at the hardest days and then the hardest kind of work has been an inspiration to everybody else. It's like such an honor to kind of be coming up on the end of this year and seeing how much work you've done and how far you've come, and now I'm so excited to like really start seeing you explode in terms of your business and how much all of these things you've worked on will keep representing, but you will have that meta skill to

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be able to deal with it to really make your dreams come true. It seems silly now we're kind of just like, yes, that was nice that you lost weight, that was nice that you got over that terrible past of yours, now we're going to go on and make this huge business for you. But I feel like all of the things you've done are so important. They're all touch points of success that you've had, but more important than that is the skillset that you've learned of how to manage your mind and your emotions. And so that's something you can't - once you know it, you can't not know it. So I have no doubt - I know that you're kind of in this position right now where you're still struggling with doubt around your business; I don't have even a shred of doubt for you. Like, there's no doubt in my mind that you're going to be incredibly successful and I can't wait. We should have another call next year and talk about how many clients you have and how much money you're making. Maybe I'll have you on my 100K podcast next time.

Whitney: That would be amazing. And I just want to say thank you Brooke for doing this work because I don't know how many thousands of people I can speak for, but you really changed my life for the better and helped me have tools in my tool belt that I didn't even think were possible.

Brooke: I love that. Well, it's my honor. Truly my honor to have you as a student. Thank you so much for coming on the podcast and sharing your story. Make sure you give Jake a big hug for me and I'll see you on our next Self-Coaching Scholars call.

Whitney: Sounds great. Thanks Brooke.

Brooke: Thank you. Bye.

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Brooke: Alright, so next up we have Krista St. Germain. I'm so excited to have her on the podcast to share her story with you. so welcome to the podcast mama.

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Krista: Thank you so much for having me.

Brooke: Of course.

Krista: I feel like this is like a full circle moment.

Brooke: Yes? How so?

Krista: Well because I've listened to your podcast for years. Literally years, and it's changed my life so much and Self-Coaching Scholars has changed my life so much that to actually be on your podcast and be in a position where I'm part of the goodness and the inspiration is kind of mind blowing.

Brooke: Oh my gosh, that's so fun. I love hearing that. I kind of feel that way everyday right now. I've had so many of my dreams come true it's like walking - it is totally like that full circle moment. It's like I've been thinking about this for so long, this is so amazing. So why don't you tell us a little bit about maybe - you said you've been listening to the podcast for years, so let's talk about your journey from finding the podcast to joining Scholars to actually going through coach training.

Krista: Okay, so I don't know what I Googled to find the podcast, but somehow, I found it, some sort of you know, personal development kind of feel. And at the point when I found it, I was really just trying to figure out how to be happy, and I was reading books about how to be happy, and I felt like all the circumstance in my life were such that I should be happy, but I wasn't and I couldn't really figure out why. And so I really connected with your podcast, and then also a lot of the teachers that you would talk about every tenth episode were teachers that I knew and loved. But the way that you phrased things, you kind of took them and put them in this way that just simplified it and made it make sense to me. So I got hooked on the podcast, no problem, and every Thursday that was the first thing I would do. I would get up, check my phone, find the new episode, and while I was getting ready for work I would listen to the podcast. And so time went by,

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got divorced while listening to the podcast, which was a huge help, and totally not your fault.

Brooke: That sounds great.

Krista: Yes, no, but the podcast material really helped me keep my mind right during the divorce and then after. And then I got remarried and last August my husband was killed by a drunk driver, and - yes, last August, 2016. So, it was kind of, you know, spent a few months just in that tidal wave of just grief and processing it, and right about the time that I came up for air, you announced Self-Coaching Scholars.

Brooke: Okay, but wait. Wait, kind of back this bus up a little bit. So, you had already been exposed to coaching, so you already kind of knew how to manage your mind. What did you do to get through that? Because I will tell you, what I think is so interesting is that you have this story, you have this tragedy, this experience, but it doesn't define you, and you don't present as a victim, which you easily could because of this experience in your life. So could you just talk, just briefly, a little bit about how you've been able to move on from that?

Krista: Well, I've done a ton of writing. That has helped, but I think the biggest thing is just realizing that you know, I didn't choose these cards. They were dealt to me and it's - that's my circumstance, right? I get to choose how I want to think about what's happened to me, and that is where my power is, and that is what creates and shaped my experience and so that's where I have focused my time and energy, is how do I want to think about what it was that happened. And it's interesting because I went from - you know, I'd heard you say that you know, nothing in your past shouldn't have happened. We know it happened, it got the way it was meant to be and how do we know that? Because it happened. And I struggled with that for a long time, and then at some point, I just decided I don't have to believe that there's a right or wrong way to approach that. There are just ways to approach that, and I get to decide which way I want to approach it. So somehow over the past year or so, I've gone from "I don't know why it

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happened but I'm going to deal with it the best way I can," to "I think it is possible that it did happen for me." That's an option for me to believe.

Brooke: I love that. I love that. That's so well said. I think a lot of times, when we are trying to believe something, and this goes for me as well, is like it would be nice if I could believe that and we don't quite yet believe it. That's a beautiful way of presenting it to our brain, is it's an option. It's just an option. I don't have to force it on myself, but it is an option for me. Yes, beautiful. Love it. Okay, so then you decided to join Self-Coaching Scholars at some point.

Krista: Yes, so you know, I was already trusting you because every Thursday morning you delivered a podcast and every Friday you delivered an email. And you know, and I had already gotten great value out of it, but so when I found out there was an option, there was something that I could actually use, I did the math and I thought, okay, what she's offering is you know, totally makes sense from a value proposition stand point too, so like, what do I have to lose, right? And I'm ready. I feel like I'm ready. And at the same time, I was thinking about new career choices because I had this realization that life is short and am I doing what it is that I really want to do? So at that point, I had applied to go back to school, I was thinking I'm going to get a Master's degree in family therapy, and that was in December, and then Self-Coaching Scholars started in January.

Brooke: Wow, okay. So you started in Scholars in January. Amazing.

Krista: Yes, like early adapter right here.

Brooke: I love it, it's so good. Okay, so then you were going to go back to school and become a therapist, and you just started Scholars, and so tell me what that process was like going through Scholars - first of all, let's talk about it this way. Why did you join Scholars? What were you hoping to gain from it?

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Krista: I knew how much value I had gotten from the podcast in just listening, just absorbing, and I knew that when I actually had a methodology to apply the information to my life, in a purposeful, focused way, I just knew that it would make all the difference.

Brooke: Wow, that's great. So you started applying it, you started working on yourself, and when were you supposed to start school?

Krista: I would have started school in August of 2017. However, I also had to take a prerequisite course. So I did go ahead, there was one course I still needed at an undergraduate level that I did take in the spring.

Brooke: So let me ask you this. So when you do your work in Scholars, what is the stuff that you most struggle with? What do you have to spend your time working on? Like for example, I feel like my main issues are I deal with a lot of anxiety, so I spend a lot of time focused and working on my anxiety, and I have a lot of self-doubt, which everyone thinks I'm lying when I say that because I do my work on it so it doesn't seem like I have a lot of self-doubt. What would you say are the issues you work on mostly when you're doing your work in Scholars?

Krista: I think not worrying about what other people think. Not changing who I am to try and control other people's opinion of me. Perfectionism, not trying to be perfect, you know, actually - because I can take forever on an email, right?

Brooke: Yes.

Krista: Yes, I actually have to - the whole concept of B- work is so needed for me.

Brooke: That's so good. So let's talk about that a little bit because you've made progress in that area of not caring what other people think, and I have so many students, and I'm sure that there are so many podcast

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listeners that struggle with that as well. What have you learned that's helped you and how has that shown up in your life?

Krista: Well, the biggest thing I've learned about that is that I can't control what other people think. You know, I can put the best email out there in the world and it doesn't really matter because what people think is not up to me, and so any effort I spend trying to control what other people think of me is wasted. Plus, I get to choose how I want to feel about me and how I show up in the world.

Brooke: Yes, so good. So good. I love that. Any time I spend trying to control what someone else thinks of me is time wasted. If I was on Twitter - I am on Twitter, but if it was me on Twitter tweeting, I would tweet that. That is so brilliantly said. So good.

Krista: That's awesome.

Brooke: So then tell me, so continue with your story. So you're in Scholars, then what happens?

Krista: So I'm in Scholars and I decide that my one thing should be weight loss. So I had gained maybe like 12, 15 pounds since Hugo died, and so I thought, well that's one place I can just focus on and get control over. Get back to where I want to be. And so I had set a goal for myself, which felt a little unrealistic, and holy cow, like I kind of blew right past it...

Brooke: Wow, nice.

Krista: Yes, I know, right? So I lost 26 pounds and I was just I guess, shocked. I was really surprised at all of the work it gave me a chance to do and I was surprised at what the feeling of fat adaptation is like, and how much easier my day can be when my food is not that exciting, and how much mental energy I have when I'm not worrying about how I look or what food I'm going to eat.

Brooke: Right, because that is a full-time job.

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Krista: Oh my gosh, I had no idea. I mean, I did, I knew, but I really didn't know, and - I mean, I still sometimes have moments where I do, but the percentage decrease now of the amount of time and energy that those thoughts are troubling me is just so much lower.

Brooke: Yes, and I love that you say that you just had - you know, you just wanted to lose 15 pounds, because I think a lot of times, we think if we're you know - I had Angie I recorded before this. She lost 100 pounds, so when you think you're 100 pounds overweight, it makes sense that you would be thinking about wanting to lose weight all the time. But I think for some of us, like, just the ten extra pounds can be so tormenting, and one of the reasons why it's so tormenting is because we feel like we shouldn't be worried about it on top of worrying about it, right?

Krista: Yes, and it just felt you know, uncomfortable on my body. You know, it just felt like I knew there was this place and if I was there that - physically, my body would feel better. The way that my clothes fit, and the way I carry myself, and...

Brooke: Yes, I love that.

Krista: I'm happy to have that as a non-issue, or much less of an issue now.

Brooke: Now, what kind of - maybe this didn't happen for you, but did you have a lot of emotions come up for you once you started not using food to deal with emotional things? Or was that a non-issue for you?

Krista: Actually, it was more boredom was a big reason for me to eat. And sometimes confusion, which I found really interesting. So but nothing overtly painful, it was really just a matter of figuring out the difference, "Am I actually hungry? Would chicken solve this feeling right now? Is what I want really in the pantry?" And...

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Brooke: That's so good. If chicken won't solve it, it's so rare that chicken solves it.

Krista: Yes, it's true, right?

Brooke: That's so good. Okay, so then at some point you decided that you wanted to come to coach training. Tell me about that decision.

Krista: So I had coach training in my mind for a while, but I was thinking of it as like a side hustle. I was thinking, "Wouldn't it be fun while I get my Master's degree and go back and you know, and work towards therapy, to do this life coaching gig on the side, but I would never do that for a career. I would just - that just might be you know, a fun thing to do while I'm studying and getting my life in." And then the more I thought about it and the more I wrote about it, and the more models I did on it, the more I realized that it really was the coaching that I wanted. But what was in the way was this fear that I couldn't do it, what would other people think, what if I didn't do it successfully, and therapy in my mind was the safer path. You know, it's a degree, it's respected, people will you know, respect me for being in that line of work, and it's safe. I know if I go to school I'll come out with a job. So it didn't challenge me as much, and so it was really just a lot of models, to be honest.

Brooke: That's so interesting. So when you were - because I think a lot of people could fall into that but be unaware of that, right? So were you aware of it because you were doing this thought work on yourself and you were noticing those thoughts, or was that something you were always kind of aware of?

Krista: No, I'm not exactly sure at what point in the thought work it became obvious to me. I started kind of just feeling like I was on to myself. Like, I didn't want to look at it exactly, but I was kind of feeling it back and starting to be on the cusp of admitting it.

