

Ep #376: Sometimes I Suck and It's OK



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 376.

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.

Well, hello, my friends. I feel like it's been a while since we've connected. It may not feel that way to you because I had batched a bunch of podcasts ahead of time. And now I'm rerecording another batch for you. And today we're going to talk about how sometimes I suck.

But before we do that, I want to talk about how awesome I am. Of course, I do. I just went and got my body scan. I'm six weeks into my workout regime. My goal was to gain five pounds of muscle and I have gained five pounds of muscle. That's what I've done. That's what I've created. It's very exciting.

So, I'm now going to spend the next six weeks trying to put another three pounds of muscle on without gaining any additional fat and losing a couple pounds of fat. So, if you're interested in following that journey, we've been having a great time in Self-Coaching Scholars. You can see the whole behind the scenes journey.

Every single day, we've recorded where we've been, what we've been doing, our travels, and our workouts. So, it's kind of fun. And what I eat. So many people in Scholars are enjoying that for many more reasons besides just the insights that I have been sharing about doing hard things.

I do want to switch gears now and talk about how sometimes I suck and so do you. And it's okay.

I'm going to say about a month ago, one of my friends, colleagues, brought to my attention something I had done that I hadn't realized I had done that hurt someone's feelings. We're just going to call it at that.

Ep #376: Sometimes I Suck and It's OK

And it turns out that what this person thought I had done I hadn't done, but I had done something that sucked, I'm just going to say. And I'm not telling you – you know me, I'll tell all the details of everything, but I want to protect this person's privacy and not go into the details of it because the details don't matter.

But here's the deal. Sometimes, you're going to show up as not your best self. Sometimes you're going to say something that's going to hurt someone's feelings. Sometimes, you're going to discuss something you shouldn't be discussing. Sometimes you may forget someone's birthday or not follow through on something you told a friend you would do or let them down or let your students down, people that look up to you and admire you and are inspired by you and are disappointed when you're not perfect, when you mess up.

And when this happened, when my colleague brought this to my attention, I was immediately devastated, as I do. I feel terrible and shame and like there's something wrong with me. And then I immediately get defensive.

And I have seen this in so many of my clients as well, that we get afraid that there's something wrong with us, we feel bad for this thing that we've done and so then we immediately try and defend ourselves and try to make it better and fix it and deny that it happened in the way that the person is saying that it happened.

And so, what I did is I just dropped into forgiveness for myself for being human. And so, as soon as I said, "Yep, that happened, I'm human, it's part of life, it's part of the 50-50, I'm just going to let myself feel what I feel right now..." and I did. I let myself feel.

The feelings that I felt were oblivious, ignorant, thoughtless, frustrated, selfish, and reactive. And I just let myself be there for a little while. I let myself be in there. And the way that you know that you're there is you won't be fighting against the person and what happened. You'll be in a space of openness and acceptance and love for yourself for being human, and for the person for being human.

Ep #376: Sometimes I Suck and It's OK

One of the things I really want to warn all of you against doing, especially those of you who have thought work, that have learned it from me, is when someone says to you, "You've hurt my feelings," or, "This thing you did hurt me," is to throw thought work in their face and say to them, "I didn't hurt you. Your thoughts hurt you. This is your responsibility. That's not true. That's just a thought."

I was coaching one of my girlfriends and her husband and the husband was sharing a story about something that his wife, my friend, had done to hurt him and wanted to talk about it. And she's like, "Oh no, that wasn't it, that was just your thoughts. That wasn't what was going on." And it immediately shut him down and she was reactive, defending herself, and it was the opposite of what they both wanted, which was more connection.

And because she understands the Model and understands thought work and so does he, I backed up and I said, "We never use the Model at other people." When we're having a conversation with someone, when we're working on a relationship with someone, if you're using the Model at someone in order to defend yourself, you're doing it wrong.

The purpose of the Model is for you to become more aware of yourself. If you want to use the Model in that situation, use the Model on why you're being defensive. Use the Model on why you did the thing that the person is claiming hurt them. That's the proper use of the Model.

We don't use the model at people. We don't throw people's thoughts at their face. That is not useful for anyone.

Now, if you're a coach coaching someone and you have permission to do that, then it's appropriate to show them their thoughts. It is not appropriate, ever, to use the Model at someone.

