

## Ep #97: Balancing Emotion



### **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 everyone. How are you? I am thrilled to be talking to you guys today about balancing emotion. Yes, another episode on the podcast about emotion. Just because everything we ever do in our life is because of emotion I want you to understand how important it is. Like I said, I have been working with my students in Stop Overeating Masterclass. We're doing a lot of work on emotion. If you want to get in on the next class, you can go to [thelifecoachschool.com/stopovereating](http://thelifecoachschool.com/stopovereating) and make sure you're on that list.

I've also been putting the finishing touches on How To Feel Better, my program that I created for all of you who want to take this work to a deeper next level. I'm really thrilled with how many people we've had sign up for the course already, and I'm really excited to release it coming up here pretty soon. If you're interested in that course you can go to [lifecoachschool.com/howtofeelbetteronline](http://lifecoachschool.com/howtofeelbetteronline). You can also just go to [lifecoachschool.com](http://lifecoachschool.com). I have a little banner on the very top. You can just click on that and it'll give you more information about that course.

What I'm going to talk to you about today is balancing emotion. One of the themes that has come up a lot with my students who were trying to lose weight is this complete avoidance of negative emotion. That is one of the things that so many of my students have been trying to do and what I have been trying to do. I've talked a lot about wanting to be able to drink Chardonnay and wanting to be able to not feel icky after I do it, not to let it have a negative consequence. I've talked about wanting not to want it. I'm even going to do a program on it. Some of you guys have been asking me about the Fewer Cocktails program that's going to be coming out. I just want to let you know, I do not have it finalized yet, but when I do you will be the first to know.

What I have done is a lot of work with myself, a lot of meditation, a lot of thought downloads, a lot of thought models on my relationship with my own feelings. I used to think it was my relationship with food and I

used to think it was my relationship with alcohol, but what I have realized is that those are just avoidant symbols and symptoms. They have nothing to do with my relationship with myself. The more that I have done this work on myself the more I've realized how important it is for me to be in a relationship with myself where I can trust and honor and take care of myself or I can make those decisions for myself ahead of time where I can supervise myself from a high level.

One of the things that I noticed a lot of in my relationship with just wanting to have a glass of wine now and then is that incessant chatter that would go on in my brain about it, the amount of time I spent talking about it and thinking about it, and being upset about it, and noticing the drama and the distraction about it. It's one of the things that I've been talking a lot to my class about because I can really relate to their relationship with food and wanting to be able to use food for entertainment, wanting to be able to use food as an escape. I want to do the same thing with wine or a cocktail.

I've spent a lot of time trying to make that relationship with myself work in that way where it's just like, "Oh, it'll be fine, it'll be fine, it'll be fine." I spent so much time working on it that eventually I came to this decision where I was just tired of thinking about it, tired of even dealing with it. For what? So I could have a drink? Like why? Like why is that so important? It's not. When I look at the big vision for my life, when I look at what I want to create in my life and what I want to offer to my students and my clients, it's such a menial piece of my life, and yet I was spending a lot of time thinking about it. I know that so many of my students feel this way about their weight. Like they're just tired of thinking about it.

One of my students came to me and said, "You know, I want to just be able to dial in my weight, I just want to like turn a dial and set it on that weight and that's what I'll weigh." Now from my perspective I can see that she can absolutely do that. She knows what she needs to eat in order to lose weight. She knows exactly what she needs to do for her body. She's losing weight pretty consistently. If she stays on a pretty clean clear protocol for herself, that's how much weight she loses, pretty consistently. When she doesn't do that, then she doesn't dial in her weight.

It's the same with me. I want to feel clean and clear in the morning. I want to not worry about alcohol. When I don't drink anything, then that's it, then I don't. It's just a decision. I remember thinking personally I was thinking, "Here's the deal. If I'm thinking about Chardonnay this much a year from now I'm going to be pissed. I do not want to use my mind juice. I do not want to use my intelligence to be negotiating that with myself. It's ridiculous." I felt a shift within me. I felt like all the work I had been doing on my relationship with myself has just come to this place where I'm able to make that decision with total freedom and I just genuinely don't want it.