Brooke: I love that.

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Krista: Does that make sense? Yes, so I knew it was there and I knew it wasn't quite congruent. But it just took a lot of writing it out. Well, just the question of you know, if I knew I couldn't fail, which one would I do?

Brooke: And your answer was coaching?

Krista: Yes, totally.

Brooke: Because?

Krista: Because, and I love my therapist, so I'm not bashing therapy at all. But what I loved about coaching was that it was more - to me, more empowering, more future focused, and it was - I like the idea of someone holding a mirror up to you and saying, "You're not doing it right, you're not doing it wrong, but here's what you're doing, and here's how it's impacting your life."

Brooke: Oh my gosh, you said that so beautifully. Love it.

Krista: Yes, so it's helpful. It's not just, "That must be so terrible", because while empathy feels great sometimes, I needed more than empathy. So what life coaching gave me, therapy didn't.

Brooke: I love that. So you came to coach training, did you decide that you weren't going to go to school and get your Masters before you came to coach training?

Krista: I did.

Brooke: Okay.

Krista: I decided - yes, so I was already coming to coach training though, right? Like, I even booked my return trip, I booked this crazy early flight on my return trip because I was thinking I was going to need to be back in time for class.

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Brooke: Got it, yes.

Krista: So this was like in, June, maybe? And somewhere of June/July, I really did the work and I decided, "No, I need to be all in or I need to be all out. One or the other. And this one feels better, and I just need to do it."

Brooke: Oh my gosh, that's so cool. Okay, and so then you came to coach training, and you were amazing. And now you're going through the certification process to get certified. What do you think about that decision now? Where is your head? Because you should be - you're right along the point where you should be completely freaking out.

Krista: Well, I have recognized that completely freaking out is a normal part of the process, so I am right on track. But you know what, I don't think it should have happened any differently because I think I needed to go through that decision-making process, but I wish I hadn't been so angsty about it. You know? Because now it seems so obvious.

Brooke: That's interesting.

Krista: It's so obvious now. It's still scary, right? It's still scary. It's still going to challenge me, I'm still going to have to manage my mind and my thoughts and use all these tools on myself, right? But it was the right decision for me, and I have no doubt that it was the right decision.

Brooke: I love it. So tell me about your future. Tell me what it's going to be like being a coach.

Krista: I'm so excited about it. So I'm working still with Jodie on my niche. I picked one I think maybe at training, I just wasn't quite ready for the actual niche that I want, but what I really want is to work with women who have lost their husbands unexpectedly. And I just feel like, life coaching has been such a gift to me in that area, and there's so much there, so many tools that these women need, right? They need them.

Brooke: I love it.

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Krista: And so yes, I'm ready.

Brooke: It's so powerful too, I mean, I think when you've gone through something like that, it's so much more amazing to work with someone who can totally absolutely relate in a true way. I don't think that's absolutely necessary, but I do think it's really, really helpful. And so I love that for you, and I think that your story is so amazing. I love that you started in the podcast and then you went to Scholars and then you went to the certification and now you're really determined to become a coach. It's kind of like that dream progression that I have for anyone who has something amazing to offer the world, and I am just totally astounded by what it takes to go through that process. You know, I've been through it myself, it's not for the faint of heart, let's just say.

Krista: Yes, the differences in me now versus a year ago feel tremendous to me.

Brooke: Yes, I bet. I bet. You have really done this work and really - I mean, to do the Scholar work and then to do the certification work is really - that is no joke. So I am really excited for you too. I think your niche sounds amazing, I think there will be many lucky women to be able to work with you, and I'm so happy to be able to share your story, and I'm so happy that you're part of the School and Scholars and a coach, and I know that your story will be inspiring to other people. So if people want to get in contact with you, you probably don't have a website yet, or do you?

Krista: I have a - the domain name has been purchased but if they go to it right now there's nothing there, but it will be CoachingWithKrista.com.

Brooke: I love it. So if somebody wants to get in touch with you, are you open to them sending you an email?

Krista: Absolutely.

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Brooke: Okay, so how can get they get in touch with you just in case they want to know more about your story or?

Krista: Sure. Right now, it's st.germain.krista@gmail.com.

Brooke: Got it. Awesome. Alright, and we'll definitely put that email in the show notes if you guys want to get a hold of Krista. Krista, thank you so much for being on the podcast and sharing your story. So amazing.

Krista: Truly my pleasure.

Brooke: I am so excited to watch your career take off from here my friend.

Krista: Awesome. Hey, you know what I need to do? I need to send you a video of me jumping out of a plane. That was courtesy of your June - your dare of the day.

Brooke: Yes, please, do it immediately.

Krista: I'm going to send you that.

Brooke: Alright my friend, okay Krista, thank you so much.

Krista: Thank you so much.

Brooke: Alrighty, bye.

Krista: Alright, bye-bye.

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Brooke: Welcome to the podcast Jeff. I'm so excited to have you here. What we want to talk about with you today and what we want you to share with the people that are listening is what it takes to succeed. And we're going to start with where you started and what you wanted to be successful at, and then we'll jump to what are the obstacles that were in your way of achieving that and how did you eventually succeed. And here's where I

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want to kind of give you some insight, is there are - let's speak to the people that are out there that were where you were when you started, and let's kind of speak that language to them because you can identify probably with where they were and let's kind of take them on the journey, because my intention with this is to show them that it's possible, and that we're not special snowflakes. So anyway, welcome to the podcast, tell us a little bit about you and your story and where you started.

Jeff: Sure. Well, my name is Jeff, I started in the personal development in terms of being interested in making a better life for myself, way back when I was 14/15, and that's always kind of been a thread throughout my life, even though I haven't really been involved in that industry. I've always kind of focused on trying to create a better life for myself. And so I've had some ups and downs, and successes in business and successes in my personal life, and then a lot of failures and falling forward and a lot of challenges along the way as well. And I think when I was younger, I was able to pick myself up a lot faster and easier, then as I got older, for whatever reason, I started to kind of play smaller and smaller and smaller and smaller, and pretty soon I was playing really small, I was really super unhappy with my life and with my surroundings, and instead of doing something about it, I started kind of medicating myself with social media and drinking, and all this other stuff just to kind of drown out the anxiety about not living the life that I had dreamed about when I was a kid. Instead of doing something about it, I thought, "I'm just going to drown out the voice in the head that I should be doing something more with my life with all this other stuff and try to fill up that space instead of doing something about it."

Brooke: Yes, that is so well said. I think that there are so many people that can relate to that, where they find themselves in a life that they don't want and don't recognize, and instead of taking action to change it, they what I call buffer, self-medicate to be able to just handle it, right? And I think a lot of people would say they don't know how to change it, right? So they're in this position, they're medicating, they want change, but they don't know how. Were you there? Where were you with...

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Jeff: I was absolutely stuck. I had no clear vision, and it's not like I hadn't tried to find a way out. I mean, I've done the fire walks, I've done all the events, I've listened to the audio programs, I mean, I really tried, but there's so much information that I never really had a clear path. I kind of wallowed around in a lot of information thinking that maybe you know, something would happen and a magic switch would flip, but nothing really happened. And so I kind of felt like in this stuck spot with no way out, and wanting a way out but not really feeling like I've got someone to guide me out of this particular spot. And so you know, I remember when I was 40 - I'm 46 now. I remember when I was 40 going, "40, it's a big birthday. This is the year I'm going to break out and breakthrough and life is going to be different." And then 41, it's like, "Well, you know, this is going to be the year that I'm going to break out and have the breakthrough." And every single year after that I was like, "This is going to be the year." And the more time went over, I was like - I was just getting more frustrated and more depressed about the situation because the birthdays weren't having any effect. It wasn't the magic of getting through those birthdays that was helping me have the breakthrough. So I was getting - just feeling even more stuck and feeling like my best years were behind me, and that was you know, stacking even more frustration and even more fear and anxiety on top of the fear and anxiety that I was already feeling.

Brooke: Right. So let's talk about - because I think so many of us can relate to getting to that place, especially when we turn a certain age. We're like, how in the heck am I 45 years old and none of my dreams are coming true, and this isn't the life I imagined for myself, and so then we start drinking, or we start Facebooking or we start overeating. So tell me the effect of the drinking on your life at that point. You're already living a life you don't want to live, and now you're adding that to it. Tell me the effects of that.

Jeff: Yes, I thought that was the answer. I thought alcohol was the answer. I feel all this anxiety and angst and pain and worry and frustration, and I thought, "Hey, let's drink. It's going to solve that problem." And so I had

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kind of tricked myself into believing that was actually helping me because sure, it was kind of buffering the anxiety away, but it was creating additional problems, and in looking back, it was really keeping me stuck in that anxiety. So it wasn't helping me at all. In fact, it was actually just keeping me stuck in that box that was making me feel bad, which made me want to drink, which was making me feel bad, it just was this ongoing cycle. And so I got to a point where I thought, you know, I really, really desperately want to change this because I saw that it was keeping me from being able to achieve any new goals, it was keeping me from feeling good, it was keeping me kind of stuck, and I really wanted to change it, but at this point I had been drinking now for about 12 years, 12, 13 years, and I got into the habit of drinking in so many spots and so many places that it was very difficult to break out of that habit, and believe me, I tried lots of different things. I tried you know, carrying a coin in my pocket, move it to the other pocket after I had one drink, and that never worked.

Brooke: That didn't work?

Jeff: That didn't work. Oddly enough, that did not work. I had a rubber band on my wrist that I would pull - you know, all these like little tricks and things, but it never worked, and I would get more and more frustrated and angry at myself that all this stuff wasn't working, and then to drown out the voice of anger and frustration and self-loathing in my head, I would drink. So just kept that cycle going and going and going.

Brooke: Let's talk about that for a second because I think that voice that justifies the drinking is sometimes hard to hear because it sounds benevolent. It sounds like, "It's just one drink, it's fine, it's normal", right? And when you're not struggling with drinking to the point where you're not functional, it's so easy to justify it. But the problem which is what you've alluded to with justifying it is that it takes away all of your motivation to change your life because it's making it so your life is tolerable, because you can escape through the alcohol. So tell me how that sounded in your head.

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Jeff: So it's interesting, so half the time I was you know, kicking myself in my butt in my head. You know, I thought, you know, I'm just going to beat myself up happy. I'm going to beat myself up to a better life, you know? And so I didn't understand that there was positive motivation behind it, and then the other part of my brain was saying, "You know what, you deserve to relax in this situation, you deserve to take a break, you beat yourself up enough, now let's take a break and have a Pinot Grigio."

Brooke: Because it sounds pretty.

Jeff: Yes, it sounds great. And you're going to be able to relax and take a deep breath and connect with friends, and there's this entire story about what drinking meant to me, so I've created in my mind this really tense feeling on one hand, and then the other hand, my brain is going, "I'm going to let you release that through the drinking and through the alcohol, and I'm going to give you that relief that you need after all the time you just spent beating yourself up."

Brooke: Right. Right, and that's just this perpetuating cycle because what happened with me is I would wake up in the morning and just feel terrible, and I would say, "Okay, I'm not going to drink anymore." And then seriously, by five o'clock, I'm like, "It's fine, it's one glass", and it never was one glass for me. It was always more than that. Okay, so did there come a time when you decided you wanted to quit drinking, or were you just going to cut back?

Jeff: I was going to cut back. And the reason I was going to cut back is because stopping was impossible. In my brain, stopping was impossible, so I was surrounded by people that drank, I didn't know anybody that had actually stopped drinking, I knew people that I thought had - you know, were drinking just a little bit, not as much as me, and I thought, if I can just get to that point where I only drink when I go out to dinner, or I only drink when I go out to an event, that would be awesome because at the time I was drinking every single night, half to a bottle of Pinot Grigio, and I was just completely wrecking my motivation and doing anything with my life. So

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I just wanted to kind of pair it down where I felt like I was in control and could drink a little bit, instead of being crazy drinking person who drank all the time regardless.

