

Ep #43: Answers



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Brooke Castillo

Welcome to the Life Coach School Podcast, where it's all about real clients, real problems, and real coaching. Now, your host, Master Coach Instructor Brooke Castillo.

Hey, it's Brooke Castillo. How are you guys doing? So glad to have you here. Today, I'm going to do something a little bit different. What I'm going to do is ... I recently did a webinar for my entire list, and what I did was I created the webinar and I also created some videos leading up to the webinar. One of the things that I asked ... We had over a thousand people register for the webinar, and one of the things that I asked people to do on the webinar was to ask a question. They were to either leave a comment or ask a question. Because I wanted to keep the webinar to under an hour, I was only able to answer a few of those questions, and I promised on the webinar that I would answer all of the questions, so I decided to do it as a recording on a podcast, so there it is.

One of the things that I want to offer to each of you is that if you were unable to watch that webinar ... It's called Self Coaching 101, How To Do It ... you can access that webinar by opting into our free coaching call, and that's on the main page of www.TheLifeCoachSchool.com. You'll see a graphic there that says Free Coaching Call. When you opt into that and you access the page to register for it, then it will immediately take you to the replay page, which will give you the last two recorded free coaching calls and it will also give you that webinar. If you're already on that list, when you get your reminders for the weekly calls, Chris will put a link in there so you can access the recordings and you can also access the webinar. Okay?

These questions came from that webinar, but they're such good general self-coaching questions that any of you who listen to the podcast and enjoy what we talk about here will benefit from these questions. The other thing that I want to offer is if you missed that webinar because you aren't on my e-mail list, I want to let you know that I do offer a lot of free webinars and a lot of free classes. Even when you're on that webinar, I offer bonuses. People that attend live get a bonus. I just want to invite you, if you aren't already on my list, to join it. I don't give you any spammy stuff, and I never do a hard sell on anything I ever do. The only thing I do is send e-mails when I'm

offering free great stuff, and I offer invites to join me for paid programs if you're interested. There's never any kind of pressure or hypeyness to it. I promise you that.

Okay. Let's get started with the self-coaching Q&A. Now one of the things that I asked people to do is they either made a comment or one of the things that I asked them to do is present me with a problem that they're having and I would tell them how to go about working on that problem with their own self-coaching.

The first thing we're going to start with is a problem, and the problem is, "I'm mad at my husband for sleeping in late on the weekends and leaving me alone with the kids." When we think about the model, and I will link to the model sheet in the show notes, so if you want to be referencing the model, you can do that. "Mad at my husband for sleeping in late on the weekends." Now what I would do on the model there is I would take the word "mad" and I would classify it. Right? The problem is she's mad. Now one of the things that I teach on the model is that every single thing in the world can be classified within the model. Everything is either a circumstance, a thought, a feeling, an action, or a result. Okay? Her problem is mad, so we put that on the feeling line.

Now some of you, just as a little side note, might be hearing my little puppies in the background and I'm just going to let them go. I usually stop and pause and try to make them be quiet, but I'm just going to let you enjoy them playing in the background. Okay.

We take mad and we put it in that feeling line. Now when you look at the rest of the model, we know that her feeling of mad is coming from her mind. The circumstance is her husband sleeps until a certain time. That's the fact. He may sleep in till ... I don't know what the time is; she didn't tell me. You can't just say late because that's kind of a subjective term. We have to know exactly what time he sleeps to. Husband sleeps till ... I'm going to give her ... Let's just say it's noon. Right?

The feeling that she's having is mad. She thinks the reason she's mad is because her husband sleeps till noon, but the reason she's mad is because of her thought about what it means. He leaves her

alone with the kids is one of her thoughts. Her other thought may be, "He doesn't care enough to get up and help me." She may make it mean all sorts of things, but that thought, "He's leaving me alone with the kids and he shouldn't," basically is causing her to feel angry.