We had New Year's. I was with my family. There was champagne, there was Chardonnay, there was situations where I absolutely would have wanted to drink, went out to dinner, everything, I had no desire, none. I know that I earned that. I'm so happy for that for myself. I think there was that moment when I said, "In a year from now I'm not dealing with this anymore, so I'm going to make a decision not to deal with it now." There was another situation, some of you know this, I've been on a two-week vacation with my family. Trust me, I'm getting to balancing emotion. I know this is kind of a long story to get us there but this is kind of the main point of my story, to take us to that place where I can offer some insight maybe that will be really helpful to you. We went to this beautiful restaurant.

One of the things that I talk about all the time is that I love the romance of it. It's like people talk to me about desert and food and cookies in such a romantic way and it doesn't make any sense to me. It just doesn't interest me so I don't understand that anymore, which is crazy, because it used to be such a huge part of my life, having all that food. I think I transferred a bit to the wine.

Anyway, so went to this beautiful bar. It was like a lounge. We had just driven for eight hours. I was thinking at that point. It just seems like a perfect time to sit down and relax and have a cocktail. My husband and I, it was just the two of us, and it was this beautiful lounge. We sat down and he ordered I think a beer. He likes the IPA beers and I ordered a club soda.

By the way you guys, if you are struggling with drinking too much, that has been a really helpful thing. Or even drinking at all. I wasn't

even drinking too much. Just one glass of wine. One of the things that was kind of Pavlovian for me was as soon as I walked into a bar wanting a cocktail in a pretty glass. So one of the things that I have been doing is just ordering. I'll tell myself, "Okay, but you have to have two club sodas first." This is what I had been doing, negotiating with myself, which of course was all the chatter I was talking about.

I've just decided now that I just don't want alcohol in my life. I just don't have room for it. That discussion is over. But at this point, this was a couple of weeks ago where I hadn't quite made that distinction yet. What's interesting about that actually is that I'm actually working with some other students who are trying to do the same thing. I don't think that just cutting it out of your life cold turkey without doing this work is as effective. Because this year, 2015, I went 100 days without drinking at all, which made it easy to do, but I hadn't done the desire work. I'm going to talk about this a lot more in future episodes.

Back to my story. We're at the bar and I had ordered my club soda and I had told myself, "I'm going to have two club sodas, and then if I still want wine I'll have it," and normally I don't want it after two club sodas. It's just kind of that initial Pavlovian would you like a cocktail to relax or would you like a cocktail before dinner? I sat down there and I was watching Chris drink his beer and I was thinking about this restlessness and agitation I was feeling.

I was thinking about Pema Chodron, who is one of my amazing teachers, and her concepts and ideas about just allowing negative emotion to be there and knowing that it's part of life and knowing that there's a balance. I just sat there and just ... I didn't get upset that I was restless. I didn't get upset that I was agitated. I just was like, "Oh, this is the part of my day where I feel restless. This is the part of my day where I feel agitated." I don't need to answer that emotion with anything. I don't need to resist it. I don't need to react to it. I don't need to avoid it with a glass of wine. I can just be with it.

I sat there and I noticed it. I noticed how I felt, where I felt it. Interestingly I felt in my jaw, and in my gut, and actually in the back of my thighs. Restlessness and agitation, that's where I feel it. I just kind of sat with it. It was my companion. There was a football game on

and I was just breathing and talking to Chris and noticing that I was feeling agitated and just allowing it to be there.

Now there is a huge difference between noticing it's there and being pissed off about it, noticing it's there and resisting it, and noticing it's there and allowing it. There's so much space around it. The way that I like to describe it is that you have the vibration of restlessness and agitation, but it's not so intense because you're allowing it and there's space around the vibration, there's room for it, there's breath involved in it. You're not squeezing it and making it more intense. You're actually opening up yourself to it.

The visual I just got in my mind is that if you picture it like a bunch of restlessness in a really small container it's going to be much more intense than if you open up the container and allow it to be there. It's almost like there's more room for it. It slows it down a little bit. That's exactly what happened to me.