Brooke: Okay, so you have the same obstacles that most of us have to drinking, which is drinking is normal and it's fun, and everyone does it, which is the storyline that we tell ourselves in our brain, and the other storyline is if we can't drink, there's something wrong with us, we should be able to drink socially like these other people are able to do. And so I love what you said because I felt the same way, like, stopping was impossible. Like, I couldn't even imagine that I could live in a world where I never wanted to drink again. So if someone is in the position now and they're thinking that same thing, "I would never want to quit, it's impossible for me", why don't you explain how you got to the other side of that, like, what took you there, what were you able to do and maybe some ideas on how you're not like I said, any different than anyone else who wants to do this?

Jeff: Yes, well I'll tell you right now, the me right now, and the me - like, right now, it's difficult for me to see how far that I've come. I mean, I do see how far that I've come, but I remember when I first started trying to stop, I mean, literally to the marrow of my bones, did not think that not only would I quit drinking but that I wouldn't have the urge to drink. I know people that have gone to different organizations and they've stopped drinking, but it's always like a white-knuckle, it's always there and it's going to pull me in. And I thought you know, maybe even if I quit drinking, it's going to have this pull, and being now where I'm at where I don't even have the urge and I can be around it; I was just at an event last night and I was holding somebody's drink while they went to the bathroom and I thought, "How crazy is it that I'm holding this fruity drink here that before I would have like snuck a couple of sips and maybe the whole thing, and now I'm holding it like it's just a glass of water, a bottle of water. I have zero desire, there's no magic over this alcohol." So that's a great feeling, but in terms of the process, really for me it was kind of a stair step process because I had different thoughts about every type of drinking that I was doing, so drinking

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at home I had a specific type of thought about, "It's the end of the day, and I need relief, and to relax and it's going to help me", so stopping drinking at home was a different process for me, or different thought process for me than stopping drinking when I'm going out to eat. That's expected, and I want their tip to be bigger so I want to have the alcohol. I had all these reasons why I needed to drink when I was out.

Brooke: Right, you could just tip them more.

Jeff: No, no, no, it had to be 20%, so I had to put the alcohol up there, right? So same thing with going to a friend's parties, I mean, they would actually - they knew that I drank a certain type of Pinot Grigio because I drank for so long around everybody, so they would actually have the bottle. Well, this is a gift, they're thinking about me, they love me, I have to drink this whole bottle.

Brooke: Yes, of course.

Jeff: So every part of it was a different process, but the great thing about it was when I stopped drinking at home and I realized that I could stop this part of it, I realized I can stop the next part of it and then the next part of it, and the next part of it, and pretty soon I got to the point where I was maybe having one drink a week, and then maybe one drink every two weeks, and then finally, the last month I had one drink that month, and then I got to the point of realizing you know, I just don't have a desire for it anymore. It's all around me, and it still is all around me, but the actual desire and urge for drinking just completely left me and it hasn't come back. And the interesting thing is I had a conversation with somebody the other day and they said, "You know, I see that you stopped drinking but you feel like you could have a drink" and I said, "You know, it's interesting, I absolutely feel like I could choose to have a drink and drink that drink and not you know, start drinking again, but at the same time, I actually don't have any desire to even have that drink." Like, if I was at a wedding and somebody said you know, here's a drink, you have to have the champagne to toast with, you know, I feel comfortable saying, "I really don't care to have it. I can toast you with water,

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toast you with anything else." I mean I super appreciate it, but I don't even have the desire to people please enough to take a sip of champagne at anything. I just don't have that desire.

Brooke: That's fascinating. Right? Because not only do I not want to drink it but I don't even have the desire to people please enough to drink it for your sake. That's so good. So why do you think you were able to do it? Why do you think - like, what was the hardest part, and what do you think separates you from maybe someone else that has gone through my program that's still struggling?

Jeff: Man, I think - well first of all, I was absolutely committed. Another reason, I mean, on top of not liking how I felt after drinking and feeling like it was keeping me stuck, I don't like having things in my life that I feel out of control with. I want to feel like at some level I have some control over things. I'm not a control freak, but I just - I want to feel like if it's something that I'm putting in my body, food or alcohol, or anything like that, then I'm making that active choice. It's not something that I feel is happening to me. And I knew because you and Rachel and other people had stopped drinking, that this is something that was absolutely a possibility, and above and beyond that, to have the ability to not want it anymore. So that's really where I wanted to go. So I was a thousand percent committed to the process and really put in the time, effort and energy to do it, and I tell people, "Look it wasn't - it took me six months. It was absolutely not easy. But I didn't expect it to be easy. I didn't expect it to be an overnight thing, I expected to fail forward. I kind of expected it to be a brand-new skill that I was going to learn, and it was." And as I saw progress, I went from drinking every night to drinking couple times a week to once a week. I realized I was making progress and that kind of helped me continue making progress and being able to check in and ask questions and be on calls and get questions answered, it just kind of helped the process until ultimately, the urge was completely gone.

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Brooke: Yes, I mean, I think that that is you know, if we're answering the question how to be successful, I think being 100% committed to something is a prerequisite, because you are going to fail along the way. And I remember even during your process you had nights when you went out, somebody did tell you to hold their drink and you ..., right? And not making that mean that you weren't going to make it. Not making that mean that you were somehow needing to drink every night again, right? So I do think that's a huge piece is that 100% commitment, and also it sounds like you believed that it was possible. At some point, you saw me, you saw Rachel, you saw that we had done it, and I think the other thing is I know for me, when I saw Rachel, it's like, she didn't make it look so miserable not to drink. I had seen people that had quit drinking and they just looked miserable, and so I think that's another huge piece.

Jeff: Absolutely. I had picture in my head of white-knuckling and it was a miserable experience. Like, I'd be able to not drink for the rest of my life but it was going to absolutely be miserable. And while I wanted to stop, I was really concerned about it feeling terrible for the rest of my life. But seeing the example of people that not only had stopped drinking but it wasn't making them miserable, that was huge for me because that's exactly the result I wanted, and knowing that there was a process to go through, regardless of how long it took that I can actually go through the process and see that result just absolutely kept me going. And like you said, yes, there were times when somebody would have me hold the drink and I'd drink the drink, and then go get another one, or somebody would buy shots and I'd take the shot because I felt obligated at the time, but I didn't really beat myself over that because I knew that this was all a process and I knew I was committed to the process and I was ultimately going to get to the end result. It took six months, but it was absolutely worth every day of those six months to achieve it.

Brooke: Oh my gosh, so true. It took me about six months too. I was drinking throughout that entire time, but now it seems like it was just a blank, right? Because now I feel like I have the rest of my life to be free. It's

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kind of like what you said about being in control. I used to feel like I drank against my own will. Really felt - really like I don't want to do this, but I'm doing it. I don't want to do this and I knew that I would just regret it. And so ever since then I'm been thinking about - like, my husband and I were thinking about going to Bora Bora, and I was like, "There's not a lot to do there, so you're just going to be on the beach." I'm like, maybe I should just go to Bora Bora and while I'm there, a drink on the beach. And I feel just like you do. I'm like, "But I don't want to." I don't want to have to go to a place where I need to drink in order to enjoy myself. So that kind of brings us full circle. Now you're in this life that you kind of have stopped buffering in, which what I've noticed with most people is once they stop buffering, drinking, self-medicating, then they're left with their life again. There was a reason why I started drinking, now I remember what it is, right? So tell me how you've been able to kind of reconcile that and live in the same life without the drinking and have you made more changes in your life because of it?

Jeff: Yes, absolutely because I really did - I'll tell you right now, the big thing for me that helped me stop drinking, and it's kind of the big thing about what you coach on completely that changed everything for me, was not trying to escape my feelings, I actually feel my feelings because like I said at the beginning, I've been through lots of different personal development programs and done all that type of stuff, but it was always about kind of escaping your feelings and try to get happy, happy, happy in the moment. When you talk about being able to feel anxiety or feel any emotion, that really changed everything for me because when I realized that I don't need to buffer with alcohol, then food came up, and other things came up, and then it really got me into the process and the practice of just feeling all these feelings that I had that were coming up because I was no longer buffering. And that really started to change my life because I started to be able to deal with the things that I hadn't been dealing with that needed to be dealt with in my life, to move forward, instead of filling up that space with alcohol and food and social media and every other distraction that I tried to move into after is topped drinking. And so now my life is

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bigger and fuller and yes, there's other things and other challenges to handle, but now I feel equipped to handle them because I'm not afraid of the feelings that come up as I'm moving forward. And so now instead of playing small and scared and in this little box, now I feel like kind of the world has opened up and I have a ton more opportunities without feeling like I have to hide from them with alcohol or food or anything else.

Brooke: Yes, that's so beautifully said, and here's the thing I want to say to you, and to all of my students who are doing this work. When you do this work for yourself, it benefits you so much in your life, right? Because you get to change and you get to feel better and you get to achieve more, but you also add so much by your example and by who you are and how you're showing up in the world. And so I know that there will be thousands of people that will listen to this podcast and be inspired by your story simply because you wanted to be better at your own life, and I think that's a message. It's not just - you know, all this self-help stuff we do, all this work we do on ourselves, people can stand on the outside and say that it's indulgent, we just want to have a better life and it's all about us, but it's really not because even what you're saying, like, showing up for the people in your life and people are asking you about it and wondering about it and seeing, hey, it is possible to do that, and so I just really admire you, my hat is off to you for doing this work. It's not easy like you said, it's tough work, but I'm so happy that you get to enjoy your own success and that you get to share it with everybody else. So one of these days I'm going to talk you into being your own overdrinking coach and so I know that you will have lots of clients for you for sure. So if people want to get in touch with you, what is the best way?

Jeff: They can actually go to my website at JeffGardnerLive.com and I'll have some...

Brooke: JeffGardnerLive.com?

Jeff: Yes.

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Brooke: And there's an email address in case someone wants to email you or chat with you?

Jeff: Yes, and I'm more than happy to chat with anybody about anything.

Brooke: Perfect, perfect. Thank you so much for being on the podcast and being an example of what is possible.

Jeff: Absolutely.

Brooke: Talk to you soon.

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Brooke: Welcome Eleanor to the podcast. I'm thrilled that you're here. before we started recording, Eleanor told me that she's in Sydney, Australia, and so she said I should come over, so I think I'm going to go over there for lunch tomorrow. I actually - one of my dreams next year is to take the family to Australia and New Zealand.

Eleanor: Fantastic.

Brooke: So if we do that, we will swing by because you'll know all the great places to go, yes?

Eleanor: My house.

Brooke: Well, your house looks amazing. We're on video so I was able to see her beautiful garden, so that's how we got talking about that. okay, so we are going to talk about your personal success and the accomplishments you've had recently, and I want to start with where you were when you started this process and what were the changes that you wanted to make?

Eleanor: Well, I've been listening to the podcast for a while, and I really liked it and then when - but it seemed to me that you had - you were talking about weight loss and about becoming a life coach neither of which was

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really my desire, so when Self-Coaching Scholars came available, I was in straight away. I thought, "This is perfect, she's reading my mind."

Brooke: Nice.

Eleanor: And I - there were two things I entered into the Scholars for. One was because I'd been at home with the children for six years and I really wanted to pursue something outside of just being a mom, and I was wanting to find out what that was and how I was going to do it, and the other thing was...

Brooke: But you knew it was not being a life coach.

Eleanor: Actually, you know, I've started to think about if I did become a life coach, what would be my niche [crosstalk]

Brooke: That's hilarious, okay.

