

Ep #64: Finding and Owning Thoughts



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, everybody. How are you guys? All right. Have you checked out my new podcast yet? What the heck? Go over there. How to Be a Life Coach. Brooke Castillo. iTunes. Please. Give me a review. With a new little podcast, it's like a little sprout right now. It needs some help. Takes a village.

All right, guys. Today I'm going to talk about finding and owning thoughts. I just recently went through an experience, and I think that this will really help you guys when you're going through similar experiences. I recently got in a fight ... I mean, there's no better way to say it ... with someone I care deeply about. They did something that I needed to, let's say, correct them on. The problem was, this had been kind of an issue, ongoing, with a few people ... some things that had been going on, and I hadn't really addressed it with anybody and it was making me more and more and more mad. Some members of my team ... just a little thing here, a little thing there, a little thing here, a little thing there, and then, all of a sudden, someone else did it and I was like, "Look. You have to stop doing this." They were upset about the way that I talked to them.

The truth is, I'm kind of bitchy, sometimes, when I don't do my work ahead of time and I don't take a deep breath. Just like you may express your anger in a certain way, I express my anger in a certain way when I'm not careful with my mind. I end up acting from a place of negative emotion. This was kind of an email exchange. Someone had given me an email and I had immediately felt shame from the email. They had basically told me that the way I had handled it wasn't right and that I shouldn't be handling it the way I was. I was like, "Oh my God. I'm so sorry, I'm so sorry, I'm so sorry."

Then, I got pissed. My first response was out of shame so I apologized very insincerely. Then, the more I thought about it ... and it's so ironic because I was in yoga just getting more and more mad. Here's the thing ... I really, genuinely, wanted to leave yoga to write the email. I know this about myself ... whenever I'm in a hurry to write an email, that's never good because it's me wanting to react to my

anger. So, I waited until the end of yoga and I was still pissed. It's kind of like I was out of body, like, watching myself be pissed about it and still wanting to scratch that itch ... wanting to react and express my anger.

So, I did. I was like, "Listen. First of all, don't tell me how I should behave and blah, blah, blah." Email. I felt this sense of justification and, "How dare you talk to me that way," and all of that crap that so many of us get caught up in. It was kind of like I was watching myself do it. Because this had been going on with other people and some other things, and I hadn't really processed it properly and done my work on it, it was kind of like these little thoughts in the background. Then, when I got triggered, I didn't own that and I didn't do my work on it. I just reacted to it.

Here's how I knew that I had done that ... because this was all an email exchange, as soon as I had sent the email, I went, "Awww. Yeah. Probably shouldn't have been sent." You know what I mean? Have you guys ever said that? You get all mad at someone, you tell them what-for, and then you're like, "Yeah. Probably shouldn't have sent that. That probably didn't serve anyone on the planet. Wasn't my best moment, wasn't very kind."

The problem was that I was so caught up in my own drama, in my own thinking about it, in my own needing-to-be-right, that I didn't want, or take the time or the discipline, to really do my own work on it. When you remember that everything you're feeling has to do with your own thinking, it's so disappointing, isn't it? You just don't want to take responsibility. I really just wanted to blame and justify and tell this person how pissed off I was at them, and it just felt like I was scratching that itch like, "Oh, that's going to feel so much better." It doesn't. It's just kind of like when I used to emotionally overeat, "Ooh, I just need that Oreo and then I'm going to feel so much better." But, of course, you feel worse.

Here's what I wish I would have done ... and here's what I hope you guys can all do if you're more disciplined than I am ... and let me just tell you this; the truth is that I own every part of it, but owning it doesn't make it okay. Right? So, what I said to this person ... they came back and said, "Wow. That was a pretty mean-spirited email

that you sent me." She was absolutely right because I was pissed when I sent it and whenever you're feeling pissed you shouldn't do anything, but I was, so it was mean-spirited. She came back and basically said, "Woah. That was mean-spirited." I said, "Yeah, it was," in my own head. But, then I'm like, "That's never who I want to be. That's never how I want to feel. That's never how I want to react. It's just not my best work."

First, I have to say that I own it, but that doesn't justify it ... it doesn't prevent me from apologizing. What's interesting, is that I did apologize and I did it from a place of love versus apologizing from a place of shame which is a very different experience, right? The first time I apologized, it was like, "Oh my God, oh my God, oh my God. Love me. Oh my God. I did something wrong. There's something wrong with me." That's an insincere apology. That's like, "Oh, I want to make this better."

But this time, when I apologized, it was really from a place of, "That's not who I want to be, and I genuinely love you." I wish I could have done that work ahead of time to come from a place of love, but I didn't. I forgive myself for that and, hopefully, she'll forgive me. Maybe she won't, and that's okay ... that's absolutely her right. But, that's not how I want to act.