I sat there and I drank my club soda with lime and I talked to Chris. We started talking about our kids and our trip, and before I knew it that feeling had gone all the way through me. It had passed all the way through. I didn't feel restless. I didn't feel agitated. I felt proud. I felt relieved. I felt like the last thing I wanted was a drink or a cocktail or even a sip of a cocktail. It was really amazing. I haven't wanted one since. I haven't felt at all any desire since.

I think that it's a combination of all the work that I've done, the decision, the willingness to make a decision to be done with it. Not only that but at the same time making the decision that I'm willing to feel restless, I'm willing to feel agitated, I'm willing to go into those emotions. At any time and for any reason I'm willing to feel the effect of that.

Now here is where it gets magical. When you make a choice to not resist, react, or avoid an emotion on the other side of it is freedom and strength. Willingness to feel an emotion gives you that benefit on the other side. The more willing you are and the more able you are, the better you get at it, the less difficult it becomes and the stronger you become, and the less the desire to resist it and avoid is there. Remember when I said I wanted not to want it? That's how you do it.

You have to want the alternative. What's the alternative to overeating? Feeling. You have to genuinely want to feel negative emotion.

Now when I told this to my Stop Overeating Masterclass students, I explained to them that I realized this was a hard sell. Hey, don't eat a cupcake. Feel agitated instead. It's not a very good tag line. But what is good, what is great, the way that I'm able to sell it is on the other side of the cupcake you still have the agitation. Now it's just covered in cupcake and in regret and in extra weight. But if you're willing to just feel the agitation, the desire for the cupcake, the need for the cupcake goes away.

One of the things I talk a lot about is do you want to be able to eat a cupcake, because a lot of us that's the argument we make. We say, "I want to be able to eat whatever I want whenever I want." I reposed that question to them and I said, "Would you rather just not want it?" Because I made this argument for so long. I was so agitated that I couldn't have a glass of Chardonnay. Hormonally, it would wake me up in the middle of the night and I just wouldn't feel good.

I really liked it and so I kept saying, "I just want to be able to have one glass. I just want to be able to enjoy it. I just want to be able to share," and I kept arguing for that limitation. Then I made the argument to myself, "Wait, I just don't want to want it. I just want to lose my desire for it altogether. I don't want to have to negotiate my desire for it. I just don't want to have the desire for it."

In order to figure that I had to figure out, "Okay, why do I have the desire for it?" What I realized is that my desire for it is so I wouldn't have to feel the deprivation or the agitation or the restlessness. But as soon as I was willing to do that, as soon as I not was only willing but wanted to feel that emotion, wanted to be willing so I could own my life and be in control of my life and not do anything against my own will, not doing stuff to avoid myself, not doing stuff to avoid my emotion, resist it, because always on the other side of that was the negative consequence. What I realized is that I want to be the kind of person that is willing to feel whatever is true for me in the moment.

The truth is after an eight-hour drive with my kids in the back, I feel a little restless and a little agitated, and that's okay. I could take a walk and I can work out because on the other side of those things I'm going to feel great, but I'm never going to take a drink, I'm never going to overeat, because on the other side of that is something I don't want, and it doesn't resolve the feeling, and it doesn't build up my relationship with myself, and it doesn't build up my ability to be present.

I have this concept, and I've talked about it before on the podcast, but I have kind of this juvenile storybook version probably from when I was a kid about heaven and this idea that, and I don't really believe this but it's a concept that helps me, that I'm sitting on a cloud with God and we're just having a chat. He's like, "Hey, you want to go to planet Earth and live a little bit there?" I'm like, "Yeah, I want to, because up here in heaven everything is just perfect, right? I'm just winning the lottery all the time. You know, I have the perfect body. I'm gorgeous. Everyone around me is gorgeous. We all win all the time. We're all number one. Everybody loves each other. And, you know, there's no reason to feel any negative emotion. There's really no reason to feel any ambition or competition or accomplishment or anything because we're already all perfect, we're already all complete. So I want to go and, you know, mix it up a little bit."