Eleanor: Maybe in ten years' time we'll be laughing about this and you'll be like the most successful life coach you have. Do you want to know what my niche would be? Maybe I shouldn't give it away, someone else might steal it.

Brooke: Yes, you don't want anyone stealing your idea, because there's only one of you that can do it. Tell us.

Eleanor: I would be - you know what, if someone else wants to take it that's fine. To coaching people through childbirth, to make the most of their childbirth.

Brooke: Did you do natural childbirth?

Eleanor: I did. I did natural childbirths and it was amazing.

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Brooke: That is a terrible idea. We laugh about this in our household because my water broke, we went to the hospital and I felt that first contraction and I was - I looked at my husband, I said, "Hell no."

Eleanor: This isn't happening.

Brooke: "This is not going to work", and then it was so painful, but what happened was they did - I guess I went really fast, and when they finally checked me I was already like dilated to eight, and I knew I wanted - so I hadn't done any of these natural things that you all do that make pain less horrible, so anyway, I had my babies come quick so it worked out, but my sister had natural childbirth and it just looks painful. Just saying.

Eleanor: I was ready for anything, but it worked out. That's another story.

Brooke: That's a whole another story, we got a little sidetracked. I love it. Okay, so you wanted to join Scholars, but you didn't want to be a life coach, you didn't want to lose weight, what did you want to work on?

Eleanor: So I'm a singer. Before I had children, I was a singer, I was a performer in Vietnam and in Australia, and then I had completely given it a break and just gone full time mom, and now that they were getting more independent, they were - you know, I didn't need to change diapers anymore, things like that, so I wanted to perform but I didn't know which direction I was going to go in and what the plan would be. It was just a very kind of fuzzy, just perform somehow.

Brooke: Got it. Got it. And you'd been listening to the podcast for a while, so you wanted to jump in and kind of plan some direction for your life and start going after it, it sounds like?

Eleanor: Yes.

Brooke: Okay.

Eleanor: And the other problem was I thought I was going to die.

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Brooke: Which is just a minor side note.

Eleanor: A minor side note. I was convinced I had cancer and I was going to the doctor. I mean, I had a reason, like, I was doing some renovation and I breathed in some of the wall that was being dusted, that was being sanded, and I just was convinced that that one exposure had given me lung cancer. And so it sounds funny now I say it that way, but it was taking over my everything, like in my mind. I was getting to a point where I was non-functional.

Brooke: So that is so interesting to think about you guys, when we think about the model and when we think about thought work. I had a similar experience this one time where I thought something had gotten caught in my throat. I was like, totally convinced of it that there was something wrong and that there was something caught and I was going to end up choking and they needed to get it out. I went to the doctor and he was like, "There's nothing in your throat" and it was like I was so bent on it, like I had gotten this thought air in my mind that I made them - I said, "You have to check it, you have to" - like, they did all this invasive stuff to tell me there was nothing wrong with me. So I understand that. You get this idea in your head...

Eleanor: Do you still think there's something in your throat?

Brooke: No, they got - they checked it and everything was fine, and once they did the x-ray and showed me, then I was fine, but I was like, bent on it. [crosstalk]. Okay, so that was just a minor note, so you were like, "Listen, I want to know what to do with my career, but then I also need to make sure I'm not going to die."

Eleanor: Yes. That's it. If we could fix those things for me, then that'd be great.

Brooke: Please help. So then what happened? Tell me after you joined Scholars, because - and the reason I wanted you to talk to us a little bit

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about how you applied what you learned in Scholars is just there's a lot of people in Scholars that want the kind of success that you have. They want the kind of results that you've been able to achieve, and so I kind of wanted that person that may be struggling or just started, I want to kind of give them some insight about why you were able to be so successful. So what do you think that was?

Eleanor: I think the times when I've seen the most amount of results is when I've just been sticking to every day the same time of day, doing the work that's set out. It's pretty much as simple as that. And the times that I've been like, "I don't think I need to do that", I see no results. So it's pretty much do the work, get the results. Don't do the work, don't get the results.

Brooke: That's so great.

Eleanor: And I guess that I carry it around with me all day long, trying to - through this new filter of when I go through life, I'm carrying the model with me so that there's this little tool that I have in my bag that helps me deal with everything that comes up because there's circumstances I can control and there's other things I wasn't expecting, but now I've got some way to actually work through it.

Brooke: I love that. So tell me, what were the hardest things for you as you kind of ventured into this journey and started kind of prying away some of this thinking? What were the obstacles you faced?

Eleanor: So the hardest thing - what? Doing the work?

Brooke: Yes.

Eleanor: Well, the hardest things came up when I had to finally - and it was about almost six months in, that I had to finally deal with some thoughts that I'd had there for a very long time, and I didn't even know that they were even there, even though I thought them on a daily basis. But to actually pull all of those thoughts out - no, I had to do this because another side note

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was that my relationship almost fell apart right in the middle, and I used this work to completely rebuild our relationship to the point now where I'm unbelievably happy. But in order to get there, I had to deal with some very painful thoughts.

Brooke: Yes, we've talked about that a little on this podcast with some of your fellow students is that some of the work that we have to do on ourselves to change our lives is on thought work that we don't even recognize as thoughts because we thought them for so long. They're just part of who we are, right? So it's very challenging to be able to kind of step out of your brain and look at your brain, and I think that's one of the biggest differences that I'm seeing in my students that are in Scholars versus my students that just listened to the podcast is because - or even having a coach, right? Someone that can give you that perspective and show you, "Hey, did you know that that too is just a thought?"

Eleanor: Yes, right.

Brooke: It's kind of like you know, you're a fish in water. You don't recognize the water all around you. So...

Eleanor: Well, and I guess you got to be responsible then as that if this is not a fact, then I have to take responsibility for this and you have to humble yourself in a sense of, "It's not everyone else's fault after all, I can't blame anybody. This is up to me."

Brooke: Which is maddening and empowering all at once, isn't it?

Eleanor: Exactly. It's good news and it's terrible news.

Brooke: It's good news because then you can change it, and it's bad news because what happens for some of us is we end up blaming ourselves for something we've been suffering with, right? Instead of just [crosstalk]...

Eleanor: Yes, that too.

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Brooke: Yes, and so that I think that art of really making sure like when I coach someone, to make sure that like, "Hey, I'm giving you responsibility for this, but do not spend the next three days beating yourself up over it either because then that doesn't serve any purpose either." You know, really taking responsibility and making that change is what does it. So tell us...

Eleanor: It's interesting you should say that because Susie - sorry?

Brooke: No, go ahead.

Eleanor: It's just that while I was in really the thick of I really didn't understand why I was doing what I was doing, and I had to talk to you and you said, "What's the thought behind it?" And I was like, "I just don't know. Tell me, can you fix it for me?" And then Susie sent me this email saying, "You better be compassionate for yourself and watch yourself with compassion as opposed to constantly judging yourself, and this is the way through." And when I was able to see myself as if it was just somebody else was when I got some insight.

Brooke: Yes, that's so powerful, right? Because we're so hard on ourselves from within our own lives, and if it were someone else going through it, we would be like, "Oh my gosh, let me hug you, it's going to be okay", right? That's so true. Having that self-compassion is such a huge shift. So tell us, since you've been doing the thought work and making these changes, what has transpired with your career?

Eleanor: Okay, so I made the decision that I wanted to create a show for preschool age children, and it's call Cheeky Tunes Song and Dance Party, and I've written 12 songs so far and I have done a business plan for it and I've got my logo. I'm right in the middle of like, in creative mode at the moment.

Brooke: Love it.

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Eleanor: It's so exciting actually, I was starting to just - when I start talking about it I start to shake with excitement because I'm so proud of everything that I've done and I just love every minute of it.

Brooke: I love it. So what do you think - so I actually was just in Scholars on Ask Brooke, and people were talking about feeling frozen and stuck and not able to be creative and not able to make you know, do what you're doing right now. What do you think...

Eleanor: Well I asked you once, what do I do with the thought, "I'm stuck" - no, what do I do when I feel I'm stuck, and you're like, "Well that's just a thought" and then you said to me, "I'm never stuck, I flow just like water", and I was like, "Okay, I'm going to use that", and that's been my motto for the last sort of six months is that I feel I'm stuck, no, no I don't get stuck. I flow. And I've just been flowing.

Brooke: That's so good, and too, and one of the things that I think happens is when you don't allow you to think the thought, "I'm stuck", and you flow and you start - then you start building the momentum because now you have these songs written and now you have - now it's starting to become real, right? And so that becomes - I just got chills - and then it starts motivating you to kind of take it to the next level and then the next level. Now, you're still scared, you're still feeling all that stuff but you're able to manage it. That's good. Alright, so let's talk about your impending death.

Eleanor: So I had to get myself to a point where I had explored all possibilities of what could happen in life, and eventually I have to - the solution for me was to get - make friends with uncertainty. Because that's what I was trying to do was that I felt so uncertain, so at least if I knew I was dying, even though that's awful, I could be certain of that. And so I had to sit with terror and dread for long periods of time, and I had to was an interesting way to say it because I got to was actually the best thing I ever did because I feel this sort of sense of doom coming over me and before I'd be like, "I hate this feeling, this is an awful feeling", and I'd start to resist it by telling myself, "Everything's fine, you're not dying, everything's fine,

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you're going to be fine." That didn't work. I still felt the doom, it's just now I had some sugar coated over the top of it. And so I actually went, "Okay, we've got doom today, let's try doom and terror on and see what that feels like." And so I just sat and felt that wash over me and while I'm feeling and I'm thinking, "This is a nasty feeling", but in a very calm way, and then the more I was able to do that, then at least I didn't feel any panic about the fact that the doom feeling was there. So the panic was going and then doom sort of found its place in my body where it could come and go quite quickly. It sounds a little - I don't know if that sounds wishy washy, but that was my experience is that I felt that and I can do it again. If it comes again I'll just feel it again. So that's the worst thing that can happen is that say for instance I got a diagnosis, I would feel probably a sense of terror and doom, and I'll sit with that until for as long as it needs to be. That's the worst thing that's going to happen to me is how I'm going to feel about whatever's happening.

Brooke: Wow, that is so beautifully said and so hard for us to comprehend, right? No because like let's talk about this for a minute. This is so big because we think the worst thing that can happen is dying.

Eleanor: Yes, right.

Brooke: But dying, you're dead. So then that's not so bad, right? You don't even know that you're dead, right?

Eleanor: Exactly.

Brooke: Anticipation and the worry about it and the doom and the terror that we're feeling about it that makes it so awful. Especially if it's not even true, because the truth is, and you guys really think about it, the truth is any of us could die today.

Eleanor: Exactly.

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Brooke: And if we start thinking about that, we're going to feel awful. We don't want to...

Eleanor: And we can't be certain about it.

Brooke: That's right. That's right. So gosh, I think you said that so beautifully. I know that a lot of my students in Scholars and even just my podcast listeners really struggle with worry and fear and anxiety about health issues about their you know, about their life and their health and all of those things, and I think the way that you described how you dealt with that is like literally life altering for people if they can get a hold of it. The last thing any of us want to do is feel really negative terrorizing emotions, but that's exactly what we need to do in order to not hold all of that emotion and resistance in our body and create physical pain from holding all of that anxiety and all of that worry in. So I love the way you...

Eleanor: That's what I was doing is I was getting chest pains, so I'm like, "Well look at these chest pains, this is cancer" [crosstalk] - well, what it was it was resisting my emotions and it was manifesting itself in my body.

Brooke: That's so common for so many of my students. They're feeling so much pain in their body and part of it is because they're resisting the pain that's there physically and emotionally.

Eleanor: Exactly.