There's so much power here for her to understand that her husband doesn't have to wake up earlier in order for her not to feel mad, and it doesn't mean she doesn't ask him to wake up earlier, but she doesn't have to do it from a place of anger. When she's mad, I want to ask her, "How do you act?" That's the A line of the model. "How do you act when you are mad at your husband? How do you act towards him and what are the results there?" Right? Does it encourage him to wake up earlier? How does it all work out? Fill it in in the model. The problem there is the feeling of mad.

Okay. Next one. Question, "This is awesome." She's talking about the webinar. "Now I'm feeling like I have so many thoughts I need to work on. You mentioned doing the thought download once a day. Is it best to try and take it slowly and just work on some thoughts rather than trying to do all of them? Is it overwhelming to think about how many thoughts I need to change in different areas of my life?"

This is such a fantastic question. I really appreciate you asking it. Here's the deal. When you do a thought download, what that looks like is you just sit down and you get the thoughts out of your head onto paper. The reason why that's so powerful is you recognize when you're looking at a thought outside of your head that it is just a thought; it's not who you are. It's just a sentence on a piece of paper. What I recommend that everyone do is just even one thought model. Don't even think about doing all of them. Just pick one thought to do a model on.

If one of your thoughts is, "I have so many thoughts I need to work on," when you think that thought, how do you feel? Fill in the model. The circumstance there would be a thought download. The thought would be, "I have so many thoughts to work on." The feeling, my guess would be, is overwhelmed. The action may be that you don't work on any thoughts because you're so overwhelmed by how many you have. What I recommend you do is you just pick one thought and do one model on it, and then really own it, really own and accept that

that's a model that you're living by. Don't try and change it right away; just try and understand it.

Next question. "Now that I'm more aware of how this stuff works ... I've been studying it for years and your books and podcasts are awesome. ... I'm having a harder time being around friends and family who place themselves in victim mode. It's tough for me to listen to them complain about their lives and not do anything about it since I know their problems are their thoughts. I want to help them see that, but some of them aren't open to it. Any suggestions on how to deal with this situation?"

I get this question a lot, and here's the thing. You think your problem is that you're being around people who are in victim mode. I want to suggest that your problem is your thinking about those people. The way that you think about the people that are in victim mode is causing you to be frustrated and in pain. Your thought, "They should change. They shouldn't complain. They shouldn't be in victim mode," those thoughts are causing you a tremendous amount of pain. It actually, ironically puts you in a victim mode place, you're at the effect of their complaining and them not taking care of themselves.

What you want to do is what most of us want to do, we want to change the circumstance. We want to change who they are and how they're acting so we can feel better around them. What I want to offer you is that they don't have to change in order for you to feel good around them. In fact, I'm always really fascinated with people who are in victim mode because I do understand where they're coming from. I do sometimes offer my thoughts and ideas, but I offer it in a really kind of jovial, kind way that isn't threatening and doesn't put them down. If they don't want it, that's fine. Right? They're allowed to be who they are in their life. I don't have to change my friends in order to enjoy my life. I just need to change the way I'm thinking about my friends who are "in victim mode."

I hope that makes sense, because that's a really important distinction. This is for all of you who ask these questions. If you need further clarification, make sure you go to www.TheLifeCoachSchool/43 and go into the comments and let me know, "Hey, that was my question

and here I need more clarification." I'm happy to go there and clarify any of these things for you.

Next one. "What about when you have a client who is working to create thoughts to drive certain results and the thoughts still leave them feeling depleted and unable to change? What about people who are completely disconnected from their feelings? How do you help them to manage their minds when they have no understanding of how certain thoughts make them feel? How do you approach a client like that?" Okay. There's a series of questions here, and they're all very good.

First and foremost, you have to teach a client how to feel their feelings. It's really important that before you ever try and help a client change how they're feeling that they recognize, first of all, they're aware of their feelings and they recognize them. Second, that they're willing to feel them and accept them and notice them. Before you ever try to get a client to change the way they're thinking, change the way they're feeling, you absolutely need to help them feel what they're feeling.

