

Ep #73: Questions and 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.

What is up? Hi, you guys. How are you? Are you having the most amazing summer? I'm having such a good summer. I love summer. My kids being home all the time, not having to make lunches is so awesome. I love just seeing them and their little faces all the time, and they're so much happier and chill when it's summertime. So fun. Vacations, of course, are a blast, and I love traveling with the kids. We've just had a great time this summer.

Today, we're going to be talking about questions and answers. The best way to get a hold of me these days, the best way to get a question answered or get coaching is by putting your information in the Comments of the podcast. We get all those comments, and I will address all of them here on the podcast. I want to encourage you to go there. Do not send me e-mails directly. We'll reply to you and tell you, hey, if you want help from Brooke, make sure you put it on the Comments of the podcast because there's no way that I can e-mail coach all of you guys that send me e-mails. So many of you send me your heartfelt e-mails with so much detail about what's going on for you, asking for help, and I really do understand that. I just want you to know from my perspective, I'm unable to do that coaching one-on-one, but I will happily do it here in the Comments.

Let's get started with some of your question and answers. Let's see. Okay, first question, weight loss and hunger. "I wonder if there's a formula for knowing when one is full. It seems so easy to go beyond the point. For me, that point is when food falls from my fork onto my shirt. I would love other signals." That's from Vivian. Yes, knowing when you're full, one of the best ways to practice doing that is to stop eating after just maybe five or six bites and see how long it takes you to get hungry again. You may be very surprised. Eat half of the food that you normally eat and see what that feels like. I know that it sounds like you eat past the point of no return, which I can totally relate to, but what I want to suggest is that you eat very little and see how that feels compared to eating just a little bit more than that and then just a little bit more than that.

That's how you can practice that other side of the hunger scale. There's zero where you aren't hungry but you aren't full. What does that feel like? What does it feel to go one step beyond that? How many bites does it take you to go one step beyond that? Then how many bites does it take you to go to another step beyond that? A good way to measure whether you're fully at two on the hunger scale is to see how long it takes you to get hungry again. If it takes you two hours to get hungry, you are probably at two. If it takes you fifteen minutes to get hungry, you are probably at zero. Play around with that, you guys. Be really patient when it comes to learning about hunger.

Okay, next question. "I loved this episode ... I've enjoyed all the episodes, but I resonated particularly with this one." This one was the one that was an interview with Kelly McCormick, and it was on anxiety. She says, "I feel so many people are paralyzed by anxiety. I remember the horrible effect it had on me after my mother passed away suddenly. I also believe that stress anxiety is the root cause of so many diseases. For instance, in 2006, I had breast cancer. I cannot prove that stress caused it, but I can assuredly say that it provided a fertile environment for it to grow.

"I love how anxiety was described as a super power telling us to check our brain thoughts and how it happens when we are disconnected from our emotions." I love this, Jean. "I jokingly say that I'm an anxiety girl. Picture a super hero with a cape, able to leap to the worst possible conclusions in a single bound. I guess I can joke about that one now because of the road I've traveled and the experiences I've gained. Thank you for what you do." I really appreciate you sharing that with me, Jean, and I know that that's not a question, but I just wanted to share that with you all.

Here's a comment from D.M. that I want to share with you guys. "I know I've listened to the weight loss podcast before, but something struck me this time. You posed a couple of questions near the end of the session that I'm blown away by. The first was, 'Are you using food to escape you?' For me, I don't know that it's as much escaping me as I think I use my weight struggles as a way to find myself. The other question is the biggest epiphany I've ever had, 'Are you using food as a way to get your own attention?' I grew up in a home with an

alcoholic father who hardly knew I was there and an over-critical mother who never let me forget that she saw every move I made by criticizing me. I remember as a little girl dancing in front of the TV to get my dad's attention.

"As I look back on that memory now, I ache for that little girl and just want to tell her how much I love her. After listening to your podcast, I think I'm using food in my struggles with my weight as a substitute for dancing in front of the TV to get me to pay attention to me. I spend a lot of time and effort trying to tackle my weight issues, but I wonder if I don't continually sabotage myself to make sure I keep spending time with myself. I keep putting me on my busy to-do list. I don't have to wonder if this is an emotional trigger because I'm in tears as I type this. I need to learn how to watch myself dance regardless of my weight, not because I have something to work on but just because I'm worth it. Plus, I have great moves."