Brooke: I think you being able to demonstrate that you overcame that is so inspiring to so many people because a lot of people when they talk about success, they talk about, "I made all this money" or "I was able to achieve this huge dream", and I think for some of us, we just don't want to be in panic, doom, and terror all day. That's our...

Eleanor: Exactly.

Brooke: Right? And that's a real genuine thing, and I think for women like us, we have good lives, we're married, we have children, we have plenty of

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money, we have all these things going for us, and then we're feeling panic and doom and it doesn't seem realistic, and then we feel guilty and upset at ourselves for doing that to ourselves so then it's just compounded all of it. We feel like we don't have a right to be freaking out about things. So I love that you're like, "Listen, this is what I'm feeling right now. This is what's going on for me and I'm going to embrace it." And as you were talking, I was thinking about this one time when my son got in a car accident and I was so upset about the car accident and so freaked out about the car accident and I woke up and I went, "Oh no, was that real? Did that really happen?" and instead of like shutting down and trying to pretend like it wasn't happening, I did exactly the way you described it. I just opened myself up to the terror and the doom and the awfulness of all of it and it still felt terrible, but not as terrible as resisting it. I'm like, who knew that doom could feel better than resisting doom, right? And it's so true. It's like, you just – Pema Chodron taught me this, you know, like, you just open your heart to the worst that can happen and all of a sudden, the worst that can happen isn't as bad as it used to be. It's still bad.

Eleanor: Yes, it doesn't make it fun.

Brooke: No, it doesn't at all. So before we end, just briefly tell us a little bit about your relationship and a few of those changes that you were able to make that made your relationship so much better because maybe someone could borrow some.

Eleanor: Okay, so basically, I thought that I was happy in my relationship. I thought we were happy and we were great, and I had all the evidence to believe that we were fantastic, and yet this thing happens that I started to get feelings for somebody else, and when this happened I really lost it and I didn't do the work. I just like, reacted and resisted the entire time, and tried my best to basically to just be good. Don't answer the phone, don't talk to him, I set all of these rules that I was going to follow, and then I just completely broke all of those rules. So it was - I think you could liken it to eating, that I don't want to eat this particular thing, and so I'm not going to

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eat it, and then you just like, you're eating against your will and all of a sudden, you've just finished a whole chocolate cake. So that's basically what it was like for me is that I lied to my husband and I went out to see this guy and I tried to kiss him and then I came home and I basically was a mess and my husband knew there was something wrong and I just told him what had happened, and that was a really dark time for the two of us that we - he was considering just telling us to part our ways. He was unbelievably hurt, unbelievably disappointed and it really rocked his world and for me as well, but for me, I was like, "What is going on? How did this happen? Why did I do this?" and I couldn't understand my actions and I couldn't understand my thoughts, and so I jumped on a call with you and I told you what had happened and you said to me, "What is the thought that caused you to do this?" I was just like, "I know you don't like it when your students say I don't know, but I don't know. Can you please just tell me? Is this a test? Do you know?" And then you were just like, "No, you just do a thought download and find out." And I was like, "Is that it?" I really was hoping you were going to solve this for me. And so, I just - I spent about two hours at night when the kids had gone to sleep doing a thought download, but this time not trying to put nice thoughts in my thought download of like, look how awesome I am at doing a thought download. I was just putting - writing down everything that came to mind and that could cause an action like this. And some stuff poured out that it relates all the way back to when I was a teenager, my thoughts about men, my thoughts about myself, my thoughts about sex, and I started crying and writing and crying and wiping the tears off the ink. It was an unbelievably painful experience and a beautiful experience that I'm so grateful for because I was so able to see everything that was in my mind and just like taking everything out of the drawers, I just took everything out and then I had to do the work of questioning every one of those thoughts about am I going to continue to think that and what am I going to think instead, and that took some real time because there were a lot of thoughts, and also I could start to have some compassion for myself because I realized that there wasn't just one thought that had caused all of this. it was multiple, multiple thoughts that even by themselves anyone would go, "Well, you don't really

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think that do you?" But I was thinking that. I was thinking things like - I'm trying to give you an example that's not R rated, but I'm damaged goods. Like, I've had too many relationships in the past and therefore I'm damaged and I don't deserve to enjoy having an intimate relationship. So I went through it, I ran the model on each one of those and then I circled them and I wrote, "Poisonous lie" and then decided what I was going to feel next. And so from then, I was like, "Okay, I've done all of my new models, now what's going to happen?" And so - and then we packed up everything and went to America for three months on a road trip, the whole family. We took the kids out of school, and we were just our family together because part of it was that I wanted my husband to really take part in our family so that I wanted to block off everything, and I invited him to do the work with me and he was just, "I don't believe this, that it's my thoughts causing my feeling. It's you causing my feelings." I'm like, "Okay." And so I was like, "Okay, he's not going to do it, I'll just do it because I can only present so much to him" and so I just did the work, and every time one of those thoughts came up, I was able to see it for who it was. It's like someone who has been living in your house for a long time and then all of a sudden like, "Wait a minute, you're not a part of this family. What are you doing here?" And so I'm like, you can leave now. So I just keep on letting them out.

Brooke: I love it. I love it. And so you know, I love that your husband didn't want to do it, not that I wouldn't want him to do it, but Marianne Williamson taught me a long time ago that it only takes one person in a relationship, and it's whoever is most sane at the time, which I always think is my husband. He's always the more sane one, but it sounds like the work that needed to be done was yours, right?

Eleanor: Absolutely.

Brooke: And that's the work that got done and that's why my guess is that's why your relationship has changed so dramatically, even without him doing...

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Eleanor: Yes, he seemed to change things but not because - like, I just asked him, like - it used to be he didn't do something and I would just have thoughts and resent him, and now I've tried something on, "Would you please do this?" and surprisingly, he does it. Isn't that funny?

Brooke: We want our husbands, we're like, "I want him to want to do it without me asking."

Eleanor: Exactly, it should be obvious. And now I'm going to put all this resentment and I'm going to go and you know - it's funny, like I did something on about Brooke about how just recently I have decided - can I talk about sex or is that...

Brooke: Of course, yes.

Eleanor: So I wanted to bring our sexual relationship to another level, and so I did this work and I realized that I had this thought about just do it anyway even if I don't feel like it. And so I was like, "Okay, that's the answer" and I said to him, "You know what, I'm not doing this anymore unless I feel like it." And he was shocked and stopped talking to me for three days. I'm like, "What's your problem? I'm just being honest" and I'm like, "This is abuse, you can't just stop talking to me", and then I did some thought work and I wrote to you, I'm like, "Why is he not talking to me?" and then I realized, "I was trying to change my actions but what I needed to do was change my thoughts of why am I thinking these thoughts of I don't feel like it. If I want to change our relationship, I should deal with that thought of why is it you're always thinking that you're too tired and you don't feel like it, and get yourself to a point where you feel like it more as opposed to blaming my husband"...

Brooke: If that's what you want. If that's the end result you want. What I loved about that...

Eleanor: If that's what you want.

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Brooke: Yes, that's right. What I loved about that experience, watching you kind of go through that was you posted to Ask Brooke, and I read your post but I wasn't - because sometimes the post comes through on my phone, so I wasn't home and able to respond to you. And then by the time I got home, you had already come back with another post where you had really done this work on yourself and kind of come to that answer and I was like, "Oh my gosh, that is such a deep, awesome, amazing work." Like, it really shows your growth in terms of your mental capacity, your mental health, and you know, your skill set in being able to manage yourself. So that was like, holy cow, well done. You're not even trained as a coach and you're using all this stuff so brilliantly on yourself that you're able to like really coach yourself at the highest level. So kudos to you. Alright my friend, I know that we could go on talking and talking but I just want to say that I think a lot of what you've said here today will impact a lot of people. I think they'll be very inspired. Is it okay with you is someone would like to reach out to you, ask you a question, maybe ask about your business, something like that? Is it okay for them to email you? Would you like to put your email or...?

Eleanor: Sure.

Brooke: Okay.

Eleanor: I could put my Cheeky Tunes email but I haven't set it up yet. I'll give you my other email. So it's eml95@hotmail.com.

Brooke: Hotmail.com mama.

Eleanor: Hotmama.com.

Brooke: I love it. I love it. Alright, if you guys want to reach out to Eleanor and just give her some feedback or ask her a question or anything, that's her email address. Thank you so much for being on the podcast today, thank you so much for working so hard in Scholars and being one of our

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success stories. I know that you're going to inspire so many people with the work that you've done.

Eleanor: Thank you.

Brooke: Yes, and I want to hear all about what happens with your career and your job and your business and all of it. It sounds amazing. I can't wait. It's just going to keep getting better. Talk to you soon, bye.

Eleanor: See you later.

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Brooke: Well hello there Clotilde, welcome to the podcast.

Clotilde: Thank you so much.

Brooke: I'm so thrilled that you're here and I'm very excited to talk to you about your success and what you have done in terms of coaching yourself and getting some success in your own life. But why don't you first just introduce yourself a little bit, tell us a little bit about you, and we'll go from there.

Clotilde: Sure. So my name is Clotilde Dusoulier, I am French, I live in Paris, and I am married, I have two children, and my main line of work is a food writer, so I've been a food writer for 12 years and I've had a food blog called Chocolate and Zucchini for 14, so I discovered your podcast in the summer of 2016, so a little over a year ago, and within about three weeks I had listened to everything that you had...

Brooke: Oh my gosh, I didn't know that.

Clotilde: And seriously, just within two weeks I felt like you had changed my life. It was just extraordinary, it was a huge shift in my thinking. I was also consuming personal development content from other people, including Jess Lively, whom I know you know and like.

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Brooke: I love Jess Lively, yes.

Clotilde: And I feel like the conjunction of your work and hers is just a perfect combination for me, but so this was just a huge interest to me and when you announced that you had a program, at first you know, I was thinking, well, it is a lot of money, I was wondering about the investment. I had some experience seeing therapists in the past to kind of overcome things that were you know, just life stuff that had been - you know, that I felt I wasn't digesting well in a way, and so this was kind of like, "Well, is this an addition to it? Is this a replacement?" So I let January pass by, and so I did not join in January when you...

Brooke: I didn't know that. I thought you had...

Clotilde: No, I missed January.

Brooke: Oh no.

Clotilde: And after just a couple of weeks I was like, "No, I just can't not be a part of it." So I joined in early February, and I thought that your podcast had changed my life, but the work you know, having accountability, having access to all that material and really being encouraged to be in contact with it on a daily basis, just moved me to a whole new level of just understanding. Because you can - the podcast is super helpful and there's just so much value in it, but when you can ask specific questions that relate to your specific situation, because we all understand you know, in theory, but then you're like, no, but listen, and it's always what you say, people tell you, "No, but you don't know my husband" or "You don't know my life".

Brooke: Right, right, I'm a special person.

Clotilde: And so understanding the specific ways that it applies to your specific situation was really life changing and also just hearing you - so I can never attend the calls live because I'm in France, and so the time difference makes it really challenging because I have two young children,

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but I listen to all of them, all of the ones that you do. Now there's just too many total for me to listen to all of them, but I listen to all of the calls in which you coach and just listening to you coach is - I think it's a little bit like learning a foreign language. It's like an immersive situation, the way that I learned English was to live in a country that spoke English and I feel like the way that I absorb your teaching is through listening to it on a daily basis and applying the work.

Brooke: So let's talk about where you - when you first started, what were you most wanting to work on? What were you most struggling with? What were the goals that you had?

Clotilde: So my main hang-up was about kind of like, this balance between being a professional, so I have a career that I love, my husband has work - a job that he loves also that is a little more - it's less flexible than mine. We have two young children, and you know, it's always that dance of who does what, who you know, who carries the heaviest part of the load, and it was this thing where I could tell that I was confused by a lot of things, I did not know how to just be happy in that situation. I guess my main hang-up was not having clarity around what I wanted to do, what I needed to do, what I was doing for myself, what I was doing for him, what I was doing for my kids, and so kind of like keeping tabs on things, and just a lot of confusion and unnecessary suffering around this. It was really weird.