If you're asking me how do I help a client feel what they're feeling, one of the things I do is I teach them how to write about a feeling as if they were describing it to an alien who didn't know what a feeling was. When someone says, "I am not sure of how I feel," because you're saying they're disconnected from their feelings, "I'm not sure of how I feel." I'll say, "Okay, let's keep it very general. Do you feel good or do you feel bad? You may not be able to name it. What does your body feel like right now?"

Usually, when you can help someone tap into what they're feeling, a client will likely say to me, "I don't know how I'm feeling." I'll say, "But if you did know, if you had to describe it, what would it be? If you had to describe the feeling, what would it be? You don't have to tell me the name of it, but just describe it in your body." That usually gets them loosened up. I say, "Do you feel tense?" I offer different questions. "Do you feel tense? Do you feel loose? Do you feel like you're under water? Do you feel like the color blue? Do you feel like the color red?" All sorts of different questions to get people to access their emotional lives.

It's very often that you'll get a client that's completely tuned out of their emotional life because they cannot tolerate being in their own body and experiencing those vibrations. Talking to them about their physical body and about how it feels to have hands and legs and what do their toes feel like, getting them back in their body, is a really important way to get them to start accessing their feelings.

Now once they're able to access their feelings, then I ask them, "Why do you feel that way?" Typically, and what I think you're describing is that they will attribute those feelings to something that's a circumstance, to something that's happening outside of them, to something that's happening in their life. That's okay because all you need to do is ask why, why is that situation causing you to feel this way, and then they will give you the thought.

Now they may not understand at that point that that thought is creating that feeling, and you just stay with them for as long as you can until they recognize, hey, notice when you think this way, you feel this way. When you think this way, you feel this way. Notice how if you thought something different, you would feel different. It is a practice. It sounds to me like you're a coach and maybe you're having a challenge having clients see this. I do want to offer that a lot of times when I teach this to clients, there's a lot of resistance, and you being patient and understanding and willing to take as long as it takes with your client will be really helpful for you as a coach. Make sure you're watching your thoughts about your clients as you're coaching them, because that will really help.

Okay. Next question. "Do you think life coaching is about helping people manage their minds or find their essential selves or both?" Okay. This concept of the essential self is a concept that Martha Beck teaches. She basically teaches that we have a social self that we present to the world. Eckhart Tolle would use the word "our ego," and our essential self would be the part of us that is timeless. What I would suggest, the way that I would answer this question is that when you manage your mind, you find your essential self. When you clean out the clutter of your mind, you access your own wisdom. There is no finding your essential self without managing your mind. Right?

Now one of the concepts that is taught with this idea of the essential self that is sometimes confusing, and I think it's important to make this distinction, is that if you are feeling ... Martha Beck would use the terminology "shackles on." If you're feeling shackles on, it may be because you're not accessing your essential self. It also may be because you're having a really negative thought. I think it's very challenging to access your essential self and to know the direction that you're meant to go until you've cleaned up all your negative emotions.

A lot of times, you could have a destiny laid out in front of you that you really want to access, but because you're feeling doubt, you're thinking, oh, this must be the wrong direction because I'm feeling negative emotion. It may be the wrong direction and it may not be the wrong direction. The only way you can access that wisdom and make that decision from a wise place is by doing your thought work first. If you do your thought work and you clean up any negative thinking that you have about it, then you will be able to access that wisdom. That's a really good question. Thanks for asking that one.

"It's been a great day. I found out I have an STD, I'm pregnant, I'm not married, and I need a colonoscopy. Thank goodness for this webinar to cheer me up." Okay. I just want to address that. I know that it's just a comment, but I just want to address that the problem isn't that you have an STD. The problem isn't that you're pregnant. The problem isn't that you need to get a colonoscopy. The only problem that those three things offer you are how you decide to think about it.

With the STD, you can get it fixed; it's not a problem. Thank God for modern medicine. You're pregnant. The way that you think about being pregnant when you're not married could be horrific or a blessing, however you decide to choose to think about it. Getting a colonoscopy, the way that you decide to think about it that's brilliant, "I love that somebody is looking out for me. I love that I went to the doctor, that I found all this stuff out and that I can use modern medicine to protect myself from getting ill in the future." Honestly, those are thoughts that are just off the top of my head, but how you choose to think about each of those things will determine literally how the rest of your week will be. I'm glad that you liked the webinar.