Awesome post, D.M., and I just wanted to share that with everyone because that insight is why I do this podcast. It's so, so great. I just want to say, too, that we got so many comments off of Karen Anderson's podcast, so if you haven't listened to that, that one's all about mothers. I think everybody should get over there and have a listen to that one, for sure, interview with Karen Anderson.

Sheila asks me a question. She says, "I'm here again. Remember, English isn't my first language, so be kind. I wonder if all this coaching applies only to people who never have done something bad, like to a murderer or a rapist. How can someone regret for such a thing? I would love to hear about a judgment thing. Be extreme with your examples, please. I'm very curious about what you have to say about this. I really love your podcast, both of your podcasts. Thank you very much." If you don't know, I have another podcast, How to Coach Yourself. I'm sorry, How to be a Life Coach. I just did a webinar called How to Coach Yourself, but my other podcast is How to be a Life Coach, and that's the business side of it.

Sheila, I just want you to know that when it comes to dealing with regret, the people that are involved in murders and sociopaths, usually one of the reasons why is because they don't have the ability to feel regret. When we're dealing with people that are on the

extreme end of the psychological spectrum, their self-awareness is not even to the point where they can even uncover why they might be feeling regret for that. I hope that answers your question.

Okay, here's a question and a post from Michelle. "I found your podcast almost a year ago and I can't thank you enough for all of the wisdom and insight that you pass along so generously to all of your followers. My question is wanting to know the distinction between feeling your feelings and being a victim. I'm not sure I understand the line between the two. For example, growing up, I had a father that just wasn't a good person. He abandoned my family and went through the rest of his life manipulating and hurting everyone he had interacted with, both personally and professionally.

"He died last year and I've been unable to shed a tear for someone that was so terrible to others. Because I've been more aware in recent months, I notice that Father's Day really bothers me. It's hurtful to see all of the Facebook posts of others that have had such positive role models and unconditional love from their fathers when that wasn't my experience. I always felt like an outcast or that I wasn't normal because my experience was seemingly so different. Seeing all these posts really brought me down and I started to feel sorry for myself. I was willing to feel the feelings, but I found that I felt like I was being a victim. If you could help clarify things for me, that would really be great. Looking forward to meeting you in September." Oh, yay, come in September. Wooh.

Okay. This is such a great question. What's the difference between feeling the feelings, which is always important, and being a victim? The difference is the thought that's causing it. If the thought that's causing it is, "Poor me. I have no control. I'm powerless. This shouldn't have happened to me," then you know that you're being a victim. That's what's causing your feelings. When you look at these posts on Facebook and you know that it's Father's Day and you're looking that other people had unconditional love or positive role models and you start feeling like, "I'm an outcast or I wasn't normal because my experience was different," then you may be identifying as a victim. That's not the same as just feeling your feelings.

Make sure when you're looking at stuff like that that you're noticing what are your thoughts that are causing those feelings. Are those thoughts that you want to continue to believe and to think? For example, my father was an alcoholic, so he definitely wasn't a good role model for me and he didn't show up and he wasn't consistently there and he cheated on my mom and he ended up drinking himself to death, literally. I don't want to think, "Poor me." I don't want to think, "Oh, everyone else got a better dad than me." I don't want to believe that because there's no upside. It doesn't serve me in any way. I like to think about what I did like about my dad, and it's challenging to do.

The thought that really sets me free is I was given the exact dad I was supposed to have. Nothing's gone wrong here. What's meant to happen does, and that is the exact dad I needed in order to live my destiny. Because of that, whenever I think about my dad, I feel nothing but love. When I start thinking that my dad should have been different than he is, that's when I start to feel a lot of negative emotion around it. The difference between identifying as a victim and feeling your feelings is the thought causing it. Make sure when you think about your dad that you're taking conscious responsibility for the thoughts that you're thinking and that those are thoughts you want to be thinking.

Okay, this one's from Claire. "Hi, Brooke. I love, love, love your podcast and I adore you. I found them recently and am listening to them in order. I'm in the forties now. I want to share an epiphany I had as I was listening to the first podcast. Quick background, I'm a career coach. I had attained my ideal weight when I turned forty. When I was forty-five, I got breast cancer and gained all the weight and more back. Needless to say, I'm ready to release my extra weight, but it's not ready to let go yet. One of my problems is eating in front of the TV at night as I lounge in my recliner."