Brooke: I think you're one of my most ideal clients. When I think of clients that I love to work with, they're clients like you. You're very successful, I mean, you've written books that were very well received, you're very popular, you have a very popular blog, you're happily married, you have the two kids, you live in Paris for goodness sakes. You're not allowed to complain about anything, right. So the fact that you are suffering in any way is almost like one of those things that, "But you don't have any reason to be suffering, right, because isn't like great. What do you have to suffer about?"

Clotilde: I completely agree, and I think there's so much value to helping - because you're like, if people who don't really have specific reasons to

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complain, you know, can't actually enjoy their lives then what hope is there for the people who have real things. But one thing that I want to note is that one thing that I understood over the course of our work together is that there is something in terms of mindset that is also our own thinking that says whether or not we have the ideal life or not. Because I have been through hard things, things I don't necessarily make public, but like health issues, pregnancy issues, that sort of thing; and I realize after the fact that I kept a fairly optimistic outlook on those things when they did happen. So I had a basis of just feeling in general like life was treating me kindly despite those things that were not ideal. So to answer your question, briefly, my main thing is that I was thinking I have a wonderful husband who I love passionately, I have amazing children, why can I not be super happy in my family life. Doing the work really helped me understand emotional independence and emotional responsibility was like a life changing thing, and this was possibly the most life changing teaching for me.

Brooke: So tell me how it changed you, because I think a lot of people will listen to this story and say, "Yeah, I'm in the same situation where I can't find happiness and I feel like I should be happy and yet I'm not, but emotional responsibility sounds like a drag."

Clotilde: Well I think, to me, there's something – I think of it, especially when it comes to relationships, it's the fact that you kind of have this idea when you're a little girl that someday – it's kind of like the Prince Charming fantasy, where you're like, "Well one day I will find somebody who loves me very much and who I will love very much and he will fix all of my problems and he will make me happy." And it's true that it's kind of a drag to think, "Oh wait, that's not happening, I'm the one who is supposed to take care of that." So that's the initial thought. You kind of want to whine about it and be like, "No but I don't want to do all the work." But then you realize, once you know how to generate all of those feelings for yourself, there is really nothing you can't do, and it is incredibly free and empowering. And I just feel so light and free. And one thing that is, I think, really important to know is that once you have cleared all of that clutter in your brain, you make

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room for so much more interesting stuff, and I'm more productive than I have ever been. I just accomplish a lot more because I feel like I'm not dragged down by the tiny little bit of argument that you had just at the door when you were leaving, and then you carry that around all day. And now that this doesn't happen to me anymore, I just feel – you talk about 50-50, but I have to admit, I'm kind of like – I feel like more...

Brooke: Don't tell anybody...

Clotilde: Yeah, no but I feel like – it's this thing about if you are okay with the 50% then it becomes an 80-20...

Brooke: It's so true, right, because then all of a sudden, you're not upset about being upset. So tell me about your husband. What's his take on this? Has he noticed a difference in you?

Clotilde: He does think that I'm a lot easier to live with. I had to ask; he didn't actually come out and say it, but I mean he can't not notice that we don't argue anymore, which is like pretty life changing.

Brooke: So what would you say to someone who wants this change, that wants to be able to step into emotional responsibility and not suffer so much in their life? What do you think were the things that you did and the way you approached this that really made you successful at it?

Clotilde: So I think there's two ingredients. One of them is that I think I'm a fairly good student, in the sense that if you give me homework I will do the homework, and I am pretty religious about it. I could actually show you that this is a whole notebook of my thought downloads there.

Brooke: Oh my gosh, that's so awesome.

Clotilde: I'm on my second since the beginning of the program. So actually, doing the work, applying it, not just doing it in your head, because oftentimes you figure it out in your head and you're like, no but I know what is going to come out of this. then as you write it, you're like "Oh, I did not

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see that coming.” So doing the work, and also an ingredient I think is helping me is geeking out about that stuff a little bit, you know, getting interested intellectually about this, getting excited, because it gives you this distance of observing your own thoughts. And sometimes, I just laugh out loud at the things that I realize. I’m like, I’m onto myself, I’m onto my brain. If you can find the fun in it, it’s really the way to go.

Brooke: Yeah, I totally agree. I think that you can watch your own thoughts and get very depressed.

Clotilde: Yeah, and I think that’s one of the things that I had not anticipated before joining the program, I had not anticipated that watching you coach would be so fun. It’s very entertaining. And that’s one skill that I really admire, that you actually make – the people you coach who come with sometimes really heavy stuff, you manage to make them laugh about it.

Brooke: Right, because otherwise we suffer over our own suffering. I think that’s really important. So I don’t want to gloss over this because I know that it sounds obvious. Like doing the work sounds like an obvious thing to do. And I want to speak a lot to the people who listen to the podcast, because I’ve had so many people that have listened, like you said, listened to every single thing and consumed it and felt like they were changed by it, and the message that I’ve got from so many people going through Scholars is like I didn’t even know how much my life could change until I actually started doing the work. Because it feels like you’re doing something, right, you’re listening to the podcast, you’re having insight, you’re looking at the world differently in some ways and I think there are some shifts. But when you actually start doing the work, which is how you said it, that’s when the change becomes to permanent; and the regular practice of it.

Clotilde: Yes.

Brooke: It’s challenging, right? So I bet there’s a lot of people that have joined Scholars that had the intention of doing the work pretty regularly and haven’t been able to. So what would you say to them? What would be your

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advice to someone who hasn't been able to be as consistent and therefore hasn't seen the same results you have?

Clotilde: I think it's kind of like a meditation practice where initially you have to kind of keep yourself accountable. Like brushing your teeth – at first you have to learn to do it and you don't really want to do it, and then if you don't do it, you feel kind of ick. And then you don't really think about it. So, I no longer think about it. My days begin with just opening my notebook and doing my Scholars homework, and it takes me 15 minutes, but I get so much – the benefits are so huge because I start my day on a very clean page, so to speak, because I have dusted the corners. I know what's floating around, and it's not a matter of pointing at things that are wrong, it's just that oftentimes those things kind of hover and you don't really realize how much they're bothering you before you pull them out and you're like, "No but this is fine. I'm going to just run a model on this and it's fine."

Brooke: Yeah. It's just like cleaning your house, right. It's like getting up and straightening your house; it's just getting up and clearing out the corners of your mind and straightening up and then you feel so accomplished and wonderful after that. So one of the things that I teach is that if we don't start becoming more aware of what's going on in our brain, we will just continue to live the effects of that. We'll continue to live those thoughts that we've always thought and we'll just keep recreating the life that we've always created. And we all can see examples of that in our life, where you see people five years later, ten years later; they're just living out their current brain programming. So since you've done this work and you've decided that the first part is understanding what you're thinking and then deciding what you want to think on purpose. How would you say your perspective has changed on your future? Do you have different ideas now about what is possible for you, and what are some of those things?

Clotilde: Well this has been a huge change that I also hadn't anticipated. I just have a sense of limitless possibility. It makes me pretty giddy to think that there is – I really believe that there is nothing that I can't do, and I think

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that this is something that you provide through the program, not just by teaching it to us but by modeling it for us. And I have never been in regular contact, even though it's very one sided, but in regular contact with anybody who embodies those ideas of being willing to fail and fail again and you demonstrate it for us. You explain it. And coming from a French culture, I think that we have a strong resistance to failure. It feels like once you've failed, it feels like your life is over, like you're never going to try again. And there's a very strong sense of shame around failing because you feel stupid that you even tried. And I don't want to speak for every French person, but this is something that I have really integrated into my thinking. And now, I really understand that failing is – it feels very cliché to say it's just an opportunity to learn, but then when you really get it, you know – a lot of things I have learned along the way are things that I had heard, but then you really get it. And then, you just get to a different level. So in the meantime, since I joined, I have actually started my own podcast. So I talk about you a lot. It's called Changer Ma Vie, which means change my life in French, and it's a personal development podcast...

Brooke: Is it in French?

Clotilde: It is in French, yes, ChangerMaVie.com, and it's a personal development podcast that has really taken off incredibly well. I was on television a couple of weeks ago...

Brooke: That's so exciting...

Clotilde: Yes, and it's something I started as kind of a side project. It has become what would have been a full-time job, but I'm not running two businesses at the same time, which is something I never thought I could do, but I learned so much about structuring my time and being productive. I never really understood what productivity meant before I applied a lot of the stuff that you teach. And again, it's the space that you have in your mind when you just clear out everything that would drag you down or hold you back before. Now I choose to use all of my brain space for things that are actually growth inducing for myself and for my business and for my family

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and for my listeners and my readers. And it just feels like this value creation – I feel like I add a lot more value to the world now than I did a year ago.

Brooke: And that's been one of my messages on this podcast as I've been interviewing successful stents of mine is that the work that we do on ourselves doesn't just benefit ourselves. It's really, and especially for you, it's going to benefit all of the people that you teach and that listen to you. And all of the people that were already following you get to see, like you said, you model this life. You are the example of that. So one of the things that's most thrilling to me about you is that you came to me very successful already, right, you had this very successful life. And to be able to take it to the next level is so much fun to be a part of and to watch.

Clotilde: And one thing I want to speak to you is this idea – because it was a question that I had at the forefront of my mind when I started listening to your podcasts – this idea of comparing therapy versus coaching and the work that you do versus... So I know that you have a podcast episode on this, but what I found for myself is that seeing a therapist for a little while allowed me to really understand what had brought me here. So I feel like it has given me a very deep understanding of the things that happened to me that were not to my liking and, you know, the things that are just my kind of pain points from my past. But I felt stuck after a while because I was like, "Well now I understand, but what do I..." I was hoping that understanding would just kind of magically unlock things. And with what you teach, it's very future focused, and so it's like, "Now I understand, what next?" How do I write the next chapter? So I think it's very complimentary that I am able to move forward really fast with the coaching because I'm not encumbered by a lot of past stuff. I'm kind of able to rewrite my past pretty naturally because I have spent time processing it.

Brooke: That's such a good point, to be able to – because I think that was my experience too. I think when I first went into therapy and talked about my problems the first time, like the first couple of months for sure were really enlightening to be able to talk about that stuff and reflect on it. But

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then just continually doing that was not serving me, so that's where the coaching can come in. I think that's a super awesome point. Okay, so most of the people who listen to my podcast are American. So what is the best way for them to get in touch with you or learn about you? You have a blog that's in English too, yes?

Clotilde: It is, yes. So my blog is called Chocolate and Zucchini. And I have cookbooks out. My latest is the French Market Cookbook, that's published in the US. And I have a new cookbook called Tasting Paris coming out on spring day, so March 20th. So Tasting Paris, and it's recipes that express the flavor of Paris.

Brooke: Amazing. And tell me about this walking tour of Paris thing. Are you still doing that?

Clotilde: I am, I am...

Brooke: Tell me everything.

Clotilde: So I have a lot of readers who come to Paris and want to see Paris through the eyes of somebody who lives there. So I take them on walking tours of mostly my neighborhood, because I live in Montmartre, which is a very charming village-like neighborhood that a lot of people want to come to. But there's a tourist side of the neighborhood and there's a local side. So it's a walking and tasting tour, so we go down market streets and we taste different things and I discuss the French food culture and the French way of going about food shopping. And it's a chance also for my visitors to pick my brain about what they should not miss in Paris. It's a lot of fun and I enjoy it very much.

Brooke: How long is that?

Clotilde: It's a two-hour tour.

Brooke: And we just come to your website to sign up for that?

