

Ep #87: Discipline



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. And now, your host, Master Coach Instructor, Brooke Castillo.

What's up, my friends? How are you guys? So happy to say hello to you and to be connecting with you. I've been running a lot of webinars lately and I'm going to be offering them all through October and November, so make sure that you check out my e-mails coming on in because you'll want to make sure that you can get onboard with those. I don't really publish them on my website, so you need to make sure you're on my e-mail list if you want to jump on to those webinars. I'd love to have you. We've been having a lot of fun. I use Zoom now, so we can be on video and I can coach you live and we can chat about some things. I also am going to be doing a coaching marathon coming up. I'm going to do 5 days in a row of coaching on the phone, so make sure you're on my e-mail list. Make sure you're getting Friday Coach Like.

If you want to make sure that you're on there, you can go to the website and go to where the podcast is and just opt in to either the public coaching call, or the 14 steps, or to my video series, and you'll be sure to be on the e-mail list. If for some reason you're not getting those emails, make sure you e-mail Melodee, M-E-L-O-D-E-E, at thelifecoachschool.com and she'll make sure that you're on there.

All right, today, we're going to talk about discipline. Discipline is so important to talk about and I want to make sure that you guys are understanding exactly what it is so you can apply it. Now, there's so much to learn on it. I'm going to try and condense it all for you. I've spent quite a bit of time preparing for this podcast so I can give it to you in a smaller chunk, so I'm talking for too long about it.

First of all, let's talk about what discipline is. When I say 'discipline', it's interesting what comes up for some people and what comes up for other people. What comes up for some people is that they think about self-discipline. They think about disciplining themselves and what comes up for other people is disciplining their children. It's the same concept, right? It's the same concept both ways. Discipline is usually thought of as a very positive thing. Well disciplined the children and well disciplined adults. Most of us don't have any

problem disciplining our children, but we have quite a challenge disciplining ourselves. I'm going to talk about that a little bit.

What I want to talk about first is how much discipline gives us freedom and how desired it is. If you have a well disciplined child, what that probably means is that they know the rules, and they follow the rules, and you don't have to spend a lot of time getting them in trouble and using harsh tones with them. It's a pretty peaceful co-existence.

If you are a self-disciplined person, it's probably the same. You probably have a very wonderful existence with yourself. Like, let me give you some examples. If you are disciplined when it comes to money, you probably have more freedom than if you aren't disciplined, right? Disciplined with money means that you consistently put money away, you aren't impulsive with your money, you save your money, which in turn gives you freedom because you have that money in case of emergencies. You have that money when you want to buy something that you genuinely want long-term.

Same is true with work. If you're disciplined with work, you probably do well there, versus being undisciplined at work. You probably produce work on time, you probably show up on time, you probably deliver what you say you're going to deliver.

If you're disciplined on your sleep, you probably have a lot more freedom during the day in terms of staying awake. If you're disciplined with your grocery shopping, you probably have food in your house when you need it and when you want it and that gives you a lot more freedom.

Now, a lot of times when I mention being disciplined, people feel like it gives them less freedom. I want to make it clear that having discipline actually can give you so much more freedom when you think about it that way. Now, what is discipline? Discipline is really your ability to have self-control and restraint against base primitive desires, right? So most of us would really like to lay in bed until 10. We'd like to eat whatever we want, whenever we want. We'd like to not do work if we don't feel like doing work, right? That's the idea of discipline, is our ability to kind of overcome those base desires.

Now what I find really interesting is that there are two main components that determine how successful we're going to be in our lives. Now, of course, success is relative in how we define it. The way that that I'd like to define it here with you is, do you get the results you want? There are two components that determine that.

The first is intelligence, which I find fascinating because intelligence and how it's measured is very, I think, subjective, even though it tries to be objective. I think that since we've added, not just the IQ tests, but added in the emotional IQ and spacial IQ and added more things to compare, versus just how you do in math and science, adding in that street smart component, I think, is very important, in terms of the range of our intelligences. Our intelligence is pretty fixed. There's about a 5% degree that we can improve that. Now, that's not the same of knowledge, right? We're talking about our base of intelligence.

