

Ep #374: Bored Choices



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Brooke Castillo

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You are listening to *The Life Coach School Podcast* with Brooke Castillo, episode number 374.

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.

Hey there. How are you? How are all the things? All the things are good here. I'm going to talk to you today about bored choices; about the choices that you make when you're bored.

And this is inspired by a conversation that I had with my son, Christian, and advice that I gave him, unsolicited, of course, about his life and what he should be doing with it. Because that's what I tend to do as his mother, is tell him how he should live his life up to my expectations. And we laugh about it.

I kid. We had a great conversation about it. And afterwards, I was thinking a lot about it. And we came to this conclusion that I think is really interesting. But it's the idea that if you ask someone what they do when they're bored, the answer to that question will be very telling about the contribution and the creation that they make in their life.

So, most of us, when we are bored, we consume. We escape. That's how most of us deal with it. And even Christian was saying, you know, "The day goes by so slow when I'm not partying. And when I party, the day goes by so fast." And I said, "Well, because you're not actually present for it."

And I think for me, what I've always done when I was bored was a combination of things. I always would either escape, which was through overeating and overdrinking and over-dating and over-anxieting, I would say, escaping from those things.

And the other thing that I did is I read. And I read a lot of non-fiction and I created a lot of content with writing in a journal, that sort of thing. So, I want you to assess yourself and think about what you do when you're bored.

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I think being bored is an opportunity. We can either access inside of our own mind or we can escape out of our own mind when we're bored. And what I've told and been telling people for years is that when you do not have a good relationship with yourself, when you don't like the content of your own mind, you don't like hearing your own thoughts, then you most often will want to escape yourself when you're bored because that's basically just you being alone with you. And if you don't like yourself, you're like, "I'm out of here."

But when you start using that time when you're bored to access yourself and listen to your thoughts and get to know yourself, you may come to want to change yourself. And one of the things that I told Christian and it's something I talk a lot about in my Stop Overdrinking classes that are in Scholars is, when you are bored, your mind, its contents, and your life reveal itself to you.

And when your life is revealed to you, you can see whether you like it or not. And if you're constantly being revealed, the contents of your mind and your life, that you don't like and you take the option of escaping, it never gets better. But if you take the option of staying and hearing and listening and being, you get to know what it is you don't like, and therefore you can change it.

The more present you are with the life you don't like, the more authority you get over it and the more influence you have over it. The more you escape the life you don't like, the less power you have within it. When you access yourself when you're bored, you find out what you're capable of, what your desire is, what you like. When you escape, you get to know how to do drugs, TV, food, and false pleasure. That's what you get good at.

It denies the true pleasure. For example, porn denies intimacy. Drugs deny consciousness. You miss out on the real pleasure of life when you escape into the false pleasures of life.

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So, for example, if you are in a life right now where you don't have a relationship with someone and you feel lonely because of that and the way that you deal with that is porn, in a way that is obsessive and doesn't serve you, then that's what you do with that time instead of contemplating maybe finding a mate or going out and meeting people and thinking about who you want to be as a mate.

This all comes down to the skill of feeling, of being, of dreaming with discipline. For those of you who listened to my interview with Todd Herman in Scholars in the private podcast, one of the things he said that he thinks I have that a lot of other people that aren't quite as successful don't have is discipline. And it's the discipline of staying present with myself and the discipline of dreaming with discipline.

I love the idea of that; dreaming with discipline. Not dreaming in some la-la unicorn land, but dreaming with legs, dreaming with commitment, dreaming with honoring those dreams.

Can you hold your own boredom? Can you use it for you or do you use it against you? Look at the people in your life. Notice what they do when they're bored. Does what they do when they're bored serve them? Can they allow themselves to be bored?

Some people, they just outrun their boredom, which is the same as escaping; being so busy that they never get bored, filling their life with so many things that they never have the experience of just being with themselves.

I've been spending a lot of time in my Austin condo just looking out the window, just letting myself look out the window like I'm 100 years old and noticing my thoughts and noticing what comes up for me and noticing what my urges are, what am I urged to do when I just have that space and that time and I feel, quote unquote, bored?

The question is, what can you try to do when you're bored? And the answer is not busyness, but awareness. Busyness is just another way of escaping.

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Awareness is you getting to know you, you being alone with you, you being present with what it is that's in your own mind.

Boredom is an opportunity to listen, to hear, to discover, to learn, to be, to feel, to be present, to stay with yourself, to listen, to hear. That is intimacy with yourself.

Think about the people that you're the most intimate with. You don't have to be doing something with them. You don't have to be talking to them. You can just be in their presence. There is a familiarity. There is a comfort. There is a reassurance of just being with that person.

Do you have that relationship with yourself? Are you sick and tired and bored with your own self? Have you never even given yourself a chance to be interesting to yourself?

When you spend the time, long enough to be bored, underneath the boredom is the foundation on which you can create something unique, that is truly just you. Sometimes, I go on a walk by myself. That's not true. I usually have my dogs. But I'm not talking to anyone. Sometimes I listen to podcasts. Sometimes, I just listen to my own brain.

And I hear things and access things that I normally wouldn't otherwise know. But on the way to that wisdom, on the way to the ideas, on the way to the unique tools and tactics is boredom. It's like the moat that you have to go through to get to it.

And there's a restless, for me, in that boredom. I want someone to entertain me. I want to hear a podcast. I want someone to talk to me. I want to consume. I want to read. But when I don't allow any input and I just allow myself to process through the boredom, on the other side of them is all my wisdom, all of my ideas, all of the space.

When I talk to people who are too busy, they have too much going on, they can't be creative because they don't have time to access their own brain.