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Clotilde: Yes, I have a contact form and so people can just place a request and we discuss dates and availability and what neighborhood they want to focus on.

Brooke: Oh my gosh, so they can come and hang out with you, especially my listeners, could come hang out with you, you'll show them everything and you can talk about coaching. [crosstalk] We might have just really encouraged that other ... of your business as well. So have you been able to figure out how to manage your time with your husband and the kids and all of that?

Clotilde: It's just not a problem anymore. It's just – my major realization was just that I need to acknowledge that whatever time I take out of my work time to take care of my family is completely a choice. That I could get a sitter to look after them all day every day, but I want to spend time with them. So when my husband comes home and I have been looking after them, resentment is not – it's completely off topic. I'm thrilled that I went to pick them up and that we've been having dinner together. It's just not an issue anymore.

Brooke: It sounds like a little thing, right. I mean, that sounds – that is the biggest thing. Those little things in your relationship add up, taking full responsibility.

Clotilde: Yeah, and getting really clear about what you do, why you do it, who you do it for, and then just not trying to have your cake and eat it too; like spend time with your kids and also feel like your partner owes you something for it, or that you have tallied up a debt and – like this is completely irrelevant and I'm glad that I was able to make that realization while they're still pretty young and I still have a lot of years to look after them from that mindset.

Brooke: Of course, and then you enjoy your husband so much more too. When he comes home and you're like, "Hi honey," instead of, "Believe me,

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that was work I had to do as well.” So that’s awesome. Okay, so if I want to find you, I go to – what’s the URL?

Clotilde: It’s ChocolateandZucchini.com or CNZ.to for short.

Brooke: Okay that’s what I was looking at, CNZ.to. Oh my gosh, you guys, go check it out. You just have to see how pretty she is if nothing el, and how beautiful her food is, if nothing else.

Clotilde: Thank you.

Brooke: Alright my friend, thank you so much for taking the time to share your story. I know it will be inspiring to many people and I’m so happy to introduce my listeners to you.

Clotilde: This has been a huge highlight of my week, if not my year.

Brooke: Well you have a wonderful rest of the day my friend. See you soon.

Clotilde: Thank you, Brooke.

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Brooke: Alright, Angie, we are recording. Welcome to the podcast. You are one of my very favorite clients because you’ve lost so much weight. I brag about you all of the time.

Angie: It is so good to talk to you again.

Brooke: I mean, you literally, like, you lost a person.

Angie: Yeah, I did.

Brooke: So I want you to introduce yourself and tell your story – just the beginning part of your story, and then we’ll dive into your success.

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Angie: So the way I would introduce myself is: by profession I'm a pediatrician, but I'm also a mom and happily married. But I'd also tell you that I was the fat girl and the fat baby, and I spent from nine months of age to 50 really struggling with losing weight, and I identified as that fat girl. So now I have to do that a little bit differently because people who don't know me from before don't see that. They see an average, normal looking person.

Brooke: Isn't that crazy?

Angie: Yes, it is really wild.

Brooke: Like you were never fat, what are you talking about, right?

Angie: Right, they have no idea.

Brooke: So you wanted to lose weight at some point; tell me about that.

Angie: I think, when I think back about it, I think that was like on my daily to-do list all the time, as far back as I can remember. And I would get up in the morning and that would be on my to-do list.

Brooke: Lose weight, just like item number three.

Angie: "Lose weight, what are we doing about that today?" Like many people who struggle with this, I had periods where I tried things. Like I probably did Weight Watchers three times and meal replacement and low-calorie foods and cabbage soup and hired dieticians and South Beach. And sometimes I would lose 20 pounds, sometimes I would lose 60 pounds, but it was almost impossible to keep it off. And a lot of times, I call it white knuckling it. I mean, to get to the end line was literally painful and I felt physically in withdrawal. So that was always there, and I think it really colored everything. So even things that should have been really joyous things – like you and I joke about the pediatrician of the year thing – was like, "Oh yeah, but I'm fat." It sort of colored and took down the enjoyment of things because I always felt some shame about having failed at this

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other piece and why couldn't someone who was so intelligent and otherwise successful figure this piece out?

Brooke: Especially a doctor, right?

Angie: Yeah. And I had like, I don't know, 37 books or something on how to lose weight ... among other things. So it was continual for me and my family.

Brooke: And they're all contradictory too, which is confusing. Like one says don't eat any carbs, one says to only eat potatoes, one says don't ever eat anything on Tuesday.

Angie: Another one is combinations...

Brooke: Right, or your blood type or your eye color – I mean there's so many crazy things. So how did you find me?

Angie: So I, among my 37 books, I bought one of your early books on how to lose weight. I think you've just redone it, but it appealed to me because it's *If I'm so Smart, Why Can't I Lose Weight?* And I, instead of getting stuck at chapter three, I just zoomed through this book and I said, "This makes sense to me." And I got online to find out more about who had written it. And at that time, you were doing an online program called *The Weight School*. I thought, "This is great. I'm going to do this." And I signed up and I listened to one call and then I forgot about it.

Brooke: Oh, I didn't know that; that's hilarious.

Angie: I did. So I signed up like in an April and I did that. And right about that time, I'm turning 50, and I'd been well over 200 pounds since I graduated from college. And my boys I had, I'd start at 220 and I'd deliver at 240 and I'd walk out of the hospital at 220 again. And so I'd gotten up to the 260-pound mark, and that's just been my 20s, 30s and 40s. And so, here I am at 50 and I'm having problems with my hip and I find out that they didn't form normally, but now I'm starting to fall down. I mean literally on my

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face, and I'm trying to do all my normal things. And I had travelled to Berkley to visit my sin and I fell twice, including in the airport, like in front of everybody, on my face. I just thought – I knew I needed to do this hip surgery and I just didn't know how I was going to do major surgery and be this overweight and do the rehab. And I started to think, "I'm just going to fall down one day at work and they're going to use all their CPR training on me. I mean, because I'm just not going to make it." And if I was honest about the days – I mean, I get to work, I get everybody seen, I dot the Is and cross the Ts and get home exhausted.

Brooke: I bet... geez...

Angie: ...together for the next day.

Brooke: I mean, think about that now, like all that extra weight you were carrying around, the emotional weight and the physical weight, trying to go through your life. That's wild.

Angie: Right, you know, and my doctor talking about, "We may have to start you on insulin," and I was on the cholesterol stuff. So it was really though that that surgery was coming up and I'd committed to do this surgery and I was going to try to fix that problem. I really had to fix something...

Brooke: This is the hip surgery you're talking about?

Angie: This is the hip surgery. So it's six months later, and the one thing I remember from the call was you talking about the key about success is you have to actually do the class you signed up to do. Maybe you won't do it the first time, but you can always come back to it. So I did come back to it. So that's like October. So over the next seven or eight months – so surgery is a year away – seven to eight months I lose 40 pounds, and that's fantastic. And nobody notices...

Brooke: What was your weight at that time?

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Angie: 260 when I started, and nobody notices, which was humbling, but it kind of opened my eyes a little bit.

Brooke: That is wild. Let's just pause there for a second. When you lose 40 pounds and nobody notices, how did that not completely devastate you and have you eating everything in sight?

Angie: Well that was the piece I really worked on in The Weight School, was I worked on the emotional eating. And if I'm honest about it, looking back, I was binge eating in response to stress. So that part really worked for me. I didn't focus so much on what the other things were that I was eating; I really tried to work on the binge eating and not over filling myself, not overstuffing myself and getting back in touch with that. Because I'm convinced for a lot of people, and a lot of kids I see that are overweight, they're eating above their fullness level, there isn't [crosstalk] point. So if you're above that, you're never going to stop.

Brooke: That's right, and especially if you start eating when you're not even hungry, you have no indication of when you should stop, right?

Angie: Right, so even though people hadn't noticed, that was a real relief to me. I felt more in control. I didn't feel so out of control. I didn't have those binge things. So I had done pretty well getting through that program, then I had stalled but not gained, which was huge, because that was usually the next. Then you sent out – it was like serendipitous timing – you sent out this email that you were going to do a small stop overeating master class, and it was going to start in October. And I thought, "This is fantastic, except I'm having my hip replaced." But we decided to do the interview, and I was so nervous because I was worried. And the commitment of once a week, the call was an hour and a half or two, you know, do the patient time and do the work, and you were very upfront that I was going to have to commit to that every week for six months, putting myself first. And so that I wasn't nervous about, although I had to think it through, and then I said, "But the day one of your program I was going to be under anesthesia getting a new hip," and you were like, "That will be fine."

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Brooke: Everybody starts unconscious anyway, it's fine.

Angie: So anyway, to this day, I don't know if you know that but the gals in our group still think I had an advantage being on narcotics when we [crosstalk] ... sugar and flour [crosstalk]...

Brooke: That's so great. That's great. So I just want to make sure everyone knows – so I used to have a program called Weight School that was an online program that is now integrated into Self Coaching Scholars. And the Stop Overeating Master Class was a small group coaching program that is now integrated into Scholars. So I don't want you guys to go hunting for those programs that no longer exist, but it's all the same material, the same philosophy. Everything that I teach in Scholars is what I was teaching Angie. So she's talking about how in the beginning, coming off sugar and flour is painful, as you guys know..

Angie: You withdraw...

Brooke: And she was on narcotics when she was going through withdrawals. So it's just a suggestion...

Angie: [crosstalk]

Brooke: That's funny.

Angie: But I think, you know, what I really had learned from the first thing is, you've got to show up and do stuff. So if you're looking at those great tools from Stop Overeating Master Class, there was really a different thing introduced to us, a theme, every month. And you know, I could get nitty-gritty and scientific and was maybe worried about some of the things in the beginning, the fasting and the diet changes, but I had this month off so I could read every possible book there was on it. Then I could sit back and say, "Is this any more sensible than the cabbage diet, or other 400-calorie-a-day things, medical induced fasts..." So I really committed that even if something sounded weird and wild, like meditation, I was going to do it, or

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fasting, I was going to do it, and I was going to really try it and really see if it worked for me. And I think that is one of the keys, I would say, that's very different than ways I approached things before. You have to be consistent and committed and maybe spend less energy figuring out if you're on the right path and just walk the damn path.

Brooke: Oh my gosh. We have to pause there because I think that that is everything. I think that on any diet, on any program, whether it's my program or whatever, we want to question everything and we want to do everything in moderation, including moderation, right? It's like we want to approach classes and decide what makes sense and what doesn't. We want to approach diets and say, "Oh I'll do this part but not the other part," and then we wonder why we don't get those results. So I think your point is so important. The things that we have resistance to are usually the things we most need to try.

Angie: Right.

Brooke: So you were all committed, you're like, "I'm going to try everything," including meditation, which is weird.

Angie: Right, could be weird. I think it's fantastic so...

Brooke: Of course, it's fantastic now, yeah.

Angie: Right.

Brooke: And you wanted to lose – how much weight did you want to lose?

Angie: So I remember, I was at 220 when we talked and we were going to do six months and I'm like, "I want to get to 185, and you were like, "Oh yeah? That's fine." Then you were like, "What do you want your goal weight to be?" and I'm like, "No, 185 is like my lifetime goal weight. I have no desire to go beyond that..."

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Brooke: Why did you say that? I want to interrupt you here just for a second, because I was just telling you before we started recording that I was talking to my doctor and she was asking me how to lose weight. She weighs 165 and she wants to get down to 145 and she's like 5'5 and I said, "Why not 125?" And she's like, "I have no desire." Just like you just said, no desire to be 125; what is that about, do you think?