So, first and foremost, I have to really do my work of not beating myself up over it or regretting it ... that doesn't serve any purpose. I apologized. I explained where I was coming from. I did not explain my way to justify it. I explained my way to really be sincere. So, where I end up now is that I feel okay about the whole situation, but now I want to go back and learn from it. I think that's one thing that we can all do. "What led to this and why was I unable to manage my emotional life?"

What had happened there was I was angry about an ongoing issue that I haven't addressed properly, globally, with my team. That's on me. I was really just mad that I have set up an environment where the rules aren't clear. People keep breaking these rules that I haven't told them about, damnit. I just want them to know about the rules, right? I just didn't want to address it. I just didn't want to have to deal with it. I was kind of annoyed with the whole thing.

Then, when this thing happened, then I was really annoyed. Now, the reason I was annoyed was because I hadn't taken care of business. I hadn't been clear in my expectations, I hadn't laid them out. Right? It wasn't this person's fault at all, but they were the one that got my anger that really should have been directed towards myself. The reason why she didn't like the way that I had handled it because I was completely overreacting. Actually, it's funny because I look at the email that I sent, and it was nowhere near as angry sounding as I felt at the time.

I usually run this stuff by my husband. First of all, he doesn't really get angry. I always read an email to him and say, "Does that sound awful and bitchy?" He's like, "Yeah. You can't send that to anyone, ever. I'm like, "Oh. Damnit." It's like his natural inclination is to always be kind. I really want to be kind, but it doesn't come as naturally to me. I just really like to say whatever's on my mind. I don't like to have to filter anything. That can be very good in my coaching ... it's one of my super powers, but I also need to be careful when I'm dealing with coming from a place of negative emotion. Unfiltered speak, when you're holding this space and loving someone, is a powerful thing. Unfiltered speak, when you're coming from a place of shame and anger, doesn't serve anyone ... especially yourself.

So, what I needed to do is, first of all, this undealt with anger about myself not managing my team, I needed to find that thought and own it first. Because it went unsupervised, it led to a lot of chaos. It's really important ... these little pesky, annoying thoughts that we don't address become much bigger problems later.

My thought was, "People need to behave differently without me telling them." Right? It makes no sense. I'm mad because people aren't behaving in the way I want them to behave, but they have no direction in how I'm requesting them to behave or what the rules of the game are. It's completely unfair for me to have that thought.

The thought should be, and could be, "People behave the way they want to, and it's unintentionally harmful." Right? When I look at it that way, it's a totally different approach. I feel totally different about it. I access a completely different level of wisdom. I can really be kind and gentle with people. I want to be able to be direct, and I want to be

able to tell people the truth, and I want to be able to direct people from a really kind place as well. That's not something that comes naturally to me, so I really need to work on it.

I think, for me, had I done my work on that thought ... and, one of the reasons I didn't was because it was just, kind of, in the background, right? That's tricky because it will catch up with you and then it comes to this head and now it's a problem that I really have to work on. One of the things that would be tempting for me here is to beat myself up and to say, "Wouldn't it be better if you were a kinder person? Wouldn't it be better if you were different?" But, I know that that won't serve me, or anyone, in my life.

What I need to say to myself, and what I am saying to myself, is, "When you don't take care of your mind, and your business ... when you have some gnawing feelings and thoughts that are unaddressed, they will catch up with you at some point." That's good to know. So, my thought is, "I don't want to deal with this." I need to pay attention to that thought.

Now, the other thing that I think is really important, is paying attention to why we feel the way we do. I was kind of having this underlying annoyance, but I was dismissing it. Instead of saying, "Why am I feeling this way," I was dismissing it from myself.

I was actually coaching someone last week and they were saying, "I don't know why I feel this way. I don't know what's going on. I ask myself what I'm thinking, and I can't access anything." I started coaching her and what we realized was that the reason she wasn't able to access her thought about something, is because it was a thought she didn't want to be having.

My thought was, "I'm not handling this very well. I'm not managing this very well." I didn't want to believe that about myself, so I just pretended like I wasn't. I just didn't pay attention to it. This person I was coaching, she was having thoughts like, "I'm not good enough to do this." As soon as she heard that thought allowed in her own brain, she dismissed it because she was like, "That's not true. I'm great. That's not true." When you're having a thought like that, whether it's true or not, whether it's logical or illogical, it's in your brain, it's going

to have an effect in your life. It's going to create feelings, it's going to create a reaction. So, it's really important that you own those thoughts, that you pay attention.