The second thing is self-control, which of course is one of the components of discipline. Self-control depends a lot on what we call willpower and restraint. One of the things that I understood when I started researching willpower, and I actually did quite a bit of research on willpower for my class, Stop Overeating Master Class, because that's a lot of what people try to rely on to lose weight, and the question is, "Why doesn't it work?" Well, there's a bunch of studies. There's actually a book out there called 'Willpower' that's definitely worth a read. Roy Baumeister did many studies and is, you know, an expert in willpower. One of the things that he concluded is that we have a limited amount of willpower and that it is, unlike intelligence, it is something that we can absolutely improve on and grow. Instead of it being a fixed personality trait, it's like a muscle that we can use to get stronger. The more willpower, the more restraint, the more self-control we have, the more discipline we will have, right? Which ultimately will mean the more successful we will be.

Even though a lot of people want to turn away from discipline as a concept, I want to invite you to embrace discipline as the very secret to your freedom and also to your success.

When you think about, let's use this example of children, how do we discipline our kids in a way in way that helps them be disciplined?

One of the things that we do, and that we do very well, is we create rules for them. We let them know ahead of time what those rules are and we have them commit to those rules before hand. When they do, we have a tremendous of peace and happiness. When we tell them they need to say please, and they need to say thank you, and they need to sit quietly at the table, and they don't need to be throwing temper tantrums, and they can't steal, right? When they develop the discipline to do all of those things, when their inclination maybe to scream and yell. I'd like to scream and yell a lot of the time, right? I don't do that because I have discipline, I have restraint, I have self-control. Sometimes I want to punch someone in the throat. I never do that because I have restraint and discipline.

One of the reasons why is because I have set those expectations ahead of time for myself. I have let myself know these are the rules that go on in my life. If you think about how you approach your work, the areas in your life where you are disciplined, it's usually because you have set up those rules ahead of time and you honor those rules. You don't wait until you're in that situation and try to rely on willpower and restraint to get you to do that in that moment. You have decided ahead of time that you're just not that kind of person. You've decided ahead of time that you will brush your teeth every day. You've decided ahead of time that you will arrive to work on time.

When you do that with yourself, just like when you set expectations for children and they are able to honor those expectations and agree to them ahead of time, they don't have to use their willpower and restraint in that moment. It is the same with us when you set those expectations for yourself, right? This is very similar to the past two episodes where I've talked about constraint and do goals, and the other one where I talked about decisions ahead of time. It really helps for you to know this is what I expect of myself, and then to honor those commitments will give you an increased amount of discipline, self-control, and restraint in your life.

What is so amazing is that practicing self-control, practicing restraints, is what makes it stronger. When you tell yourself, "I'm going to exercise every day at 5," and then you go and exercise every day at 5, you develop that discipline. You develop the restraint of not going to the bar instead, right? The more that you do that, the

more powerful it is. If you tell yourself, "I want to go at 5," and you set yourself up so you're going to have to be using willpower, which means you've given yourself the option of not going, then in that moment, you have to make that decision. You say, "Well, I could go. Maybe I won't go," by that time, your willpower is so limited, by the end of the day, you've probably used up most of your willpower reserves and you're definitely not going to go.

But, if you set yourself up so there is no option, you make that commitment 100%, no matter what, and then you honor that commitment to yourself with not giving yourself the option, that's what true discipline is.

You guys have seen this with kids, right? When your kids know that you just don't buy candy, ever. I just do not buy you candy, I do not buy you coke, right. They stop asking. It's not even an issue, there's just total freedom around it, right? But when sometimes you do, and sometimes you don't, then there's always a fit, right? There's always an issue with it. There's one thing about really strict discipline with yourself when you say, "No, this is just something I do." Like, for me I'm just never trying heroine, it's just not an option. I don't care how many times someone offers it to me, I don't care where I am, I don't care who else is doing it, I don't care anything. I'm just never going to do it. I don't have to make that decision for myself, that's already been decided. I have a very clean discipline about that. Same with cigarettes. I just do not smoke cigarettes, period. I don't have to spend a lot of time wasting decision-making energy on that thing because I've already decided that for myself.