Okay. Someone's problem was, "I'm not sticking to healthy eating." When we think about the model, where would we put that? Think about it for just a minute. Would it be a circumstance, a thought, a feeling, an action, or a result? If you said action, you're right. Remember, that action line is action, inaction, or reaction. Not sticking to healthy eating is an action. Now what are you feeling that's driving you to eat the food that's unhealthy? What is the thought that is allowing that to happen?

My guess is you're having a thought, "It won't matter if I eat this. I can have it. It doesn't matter if it's healthy. It's just inconvenient to get other things." Whatever it is that you're thinking about that's allowing you to eat unhealthy or not stick to the healthy eating is the thought that you must work on. Even the way you describe it is something that you don't have major control over, but you do. You get to make that decision.

I'm always telling everyone in weight school, the decision to overeat, the decision to lose weight is not one decision. It's a million decisions from now until then, and you keep making those decisions. Why are you making the decision to eat food that's unhealthy for your body? Don't judge yourself for that, don't beat yourself up for it, but find out what is that thought, what is that reason and really accept and then explore it.

Next one. "I love you and the model." Yay, thank you. "Is an intention different than a thought? If so, how is it different?" That's a really good question. An intention is the reason you have the thought in the first place. For example, if your thought is, "I want my husband to buy me flowers on my birthday without me telling him to," your intention behind that thought is that you want to feel loved by your husband. Right? I want to feel loved by my husband is a thought in and of itself, but it's confusing to think that a thought drives a thought. The intention behind it, the reason you're having the thought is because you want to feel loved.

Now it's giving you the exact opposite experience typically, especially if the husband doesn't buy you flowers, but the intention behind it is usually good. That's important to remember. Most of the thoughts that we have that cause this tremendous amount of pain are well-intended

thoughts. Most of us aren't horrible people out to hurt ourselves. Most of us aren't horrible people out to hurt ... I would say none of us are horrible people out to hurt other people. We just do it unintentionally because our intention is to achieve more love, and it's misguided. Good question.

"As much as I try, I cannot lose weight." Okay. In the model, that would be a result. What are you doing to get that result? What are you feeling and what are you thinking? Do you believe you can lose weight? Are you trying everything? Are you doing everything you possibly can in that action line? Do you need to change what you're doing? Do you need to try something else? Do you believe you can?

The truth is if you believe that you can lose weight and you believe that it's possible and you believe that you can do what is required for your specific body to lose weight, then you absolutely will because you won't give up on trying. You'll continue to work and work and work at it. That thought in and of itself, "I can't lose weight," can be a result, but it can also be a thought. If you start with the thought, "I can't lose weight," and you don't believe you can, then, of course, you're going to have the result of not losing weight. I would start there.

"I can't stop bingeing on chocolate." I would put that in the action line. What is the thought that's creating the emotion that's having you binge on chocolate? Really identify what is that thought.

"How do we stay on track every day so that each day we're focused on creating positive results?" I highly recommend that every day you do at least a ten-minute thought download and at least one model. If you do that for thirty days, your life will be different. I promise. Most of us spend zero time taking care of our minds. We spend more time cleaning our house than we do taking care of our minds. Our most powerful tool that we ever have, we spend zero amount of time directing it, cleaning it out, honoring it. I would say at least ten minutes. Better if you give yourself a half an hour to work on your mind, putting really positive things into your brain all the time and cleaning out all the negative thoughts that are going on in there.

Okay, next. "I am a freelancer and struggle to earn enough to pay my bills, including ongoing medical expenses." That I would put struggle maybe in the A line. You could do a model with struggle. Or what I would do is put "I'm a freelancer and struggle enough to pay my bills" in the result line, which is kind of an interesting way of doing that because then what is the thought that's driving you to be the result of being a freelancer that's struggling?