I have this vision of God saying to me, "Okay, well I just want you to know that when you go there it's 50/50, right? So 50% of the time you're going to feel like you do here in heaven. You're going to feel wonderful, and amazing, and happy, and perfect, and beautiful and loved and love. And the other half of the time is just going to be negative emotion, right? You're going to feel awkward and uncomfortable and frustrated and mad and even hate and humiliation and insecurity. Are you in?"

I say, "Yes, because here in heaven I don't really experience happiness in the way that I do when there's contrast." If you're always winning the lottery, winning the lottery isn't very exciting. If you're always happy, you don't really appreciate happiness. If everyone is always kind and tender to each other, you don't really appreciate it, right, because it's always there.



So when you have the contrast it makes emotions different, it makes them mean something different. Happiness means something different when there's unhappiness as the alternative. When there's only happy there is no alternative. This simplistic way of thinking about the world is really helpful and it's a lot of what Pema Chodron teaches us about the balance, the yin and the yang of everything, that life is suffering, that we actually agree to the suffering, we want there to be suffering so we can experience the contrast and that is why we're motivated to evolve.

If we're always just happy and perfect and loved and everything is great all of the time, there is no reason to advance or evolve. This is a concept that I really got taught by Abraham as well, like the contrast is what lets you want, desire. It creates that asking and the receiving.

Now asking and receiving is irrelevant if you're always already complete, if there is no negative emotion. I presented this idea to my Stop Overeating Masterclass students. I told them that 50% of the time we can plan on feeling negative emotion, and they wanted to negotiate that percentage. But I actually think that a lot of the time a lot of our students feel negative emotion a lot more than 50% of the time, and they don't even really allow themselves to feel the negative emotion. It's basically their resistance to the negative emotion, the anxiety about the negative emotion, not even the genuine emotion.

But if you were willing to feel the negative emotion, if you knew that it was part of your life, if you knew that okay, this is the part of my day where I feel anxious, I talked a lot about this on the podcast, a lot of mornings I wake I feel anxious. If I don't resist it, if I just allow it to be there, it's like a heavy purse sometimes, it's fine. It's part of the deal. Oh this is the part of the day. This is my 50%. This is the part of the day where I feel agitated. This is the part of the day where I feel deprived. This is the part of the day where I feel bored.

One of my students said, "Salads are so boring." I said, "It's not your salad's job to entertain you." In fact, it's not your lunch's job to entertain you. It's not your food's job ever to entertain you. Your food is there to provide you with fuel. Your food is there to provide with you with a way of feeling amazing in your body. Your entertainment, your distraction from your life comes from within you. You have to earn it.

You have to create it. Because when you take it from something external you will pay the price on the other side of it, because you're using it as an escape. If it starts with a negative emotion that you're trying to escape, the result will be a negative emotion.

I think this understanding, this metaphorical story that I'm telling you can completely change your life. If you are willing to feel 50% of the time a non-positive emotion, a negative emotion in order to be a balanced human being, in order to really appreciate the positive, you're willing to feel the negative. You don't need to win the lottery all the time. You don't need to eat all the time. If you could eat whatever you wanted all the time ... In fact, there's people in my life, my brother, very thin, can eat whatever he wants all the time, he gets bored. It's not so great.

For us we feel like, "Oh my God, that would be so great to be able to eat fettuccine Alfredo, three servings of fettuccine Alfredo. That would be amazing." He's like, "That sounds awful. Right? Why would I want to eat three servings of fettuccine Alfredo?" To him because he can do it all day every day it's not interesting to him. He doesn't need that as an escape, as a way of beating himself up or as a way of avoiding emotion.

It's just like for many of us the idea that we could be on heroin all the time. I mean if you go on heroin, I think you feel great all the time. When you're coming off of it you just could take more and you would just feel amazing all the time. Why don't we want that? Why don't we want to be high all of the time? Because we want to be present with our experience. We want to be human. We want to experience all the emotions at being alive.