Okay, Claire, I would disagree that your fat's not ready to let go yet. You're not ready to release your extra weight, because if you were ready, you wouldn't be eating in the recliner. Okay. "After hearing this podcast, I asked myself ..." The podcast that she's referring to is Why You Aren't Taking Action. "After hearing this podcast, I asked myself how I felt before I ate, anxious and guilty, and what was the thought

that led to that anxiety. I felt that I should be doing something more productive with my time than watching TV.

"While eating when I'm not really hungry is not good for me, it did keep my hands and mouth busy, which gave me an excuse to continue watching TV. While I don't think I can give up my night TV-watching, I've decided to do something else while watching TV to feel more productive, like ironing, folding clothes, checking my e-mail, et cetera. Thanks for the great insight. I'm familiar with the concepts because I was a psyche major." She says she was a psyche major and knew about behavioral cognitive therapy, but, "Until you described it in this way that you do, it didn't hit home."

One of the things I want to share with you is if you notice that you need to be more productive when you're watching TV, you can notice that that's a thought and you can change that thought or you can keep that thought and work around it and just be more productive in front of the TV. What is really important that you understand is that that is a thought that you can change. You have the ability to give yourself permission just to watch TV. You don't have to be more productive, and overeating while you're watching TV is hardly productive. We tell ourselves these illogical stories like somehow if I'm eating, then it's okay to watch TV. You might want to just change the thought to, "When I watch TV, I just watch TV and I don't have to be productive at all. I don't have to eat and I don't have to be ironing. I can just sit in front of the TV and I give myself permission to do so." That could be a really powerful way to approach that.

Okay, next question from Sheila. "I'm really struggling with the judgment topic. I would love to listen to your opinion. I think judging people is inevitable and sometimes is completely necessary to give an opinion of other people's behaviors. I think all opinions are judgments and thoughts. In my life sometimes a critic to my behavior, it makes me click and because of that I'm better." Ooh, okay. I know that English isn't your first language, so this is challenging for you, but I hear what you're asking me, and I agree that judging people is inevitable.

I think we make positive judgments and negative judgments about people all the time. I think we have opinions about other people, but

those are choices. Those are choices. When you say that you criticize your own behavior and it makes you change, then somehow that's better, I would disagree with that. I think what's happening is you criticize your behavior, which is a negative thought that creates a negative reaction, and then you decide to change your thought about yourself so you can change your behavior. What I want to suggest is you don't have to criticize yourself in order to change your behavior. In fact, I can't see any upside to criticizing yourself. You don't need to criticize yourself in order to change.

Okay, this one's from Jay. "Thanks for this podcast. This is finding and owning your own thoughts. It was really empowering for me to hear you own up to your own shortcomings, post argument with one of your co-workers' peers. It's powerful to hear that life coaches can make mistakes, too ..." oh, my goodness ... "and that our work will be ongoing and will continue throughout our lives. It brought up thoughts that I've been having that I've needed to clear. I do have a clarifying question, though. What is the difference between holding other people accountable for their actions and not taking responsibility for how we show up? How do you know that we're in the wrong?"

"You mentioned that you had this argument with someone that you cared deeply about. I've also had a relationship where I cared deeply about someone, and in some ways, we both hurt each other. However, when the relationship needed to come to an end, I found that my boundaries weren't being respected. Yet because we were so close, and after listening to your podcast, I wonder, was I wrong for the e-mails that I sent? I'd like to think I was firm and did the right thing, but at the same time, I still feel bad for having established the boundaries I needed. Please let me know your thoughts on this. What's the difference between holding other people accountable and not taking responsibility for how we show up?"

This sounds so familiar, I feel like I've already answered this and I might have answered this in another podcast, but I'm going to answer it here, too. The difference between setting a boundary ... I'm really going to answer this question, what's the difference between holding other people accountable for their actions and taking responsibility for how we show up? You can hold people accountable for their actions. It doesn't mean that they're going to take responsibility. You can tell

someone, "Hey, this is the way you behaved," but I just want to be clear, Jay.