You're obviously not earning enough money. You're obviously not getting enough work to get what you need to get done. Why is that? What is the thought? What is the belief behind that? That would be really interesting. I know that you may think that's a circumstance, but it's certainly not. The way you describe your life and the way you describe your job really matters when it comes to how you feel and, therefore, how much you will produce in terms of creating the results you want in your life.

"My girlfriend doesn't pay enough attention to me. She hangs out with other friends more and is not giving me a fifty-fifty relationship." Okay. This is a thought. Whenever we're talking about someone else in our life, whenever we're referring to someone else, we need to make sure that we put that in the thought line. We can't have their action be an action in our A line. An action in the model has to be an action we are taking. Okay? "My girlfriend doesn't pay enough attention to me" is a thought. You think you're just making an observation. You think you're just telling me about your girlfriend, but what I'm suggesting is "My girlfriend doesn't pay enough attention to me" is a thought you're choosing to think.

My question to you is how does that thought feel? My guess is it doesn't feel great. My guess is it feels terrible. My guess is that thought is creating a feeling that's having you act in a way towards your girlfriend that is probably not ideal. My guess is you're either being extra needy with her, which is not attractive, or you're being maybe standoffish to her because you're kind of pissed off. I don't know because I can't ask you what your feeling is, but my guess is it's one or the other, because that thought will create a lot of those feelings for most people.

How do you want to feel towards your girlfriend without changing her? What if she's not ever going to change? What if she's allowed to be however she wants in the world and whatever she wants in the relationship? Right? Doesn't mean you don't ask her for more, but if she doesn't give it to you, how do you want to feel? You're relying on your girlfriend to create the feeling of appreciation for you. You want her to appreciate you because you want to feel appreciation.

What I want to offer to you is that appreciation is not a feeling she can generate for you with her actions. Appreciation is a feeling that you can generate with your mind. When you think your girlfriend doesn't appreciate you, the feeling that you're going to create for yourself is unappreciated, and you're going to give her the credit for creating that emotion for you when you're the one doing it. How could you think about her spending her time with her friends that wouldn't create a negative emotion for you? That's your ticket.

"How to get past the first interview." My guess is you're looking for a job and you're not getting past the first interview. First and foremost, I want to know how are you thinking when you go into that job interview. What are the thoughts you're taking in there? The result you're getting is not getting past the first one. My guess is you think it's because of something that's happening in the interview with them. What I want to offer you is how you think about that interview going in is going to mean everything and how you think after that interview is going to mean everything. What you mean when you're going in and what you mean when you're going out.

If they don't call you back for a second interview, what do you make it mean? If you make it mean something negative, then your next first interview you're probably going to go in there with a doubtful, worried emotion. The best way to get past the second interview is to go in with confidence and contribution and excitement and ability. The way that you do that is by having thoughts that, yes, I'll get past this first interview, of course they're going to choose me. When they don't, you have a thought that serves you, not one that debilitates you.

"My relationships end within three years, personal and business." It sounds like you have a history of having relationships with people for three years, which I think is really interesting. I would actually change

that and make that a thought, because if you continue to believe that your relationships end within three years as if that's a fact for you, then you will continue to create that for yourself. Now the question that you need to ask yourself is why. Why do you believe your relationships end? What is the reason? Does the person break up with you? Do you end them with them? Why is that happening? Your reason for that, what you make that mean is everything. That is the thought that you need to put into a model and work through.

"I'm constantly arguing with my twenty-year-old daughters." Okay, that's a great one. What I would do with that is take "arguing with daughters" and put it in the A line. What is the thought that you're having about your daughters that's generating the emotion that's causing you to argue? Ooh, that would be so good to discover. Right? If you're thinking they should do this, this, and this and that's making you feel out of control or that's making you feel frustrated, that may drive you to argue with them. It sounds like it's an habitual thought. You want them to change is my guess.