I think we forget that. I think we get this idea that we should be happy all the time, that we should feel positive emotion all the time. Or that negative emotion is here to teach us something or tell us something or warn us about something. But here's what I think. I think our brains unsupervised create a lot more negative emotion than is necessary. I think our brains when supervised will probably produce about 50/50. That's if we're managing them, we're aware of them, we're in control of them.

When we apply this work to our lives we become the watcher of our brain, we become the watchers of our mind. That gives us a reprieve from being in our mind. But it doesn't mean that we should always be feeling positive emotion. Embrace the fact that with a balanced human being we're probably going to be 50/50. That's okay. It's okay to feel restless. It's okay to feel deprived. It's okay to feel agitated. It's part of the deal. It's okay to feel sad. It's okay to feel angry.

Now a lot of people will say to me, "Well, I don't want to feel angry because that means I'm going to be mean," or, "I don't want to feel hate because that means I'm going to do something." Remember feeling an emotion is very different than reacting to it. Feeling an emotion means just giving it space to exist for as long as it needs to in order to peter out. If you think of it like a shooting star it just needs to do its thing, it needs to burn itself out.

If you allow it to be in your body, if you allow it to be present, if you don't judge it, if you, "Oh, this is the part of my day where I'm going to feel this." I know I'm the one creating it. I know I'm the one with my mind that's creating the thoughts. That's okay. It doesn't mean anything is gone wrong. It doesn't mean that anything needs to change immediately. I will let this feeling be here as long as I want, as long as it needs to be.

Now if you are feeling negative emotion more than 50% of the time it's because you aren't managing your mind properly, and that's where we really get to work. Step one though is we really have to acknowledge what we are feeling and thinking before we can even go about changing it. Understanding the negative emotion as part of the deal. You've got this. 50% of the time you've got this. If it's more than that, we'll work on it, we'll work on cleaning up the mind, using all the tools that we have available to us. If you really want to take this to the next level make sure you enroll in my class, How To Feel Better, [lifecoachschool.com/howtofeelbetteronline](http://lifecoachschool.com/howtofeelbetteronline).

When you watch a commercial, when you watch an ad, what does it tell you? It basically tells you that you should be happy all the time, You should be thin. You should be beautiful. You should be happy. You should be like that fictional heaven that I have in my mind, all of the time. If you don't it's because you haven't purchased my product.

It's because you haven't purchased this beer, or you haven't purchased this bikini, or you haven't purchased this whatever it is that they're trying to sell.

They're teaching us that you need to buy this external thing. A lot of the times it's food. You need to buy this cupcake and then you will feel happy all the time. People that buy this product feel happy all the time. But the truth is we're not going to feel happy all the time, and that's okay. Don't let anyone program you to believe that you should. Don't look on Facebook and think that everybody there is happy all the time, because people who are trying to convince other people that they're happy all the time are missing the true experience of being alive, the true experience of being a human being.

Now if you're feeling negative all the time and you're indulging in negative attitudes and indulging in negative moods all the time that's a whole different thing. Let's try and balance it out you guys, let's try and do half and half and see if we can embrace the negative emotion and experience it in a way that I believe we are meant to experience it.

Love to know what you guys think about this concept, what you do in your life to accommodate and allow negative emotion instead of resisting, reacting, or avoiding it. Love to hear your comments. Go to [lifecoachschool.com/97](http://lifecoachschool.com/97) and let's talk about balancing emotion, negative emotion and positive emotion. I'll see you guys there. Have a wonderful amazing week. I'll talk to you soon. Bye-bye.

Thank you for listening to The Life Coach School Podcast. It is my honor to show up here every week and connect with people that are like-minded, wanting to take their life to a deeper level with more awareness and more consciousness. If you are interested in taking this work to the next level, I highly encourage you to go to [thelifecoachschool.com/howtofeelbetteronline](http://thelifecoachschool.com/howtofeelbetteronline). It is there that I have a class that will take all of this to a deeper application where you'll be able to really feel and experience how all of these concepts can start showing up in your life. It's one thing to learn it intellectually. It's another thing to truly apply it to your life. I will see you there. Thanks again for listening.