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They don't have time to access and let the dust settle, let the ripples settle so we can see through the clear water to the ideas at the bottom.

Too much going on all the time, you can't get access. But in order to allow the water to settle and the dust to settle, we have to allow for the boredom. We have to allow for the non-entertainment, non-exciting space.

Try this. Sit down in a chair without your phone, without the TV on for five minutes. What happens? What comes up for you? How bored are you? Do you feel the urge to pick up the phone, to hear the news, to talk to a friend, to get that thing done, to wash the dishes? What comes up for you?

That's all the dust in the air. That's everything stirred up. If you wait long enough, you'll get bored. Congratulations. Be bored for a minute. Boredom is when you hold space for everything to just calm down.

The restlessness, all of it, just let it be there. the anxiousness, the desire to be entertained. And then, just notice what comes up for you. And it only has to be five minutes. Just notice. Be bored on purpose.

People say, "I don't want to meditate because it's boring." I think that's hilarious. Like, that is the point of meditation, my friends. It's like, "I don't like sitting down because it's sitting down." Yes, that's what it is.

But when you allow yourself to get to know yourself, that's when you get a chance to impress yourself, be proud of yourself, make something for yourself, create. Some of you do this ahead of time.

Sometimes, you prevent the boredom from ever happening. You pack your life so full that you never have to experience what it's like to be bored, what it's like to have the dust settle, to just be there with nothing to do, nothing to consume, nothing to learn, nothing to find out except what's in your own mind, except to just be with yourself.

So, if someone says to me, "I don't like hanging out with that person because that person is boring," I always laugh because it's usually a

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projection. Boring is a feeling. You attribute it to someone else as a characteristic, right?

You can't be bored if you truly enjoy the company of your own mind. Even if there's somebody else there, you still have your own mind there. But we thrash around with it. We don't want to sit still. We don't want there to be nothing to do. We want the other people, the other inputs, the other insights.

We don't want to just be left alone with ourselves. So, then we say, "That is boring." But again, it's you that is bored. And if we spin that, so being bored doesn't necessarily mean a bad thing. It means something we can invite in because on the other side of that, when we settle through that is when we access what's true. And that's what we can use to create.

Your idle hands, when you don't have anything to do, is only dangerous if you escape it, if you buffer, if you try to get away from yourself. Otherwise, it's the answer to most things. If you allow yourself to be bored and not to escape, you will find out what is true. You will find out what you are. You will find out who you are. You will find out what's in your mind. And from there, you will get all the power to influence and change it.

So, when your kids tell you that they're bored and they're so frustrated that they're bored, they tell it to you like it's this terrible thing that has come upon them that should never come upon them, that it's a bad thing. And part of the reason is, our kids have very rarely been bored because we have kept them constantly entertained from the time that they were children.

We didn't want them to get bored and anxious and fussy. So, we put them right in front of TVs or phones or iPads to keep them engaged and quiet. But what it did is it separated them from that restlessness. It separated them from that part of themselves that could bubble up, slowly, that curiosity, that interest.

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It's so fascinating, I think about this sometimes. When I was young, I was just such a voracious reader. I just wanted to read all of the time. And it was because I was in this space of boredom and I wanted to escape myself.

And luckily, I liked reading non-fiction, so it encouraged me to journal. And so, then I got to the place where I wasn't just consuming. I was also creating. I was also listening. I was also being and hearing and discovering about my own self. And that is something that we – most of us – don't actively teach our children to do, is to access the interior of themselves and to find out what's unique about them, what's interesting about what's going on inside of their own brains.

We're taught to believe there's nothing in there. Everything's out there in the Googles. There's no new creations in our own brains. But we have a unique set of ingredients that nobody else has.

So, sometimes, we've got to go in and try some recipes and cook some things up and see what we can produce that's unique, that's different than what everyone else is producing. And I do worry about my kids sometimes.

Will they ever have enough space and time and energy to be bored enough to see what's in their own mind, to see what's in their own creativity, to come up with their own answers to their own questions? Or will they be constantly answering and regurgitating other people's wisdom and other people's uniqueness?

I think, if we don't have enough choices that are conscious when we're bored, we end up just repeating escape mechanisms to make our lives go by faster. I mean, that's literally what my son said to me, "The day goes by faster," as if that's the goal, to make our day go by faster so we don't get bored.

What is your tolerance for boredom? A lot of us have figured that out over the past several months, right? Figuring out what it's like to just be. And I think it's a beautiful thing. And I think creating from a unique place of

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willingness to try new things and fail and not just paint by the numbers or figure out what someone else is offering us but for us to figure it out for ourselves is when we come up with new ideas. It's when we come up with new creations. And that innovation is what creates the value that propels the world, literally.

I loved reading about all the previous pandemics where people were in quarantine and the amazing masterpieces that were created during those times, where people were left to themselves, to access what is inside of them instead of going out into the world to access what's outside of them.

And I'm not saying that you shouldn't access and that you shouldn't read and that you shouldn't consume. What I'm recommending is that we don't escape, that we don't try to use boredom as an excuse to escape, but we use boredom as an opportunity to create something amazing.

So, here's the deal. What are the choices that you want to make when you find yourself bored, when you find yourself in the company of yourself and you're not enjoying it? What do you want your protocol to be? What do you want your choices to be? What do you want to spend that time, that empty time and that empty space doing?

And I recommend that you choose it consciously. And not only choose it consciously, but create space for it consciously, create space in your life where you will most likely be bored and see what you can find inside of you, see what you notice that you may want to change, see what desires you haven't been paying attention to; the true desires that will come up when you give up false desires.

Be bored, my friends. That is my wish for you over this next week. See what you can find inside. I'll talk to you soon. Bye.

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