They're teenagers and it's never going to happen. You can change the way you think about them and you can change the way you show up for them, so it's really important for you to recognize that your thinking is all that matters here. No matter what your teenagers do, your daughters do ... Oh, I'm sorry. They're twenty years old. They're just out of teenage years. They're adults, so they're even less likely to change. Why are you choosing to argue with them? It takes two people to argue. If you don't argue with them, what do you imagine you're losing? What are you thinking that causes that argument? That will totally change your relationship with them. If you don't want to argue, you just need to change the thought that's driving that behavior.

"How do you turn around a thought that is negative if I truly believe it?" Wow, that's really good because most of us truly believe our negative thoughts. The best way to do it is just to recognize that believing something is a choice. I always am asking myself why am I choosing to believe it. Believing something is not something that just happens to us. The way that we believe in something is we practice thinking it. A belief is just a thought we keep on thinking and thinking

and thinking and thinking and thinking. The more we think a thought, the more we're going to end up believing it.

You have to see the effect of that belief in your life and you have to decide if you want to continue to believe it. If you don't want to continue to believe it, the best way I know is to notice continuously how that belief makes you feel and act and the result that it creates. Then, in order to change it, the best way I have found is to try and change it slightly first. You go from "I believe that I am a horrible person" to "I believe that I'm a person" to "I believe that I'm a kind person" to "I believe that I'm a good person." We have to move up that ladder of thinking in order to get to a different emotion.

If you want to believe something because you believe it, then you're going to keep getting that result in your life. The only way to change it is to recognize that every thought you have is a choice, and you may be choosing it by default. You may be choosing it unconsciously, but it's still a choice for you to think that. You have to decide is this a choice I want to keep on making.

"How much do you have to clean up your own mind before you can be an effective coach for others?" Here's the thing. None of us are going to clean up our own mind. I think we can be much more effective for others when we have practiced and coached on ourselves. That being said, I think coaching yourself is the hardest person you're ever going to coach because being in your own life and trying to coach yourself in your own life is so challenging because you don't have perspective. It's much easier for you to coach someone else because you have so much more perspective on their life than you do on your own life. I hope that makes sense.

It's really important to remember that, because I can look at your life and see so clearly that you're worth it and that you matter and that you're talented and that you're amazing. When you're in your own life, you may not be able to see it as clearly. I would say in order to start coaching someone, you really have to have practiced on yourself quite a bit and on other people. As you start working on yourself, practicing on other people who are willing and able to be coached I think is the best way to prepare yourself for coaching. You've never

gotten to the point where your mind is so cleaned up that you can coach other people without having to continue to coach yourself.

Next one. "Using the model seems to encourage thinking more rather than thinking less. Many spiritual practices suggest reducing your thinking. How do you reconcile these two?" Okay. Listen to me. If I could reduce my thinking, I would be stoked. I have not found a way to reduce my thinking. Your brain, that's what it does; it thinks. It constantly thinks all day long. I'm pretty sure all of us have about sixty thousand thoughts. The model doesn't encourage us to think more. The model just encourages us to pay attention to what's going on with our thinking. If we're going to have sixty thousand thoughts a day, I'd like to be aware of at least ten of them, and I'd like to direct even more of those.

I've heard some people talk about going into a place where you're not thinking, to go into that meditative state and allow the thinking to be there but not pay attention to it so you can go into that watcher position. I think that's a very powerful thing, but I personally believe that reducing our thinking is literally impossible. I think we can reduce the amount of negative thinking that we're having and the amount of painful thinking that we're having, but paying attention to our thinking doesn't make us think less. In fact, it just makes us much more aware of what we are thinking.

Okay. I have gotten through one page of questions, and I actually have three, four more to go. I think what I'm going to do is I'm going to intersperse these with upcoming podcasts. I'm going to do this one. I think we're at about thirty minutes here, so I think we're going to do this one and then I'll do a couple more regular podcasts and then I'll throw another Q&A in. Let me know if these are helpful to you. Let me know if you're learning from me responding to these questions and I'll continue to do more. In the meantime, I will be looking for your comments and seeing what you think. All right, everyone. Have an amazing week. I'll talk to you next week. Bye-bye.

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