When you have a boundary that you set with somebody, you want to make sure that the actions that you're being held accountable are your own. A boundary is, "If you do this, then I will ..." Okay? You want to make sure that taking responsibility for how you feel and how you act is all what boundaries are. Other people get to behave however they want to behave. I know that that's such bad news. It makes me nervous when you say something about holding other people accountable because it makes me think that you're trying to control how they behave and kind of punish them for how they behave.

That's very different than a boundary. A boundary isn't about holding someone accountable and giving them consequences and punishing them for how they behave. It's about you taking responsibility for how you want to behave. When you're in a relationship with someone, just remember they get to behave however they want. If they want to do things that you don't want to be a part of, then you can leave, but they get to behave however they want. It's not about you holding them accountable, it's about you holding yourself accountable.

Okay, you guys, that is my Q & A for this one. If you have other questions that you want me to answer, if you have other things that you want me to address, then I would be happy to do it. You need to ask your questions in the podcast Comments. Please don't e-mail them to me. I will be happy to answer all of your questions here. I'm going to add a little bonus on the end of this just for a few of the people that were on the public coaching call. We have a public coaching call that we have been doing for people who want to get coached live by me. We are no longer offering that class because everything's blowing up around these parts.

I just have so many people that are showing up and wanting me to help them with things and participate with them and things and pay me for doing wonderful things, so I'm in. I do a lot of free things and this is just one of those free things that I no longer have time to do, but we will have recordings of them. There were a couple of people that were on that call today that were unable to get coached, so what

I'd like to do is just provide them a little bit of coaching at the end of this call here. Hopefully, it will be the second best option to being coached live because we won't be able to hear their answers to my questions, but I will definitely be able to offer them a way that they may be able to coach themselves.

This is from Leila. "I'd like to be coached on when I should quit my job. Here's the summary. I've been in the same type of job at the same company for over a decade. For the last few years, I've known I wanted to do something else. Excuse after excuse kept me here. Now I'm over my excuses and I only have choices left. Part of me thinks, 'Finally, let's do this.' The other part is like, 'Hold on, lady, have a little bit of patience and be more responsible about shifting careers.' After so many years of holding myself back for the wrong reason, it's a little hard to tell if I just have a new, more clever excuse." Interesting. Your typo was you wrote "cleaver," cleaver excuse. That makes me think that you have a cleaver in your hand. That's awful, right? That's what we do sometimes, we use our excuses as cleavers.

She says lots of extra detail that may or may not be useful. Here's the deal. "Early in my career, I had several different jobs. I would stay in a job as long as I loved it and then easily decide to quit when I was no longer where I wanted to be. Each time, I was able to find my next thing pretty easily. Then I got a career. I've been with the same company corporate job for over ten years. The last few I have not been as happy or successful as I wanted to be. To compensate, I did a lot of side work. That worked for awhile and ultimately left me much more frustrated being in a job I don't love anymore. I spent years wallowing in the opinion of doing lots of personal growth and work, and I have had plenty of excuses to stay in my job.

"The longer I stay where I am and continue to know in my heart that there is somewhere better for me, the more I get stuck and the more I have to coach myself out of it. I've made a lot of progress in letting go of my excuses keeping me in my job and on my way to building a coaching business. I'm enrolled at the Life Coach School in September." Woo hoo. "What I'm trying to decide is when I should leave my current job. I'm getting stuck on where I'm being responsible versus sabotaging myself. There are three timeframes I'm

considering, now, September 2015, or September 2016. I thought my last barrier to quitting was to be getting my husband bought in. He has now very clearly told me that I can quit as soon as I would like. So tempting to just do it. On the other hand, I want to be responsible."

Then she goes through to her pro and con list of the pros of leaving and the cons of leaving, and "Why haven't I already quit?" She says most are mitigated at this point but creep in and she has ego, fear, money, desire to please other, opinion, what-if. Oh, my gosh, I love your self-awareness here and I love how much energy you've put into this. Here's the thing. Leila, this is what I want you to know, and this is for anyone who's ever making a decision. There is no wrong decision. If you decide to quit your job, you're going to be amazing. If you decide to stay in your job for another year, you're going to be amazing.