That's why I called this Finding Thoughts. If you're feeling any kind of aggravation, agitation, anything ... it's kind of like clutter in the corner that you need to clean up, right? It's something that you need to acknowledge and you need to address. It's really important that you don't let clutter build up in your brain, and this was something that's been nagging me in the back of my brain very quietly. Sometimes you have to go looking for the clutter ... you have to go looking for those little things that are going on. Then, you have to allow whatever the thought is that's causing it, allow it to be there. Don't dismiss it, don't put it away. You have to own it. Even if you don't like it, you have to own it.

My thought was, "I'm not doing a very good job of managing it, but it doesn't really matter. Who cares? Push it away, push it away. It's not a big deal, it's not a big deal." Whenever you hear yourself saying that, then you know you're probably going to get yourself into trouble, right? What you need to do, and what I needed to do, was really clean that up. Had I done that, had I owned that thought that, "I'm not managing this very well," when I saw this issue happen, I would have been able to acknowledge, "Oh, yeah. Look. There's that thought, 'I'm not managing this very well,'" instead of lashing out at this person and blaming them for something that I am not handling. It's so disappointing to know that, right? It always comes back to us. But, had I done my work ahead of time, I could have prevented a lot of drama that I created in my life, and in theirs, by handling it the way that I did. Okay? Not beating myself up for it, I'm just seeing the fallout from something that was an uncleaned-up thought about something.

A lot of times, our uncleaned-up business requires action, too. "I'm not managing this very well," acknowledging that thought and looking at it and seeing why am I thinking this. The truth is, I need to manage some things better, I want to manage some things better. Had I paid attention to that thought, I probably would have communicated more clearly ahead of time and totally prevented any of this from

happening. But, because I kept dismissing it, then I have this unfinished business.

So, you might ask me, "How do I go about doing this?" I just want to give you the guideline. If you feel any sense of unfinished business with any person ... if you feel a slight annoyance, a slight frustration, a slight anger that you're ignoring in any area of your life, that is the seed of destruction. Do not underestimate it. Make sure you go there and clean that up. Make sure you go there and look at that thought. Do not dismiss it away because it's illogical. Do not dismiss it away because you think it's not true. Have a look at it. See what it is, hold it as a sentence in your hand. Really pay close attention to it. Notice the feeling that it brings up. Then decide, "Is this something I want to choose to believe? Why am I believing it?" Then own that thought. Don't dismiss it. Own it. When you own it, then you have authority over it. Then you can decide whether you want to keep believing it or not.

Now, "I'm not managing this very well," was the thought that I would want to continue to believe because I felt like it was a thought that would actually produce a good result if I paid attention to it. If I saw this thought, "I'm not managing this very well," what I could say was, "That's not useful to think that, and it's definitely not useful to dismiss it. A thought that I could have is, 'I'm going to manage this.'" That felt real and good to me. Now I feel motivated to handle the situation and to handle it in a way from a really positive place instead of a place of destruction. Okay?

Pay attention to those little, naggy feelings. Pay attention to those little, naggy thoughts that you don't think matter, that you don't think are important. They are important and they do matter. Clean them up. It's the little clutter. It's like that cup of pens that you have and none of the pens work in that cup and it's in the corner just getting dusty. You're like, "Oh, I don't have time to deal with that. That doesn't really matter. I have more important things to do." But then that cup just sits there and it just kind of nags at you. You see it out of the corner of your eye ... it just kind of bugs, bugs, bugs. Then it starts getting a lot of dust and then it becomes a problem, right? Then what happens is you're on the phone and somebody's giving you a phone number real quick and you go there and there's no pens there. You scream,

"There's no pens in this house. Nobody ever buys any pens!" You, like, lose your mind. Had you paid attention to that annoyance in the first place and solved it for yourself, then you wouldn't have it.

So, please don't dismiss anything in your brain as unimportant. Don't distract yourself from it because it can end up being a much bigger problem later. Pay attention to those little, pesky, seemingly innocent, negative thoughts and get them cleaned up. Ultimately, they could show up and cause you problems later. Find your thoughts. Let them be what they are. Don't judge them ... hold the space for them, and then own them. Once you own them, then you can decide what you want to do with them.

All right, I hope this helps. If you have any questions, make sure you go to TheLifeCoachSchool.com and I'll be happy to answer any of your questions and hear what your thoughts are that you haven't been paying attention to. All right, everybody. Have an amazing week. I'll talk to you next week. Bye bye.

Thank you for listening to The Life Coach School Podcast. It would be incredibly awesome if you would take a moment to write a quick review on iTunes. For any questions, comments, or coaching issues you would like to hear on the show, please visit us at www.TheLifeCoachSchool.com.