You can do that in your life by creating discipline, making those decisions when you're in a sane place. Making sure that you're honoring the person that you will be in that moment and knowing that you are not creating a lot of options for yourself. The more you follow through on those decisions that you've made ahead of time with thoughtfulness and care, you're not making ridiculous decisions and throwing yourself under the bus, meaning you're going to work out for 17 hours every day or even 4 hours every day. Like, you know that you aren't going to want to do that. You have to negotiate with yourself ahead of time, make a deal with yourself, and then shake on it. Right?

When you shake on that commitment to yourself, it should be as if you're shaking on that commitment to somebody else that you really, genuinely care about, okay? That really matters to you. Here's the benefit of doing that. The more you set up all your decisions ahead of time, the less reactive you will be in the moment. The less temptations you will have to deal with. If you decide ahead of time that you will not smoke cigarettes, you won't ever be tempted by them. You won't have to have that negotiation with yourself. It's just not an option.

Same with relationships. If you just absolutely know that you will never cheat on your husband, you don't have to make a lot of decisions about anything else about that. It's just done. Right? It's so much freedom. It frees up your brain.

When you decide that you work out 3 days a week, no matter what. Tuesday at 4 o'clock you go to yoga, that's it. It's not something that you can negotiate, you've already shook with yourself on it. It's freedom. Okay? Having that game plan lets you use a lot less willpower. You don't have to use your willpower and your restraint in that moment because it's already been decided.

Here's the beauty of that. The more you use your discipline and honor your discipline, the more willpower, the more restraint, the more successful you will get at discipline, and, 'and' is the best part, I love this part! When you do that, right? When you honor that decision to yourself, you get better at it. You've practiced it. If you do it in one area of your life, you get better at all the areas in your life. If you are more disciplined because you're exercising every day, then you're going to show up to work on time. Then you're going to be able to eat better. Then you're going to be able to not yell at your kids as much. Discipline in one area applies to every area.

And finally, and this is a really important point. Using discipline by making a plan for yourself ahead of time, and then honoring that plan because you shook on it with yourself, both parts of you agree, the part of you that would be in the future not wanting to exercise, and the part of you now that really likes the idea of exercise. That relationship that you develop with yourself will be a relationship of integrity and honor. The more you have integrity with yourself, the

better the relationship will be. Which means the more you'll be able to ask of yourself, and the more you'll be willing to do.

I cannot tell you how powerful this has been in my life, especially within the past year. Planning my decisions ahead of time. Really eliminating any need for negotiation. Following through and honoring my commitment to myself has made my discipline, my willpower, my self-control much stronger, and it's also increased the relationship I have with myself. This, in turn, has made me more successful in all areas of my life. It's powerful, powerful stuff. I highly encourage you guys to try this. Go back. Listen to constraint. Get a good focus. Listen to the one on 'Do Goals'. Write yourself really clear goals. Make some expectations for yourself. Make some disciplined rules for yourself that you want to follow and then honor those by shaking on it with yourself and following through.

The more you do it, the better you'll get at it. If you want to start small, I'm cool with that. You can start with a 5 minute minimum base line exercise. Go out and walk every day, or 5 days a week for 5 minutes. Do it over and over and over. Yeah, you probably won't get as much from the exercise as if you did it for an hour, but you will get an equal amount of discipline strength from walking for 5 minutes as you do for making yourself go out there and do it for an hour. You won't give up if it's 5 minutes. The more you honor your commitments to yourself, no matter how small they are, the stronger your discipline will become.

All right you guys, have an amazing, awesome, beautiful week and disciplined week. Discipline is freedom. I will talk to you guys next week. Take care. Bye-bye.

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