The one thing I always tell people is that if you're making a decision in order to feel better, you're not ready to make a decision, because you don't need to make a decision to feel better. The only reason you should ever decide to do something is just because you want to. Don't make a decision to quit your job because you want to be happier, because you may or may not be happier. Don't quit your job because you think you'll feel differently, because as you know, you can be happy, you can feel differently in your job. Make your decision because it's simply something you want to do. You feel like this is what I want to do and you do it. No matter what, either way, you get to own that decision and you get to feel great about it.

Here's what I say when it comes to making a decision. First and foremost, don't make it because you think you're going to feel better. Number two, make sure you really like your reason for why you're making that decision. When you go through your own pro and con list, you want to make sure, do you like your reason for staying in your job? Is that a good enough reason for you? Or do you like your reason for leaving your job? Is that a good enough reason for you? Whether you leave it now or you leave it in September or you leave it in September 2016, which reason do you like the best? Here's the best news. You can change those reasons, too. There are no wrong decisions.

Here's the one thing that I want you to consider and the thought that you said, "I want to be responsible." That is a thought. My question to you is, why? If you like the answer to the question of why you want to be responsible, then you can commit to doing that. If you don't like the reason, then that can become one less reason to want to be responsible, because you can be responsible and quit your job, too. Just throwing that out there.

I, of course, can't make this decision for you, and I can't make suggestions on what you should or shouldn't do. There's no way that I can know that. What I do know is that there is no wrong decision, and whatever decision you decide to make, you can be just as happy and you can create exactly the life you want to create, whether you stay in your job or you quit it and start your business right now. Make sure you let us know in the Comments what you decide to do and why, be really fascinating, and that's a great question to share with everyone. Love it.

Okay, next question. This is from Ellie. "When does the coach recognize that the client can't be helped?" Never. I don't think that there's ever a time when a client can't be helped, and the fact that you're asking the question makes me think about this, and this is really important. If you have an idea of what your client will do or won't do or will see or won't see in order to be "helped," you're always going to have an agenda for your client and you're always going to be directing them to a certain place or not. Make sure that when you're coaching your client that you don't have an idea of how they should be changing or what they should be doing.

If someone is committed to their story and they're committed to their current belief systems, that's really none of your business, and they can be committed as long as they want. I think everyone can be helped. Now there comes a time in some of our coaches' lives that there's some people that we don't want to coach anymore. That's a very different thing, but believing that someone can't be helped and that you can't help someone will absolutely affect your ability to coach them. Make sure you do your own coaching on yourself first and that you're not holding a belief that they can't be helped and then you'll be able to hold the space for them to find their own way.

Okay, last one. "My husband hates his job, and for good reason. He needs a way to survive until he can get out in November of 2016. How can I best support him as he's having a very challenging time letting go of work. He obsesses on negative thoughts about work in his daily life and on weekends when he's technically off work. He feels the stress, anxiety, and frustration of work will follow him everywhere." Okay. Remember, stress, frustration, anxiety are not from work. Work is neutral. Now you've totally bought into his story here, right? You believe work is stressful, because you said, "and for good reason." I hate his job, too, right?

His job is neutral. What happens at his job is neutral. What his boss does, what the other people do, what happens at work is neutral. The only thing that causes him a challenging time, the only thing that causes him to obsess is his negative thinking. He gets to decide how he wants to feel about his job and he gets to decide what he wants to think about his job. He has a couple of more months to really practice this. Now here's the question that will really help him. You can't change anything about his job. His job is absolutely going to stay the same. The people are going to keep acting the way they do. The job is going to continue to be the way that it is. How do you want to feel until November about the job?

Now be careful here, because right now you hate it. Right now, you have a lot of negative emotion about it. How do you want to feel with nothing changing until November? That's up to you. You get to determine how you want to feel. I would suggest that you figure out how you want to feel about your husband's job, too, because you're having a huge influence on how your husband is able to be helped by you, I should say, because you're so in his story with him. His thoughts about his job cause him his pain. His job does not cause him pain. I know you won't agree with me, but I really want you to see that you get to decide how you want to feel by what you think about that job.

Okay, everybody, that is it for today. That's all I have. This week is over. If you have more questions for me, take it to the Comments. I'll answer them in the next few sessions. Otherwise, have an amazing, beautiful week and a gorgeous summer. Take care, everyone. 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.