Angie: Well in my case, I don't think it was desire, I just didn't think there was any chance I was going to get there. I didn't think it was a real option for me, and I just thought – so here was this backward-looking thing which we try not to do, thinking, "Okay, at that weight I can shop in the regular clothing section, I won't hurt so much, maybe I can come off my meds, maybe my CPAP can come down." I just thought life would be different at 185. And you're like, "No, no, no that's what you're going to lose in six months. You're going to get down to that, but what do you want long term?" And so that was, I know for a lot of us in our group, something we struggled with. And I'm like, "But I'm old," and ... metabolism and don't I get extra points...

Brooke: Don't I get extra pounds? That's awesome.

Angie: Right, so that was really a turning point. And when I started, I think I still didn't believe that until we were a couple of months into our program where I really thought, "Okay, I think it's safe." And that's probably part of it; I think it's safe to dream big. And so, then I agreed to 155. I never agreed to 130 or 135, but I agreed to – I said, "Okay, how about 155?"

Brooke: Which was like 30 pounds less than what you wanted, right?

Angie: It was, and eventually I chose 148. And I will say here that at the time – so I was like at 157 when I said 148 is going to be my goal weight. And I spent two to three months getting those last ten pounds fine tuning. And, you know, someone would ask me was it worth it, and what I would say is, "It was so absolutely worth it." There is something about picking that goal and doing whatever it takes to get to that goal, and then you can

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choose differently. And so, now over ten months, I like 151 a little better than 148 but I can always say I got to goal and this is a choice I made based on my experience.

Brooke: But isn't that great to just be able to, "I want to weigh 151." And that's what you weigh – and being in this belief system that that would be impossible, that you would never be able to weigh that, right?

Angie: Right, well and there's this whole plateau theory out there and all kinds of things like that, and it is, I think, extremely powerful to do it. I have the control over that – or I have the control over what I eat; that was another big one for me. I only have to eat – and I still lapse into that, like on a vacation, I think, "Oh we're going to an Italian... Wait, nobody can make me eat pasta if I don't want to eat pasta..."

Brooke: You're going to make me eat pasta?

Angie: Right, but that was the story I was telling myself about...

Brooke: Totally. So what was the hardest part for you, do you think?

Angie: What was the hardest part for me? The hardest part for me was what I called the snacking, or call it the grab-ass piece, especially at work, because there's an insane amount of stuff at work. And you can tell yourself the story – you know, what is a snack size chocolate bar going to mean, or what are a few nuts going to mean in the scheme of things? But it's part of a bigger thing which is, "Wait a minute, that's not what I'm doing. That's not what I said I was doing. I don't need to do that and why am I letting all this consume any time at all?" I still think that that is probably the challenging piece, to really work on food as fuel and not letting it be entertainment or anything else.

Brooke: Yeah. What is different this time? You're pretty sure you're not going to gain it back?

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Angie: I am really sure. I mean, sure enough that I got rid of just a boatload of clothes...

Brooke: You had to keep buying clothes?

Angie: I had to keep buying clothes because the first time I got them out there was two big under-storage things that didn't even fit. I remember crying. Like I was saving these for when I lost weight and I missed it.

Brooke: You missed the moment, that's so funny.

Angie: And so, the thing about it that really was sort of challenging is for a while I was afraid I was going to lose my identity, and what actually ended up happening is I think I'm more authentically me. So I got less afraid of speaking my mind and showing up and being front and center. And that was kind of an interesting thing for me to do. And so ultimately, you had me explore and I really had to think about, "Did I like both the job I was doing as a doctor and did I like the organization I was with?" And through this, I actually ended up liking everything I did a lot better but realized I had changed my car, I've changed my address, I've changed groups I belong to. I've had to work through transitioning with friends, and when we moved into this house two weeks ago, I realized I'm four blocks from this other clinic, I could even work for them if that's what I wanted to do. That was a real turnaround from thinking...

Brooke: A huge turnaround for you, because you just felt so like you had to do everything.

Angie: I had to do this. I was really sort of wedged and cemented in and I was absolutely as excited about, "I can pick a new color for towels in my guest bathroom." It was sort of like your flower analogy...

Brooke: Yes.

Angie: If you feel locked into things, you don't even consider the other options.

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Brooke: It's like Joe Dispenza's work where he talks about how you have these programmed thoughts and you just keep reliving your past over and over. And when you use the skills that I teach to change your physical body, not just by the dieting part, which is part of it, but also the mental part which you did so much of, is that all of a sudden you get to decide what you want to think on purpose. And I think that's why the change – like I have so much confidence that your change is permanent because you literally are a different person. The thoughts that you're thinking are creating a different person. You're not working against your mind to try and maintain, which is what most of us used to do when we would lose weight real quick and then try and white-knuckle.

Angie: Right, you think certain things are going to be different, like you won't get audited by the IRS, or my holy grail was I blamed really uncomfortable periods on being overweight, and it turned out that made not a damn bit of difference.

Brooke: Really? Oh, that's so interesting.

Angie: But once I lost the weight, I had the confidence to go to my gynecologist and say, "fix this, it's fixable." And so that was kind of a different – you know, I'm important enough and I'm not going to blame – I was blaming everything on being overweight. So I don't worry about gaining it back, which I think is a really interesting thing, and like with anything you learn, the longer I do it and the more skill I have – so I think it's not a bad thing to gain a few pounds on vacation and have to come home and look at it and adjust, but the more skill I get with it, the less worried I am, because I'm like, "I can do this, I've done this before, I have the tools."

Brooke: The more you practice, right? So what would you say to someone who is where you were 100 pounds ago and doesn't think that it's possible? I always tell all my students, "It's not going to be easy, nor should it be." Enjoy it being hard because then you'll have that sense of accomplishment. So what do you think – the whole title of this podcast is How to be

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Successful. How would you tell someone approaching this, if they asked you how could I be as successful as you?

Angie: So the first thing is, for someone with that weight to lose, is to realize it's never too late. So why, at 51, I thought it was too late is crazy, because it's never too late. And I tell everybody, I got at least ten years of my life back.

Brooke: I agree.

Angie: At least, minimum. And what I'm going to enjoy out of it is more than that.

Brooke: Yeah, because now you're an athlete, you're off doing all these athletic things.

Angie: It's true, and not because I have to, because I used to dread it, but because I want to. I enjoy this sense of accomplishment in doing that, so that's been a lot of fun, and I can do it with my husband, so that's been...

Brooke: Total bonus, yeah.

Angie: So what would I say to do? So again, I think one of the key things is while you're working on your mind and your thoughts, you've also got to get out of your head, and sometimes you've just got to do it. So you've just got to commit and say, "I'm going to do it for this long and then readjust." So I think that skill of saying, you know, at least for a week this is protocol, or at least for a week I'm keeping food records, or at least for this long... And then stick to it. Yeah, that particular tool might not work so well for you, but I really think the key to success is less about changing the protocol and more about just being consistent and executing what you've chosen to do.

Brooke: That's so true.

Angie: You just have got to do it. And so I think my superpower on this is I didn't ever go back up. Visually it sometimes felt like I was climbing this

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rock wall and maybe was hanging and couldn't see the next hand hold, but I really just stuck with it until I could see the rest of the route, and then moved forward. And I think sometimes that's the piece you have to do, you have to tolerate not losing that week or that 22 days or that month, and then get back to it and not give up. Because it can be done, it absolutely can be done if I can do it.

Brooke: Everyone I've talked to on this podcast interview and on this podcast so far, I think that's the trick. Everyone has said you have to be committed, right, you have to be committed for the long term and you have to actually do the work. And I think that that distinction – I think sometimes we think about doing the work, we commit to doing the work, but it's not the same as doing the work, showing up for the calls, showing up for the protocol every day, showing up for what's going in your mouth every day. Those little things every single day and not letting the mistakes and all of that get you down. I think those are the things that you really demonstrated.

Angie: Right, I love the workbook and the worksheets. So for me, the tools like write it down and move on or exception planning, those were great. I still keep the same food journal every day that I kept throughout the program. So I could look back and tell you, or if I was having trouble knowing what I'd been doing, I could go back and look and I'd know exactly what I was doing that worked. So I loved that piece with that...

Brooke: But that's hard. Like what would you say to someone that says, "Oh but filling out worksheets and writing down what you eat every day and planning, it all just seems so exasperating."

Angie: Just pick one thing and do it. And I was laughing – we just got back from vacation and I hadn't really cooked much in the new house and the thing I love – I call it Bag o' Salad, so I like those bagged salads, deli lunch meat and I cut it in half and there's nothing simpler than hauling that to work. There's no excuse to not do it. And I had had my husband- so my husband does my grocery shopping, I'd had him get the regular lettuce and vegetables, and I was getting up in the morning going, "Oh crap, this week I

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have to slice the lettuce and the tomatoes.” Oh my god, it’s going to take all of three minutes; what are you thinking? Your mind still tries to put those roadblocks up, even this far into it and pretend that you have to go out for lunch because you didn’t buy the Bag o’ Salad, because you’ve got to slice your lettuce; oh my god. So I think knowing that that’s coming really helps you. Knowing those thoughts are coming and it’s easier to recognize them now. Before I think I felt like they just sort of crawled up the back and got hold of me, and now I think I see them coming, “Oh I see you, I know what you’re going to say. I don’t want to hear it.” And so that just has really helped. And if you can’t do it all, that’s the other thing, it’s not an all or nothing. That’s a diet. So the thing is, pick one or two things you’re going to commit to and do that consistently. And it really does – that sense of accomplishment and success will allow you to pick up another one and pick up another one.

Brooke: So just before we close out, I want to – I know that one of the things we used to talk about on our calls was the fact that you were an overweight pediatrician trying to treat overweight kids coming in; how has that changed for you?

Angie: It’s been interesting. Overall, it’s great. Part of it is that meditation helped me connect with my patients. I had a few patients go to other people because I think that they assumed because I was overweight myself, I was going to give them a free pass and say that was okay. And that was never really true about me. So I had to kind of rethink it and the way I present it. So for patients who knew me, they went – like you were talking about with your dermatologist – they want to know what I did, and they want to try some of it. And they would say, “Oh that’s too hard,” and I would say, “No it’s really not and here’s how I’m going to encourage you to start.” For people who are brand new, it’s interesting; I don’t have to bring it up, which is kind of an interesting thing. But there’s still tons of work to do on healthy eating. And it was kind of fun to get asked – so the surgeon, the bariatric surgeon in town can’t do enough of these surgeries, so he put together a group to try to help teach physicians about the no flour, no

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sugar, low carb diet and dietary advice, and that was really great to be able to do that. So I still have that experience of saying, “Hey I know, I’ve done it, it’s hard, but it’s doable and it’s so worth doing.” And it’s been a little interesting to let myself be the role model. Sometimes people say that – because you know that I don’t love attention, so...

Brooke: I mean, the other theme that I’ve had through this episode has been that the work we do on ourselves isn’t just about us, especially when you’re in a service industry, which you are and you’re showing up and you’re demonstrating and being an example of what is possible. And so yes, of course you did it for yourself and for your relationship with yourself, but you have affected many people in my community and so many people in your own. So I think that that’s just the side benefit, right, that huge contribution that you get to make by showing up, like you said, more authentically in the world. And so I honor you for that accomplishment and I know for sure that this podcast, and all of the other times I’ve talked about you, total inspiration.

Angie: I have to share with everybody, Brooke, you know, for me, you were the right coach at the right time and I was willing to listen to what you asked me to do and do it. And I think that that’s so valuable, and so I think finding a group or environment where you can do those things is so important for people. And again, I think that – I continue to do all the workbooks in Self Coaching Scholars and really enjoy the growth there and share it with as many people as I can.

Brooke: That’s so awesome. You’re like – I like to say you’re like a star student, but I don’t even have to say that because you see the effects. When you do the work, you see the effects in your life. So such an inspiration, thank you so much, Angie, for everything you do and for inspiring us. I appreciate you being on the podcast today.

Angie: And thank you, Brooke.

Brooke: Alright, take care, bye.

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