So, pull it in. Pull it into yourself. "What is going on for me? Why do I feel defensive? Why do I feel shame? Why do I feel reactive? Why do I feel ignorant? Why do I hate myself so much right now because this happened?"

Ep #376: Sometimes I Suck and It's OK

And just let it be there and be in that space. And then, allow yourself to remember that you're a human. You're going to suck sometimes. You're not going to do it right sometimes. You're going to forget, "Oh, we were supposed to mee," or, "I was supposed to give you a ride to the airport," or, "I can't believe that was your 50th birthday and I totally forgot and I can't believe that I made you this meal and you don't even like eggplant..." Whatever it is, right?

Allow yourself to feel the shame of being human, of screwing it up. And for some of you, it will be much worse than that. You will do something that you knew was wrong. You'll gossip behind someone's back or you'll intentionally lie to someone or hurt them out of a reactive argument, say something hurtful. That's all part of it. It's all part of being human.

And understanding why you're doing that is very important, and staying aware and trying to be nonreactive is so much better for you and for the people around you. And yet, still you're going to suck sometimes. You're going to blow it. And you've got to be able to hold space for yourself, to be in that space of having made a mistake, of having done it wrong, without reacting and blaming the other person.

A lot of times, we do this when we're performing for an employer or for a mate. We want them to see us in a certain way. And so, we deny the truth sometimes. I had an employee, I asked them, "Hey, did you make this mistake?" and they blatantly lied to me and said, "No."

It was a reaction because they had shame. And they were feeling freaked out and ashamed because they had made a mistake. And so, they ended up lying about the mistake, which of course did not help the situation at all.

But I understand, when you're coming from that place of, "I don't want to acknowledge that I made this mistake, I don't want to acknowledge that I sucked here, I don't want to acknowledge that I didn't do this right, that I screwed that up and it had consequences for people. I don't want to do that."

Ep #376: Sometimes I Suck and It's OK

But when you can allow for that, then you drop into this forgiveness for yourself for being a human being, and then you can have empathy. And when you have empathy, when you can see it from their perspective – this is what happened to me recently when my colleague pointed out something I had done, is I just dropped into what it must be like for her to have experienced that.

And then, nothing else mattered. It wasn't about me anymore. It was about what it must have been like for her. And so, for me, apologizing to her and explaining where I was coming from, asking what I could do to make it right, trying to connect in a way where she really knew I was genuine and I understood was my priority.

And for me, that process took, I don't know, maybe 20 minutes, a half-hour, to get to that place. And I reached out not to relieve my own shame. And that is a really important distinction. You're not taking action with the other person so you can feel better. You need to get to the space where you feel better first. It is not that person's job to forgive you. It's not that person's job to accept your apology.

It's not that person's job to stop being upset with you, to change their mind. It is not on them. It is your job for you to feel the feelings and the effect of your thoughts in your body and get to the place where you can forgive yourself for being human before you reach out to the other person if you want or need to apologize to them.

And then when you do, you do it from a pure heart and you don't expect anything in return. And when you do it from that place, they don't have to forgive you. They don't have to accept your apology. And yet, you can still know that you have shown up in the best way you know how.

You may have lost that connection with that person because of the thing that you've done. You may have lost your job. You may have lost your relationship.

I've coached a lot of people that have been unfaithful in marriages and in relationships that have lost the relationship because they've done that and

Ep #376: Sometimes I Suck and It's OK

they feel so much shame about it and they feel so defensive that they're trying to justify it that they lose the connection. They want the person to forgive them so much so they can be back together that they lose their ability to show up and apologize and be in empathy because they're trying to manipulate and control the situation so they can feel better.

And I just want to say that you miss the opportunity to evolve when you do that because when you can accept that, "Hey, you messed up there. You lied, you cheated, you stole," whatever it is you did, when you drop into fully owning that and fully accepting that you're a human being that made that mistake and feeling the consequences of that, really owning the consequences of it, you will find a way to completion and acceptance.

There's nothing more for you to do there. But when you're trying to manipulate the other person so they can make you feel better about what you've done when they said that you've hurt them, that's when you miss the opportunity to evolve.

So, when this thing recently happened to me, I felt bad. Actually, in one of the recordings in Scholars, I was dealing with it at the time, and I just was carrying it around like a purse, like I do. I was just being in that space and just feeling yuck. That's a feeling; yuck. And I just knew that it was going to be for a while.

And I talked to Rahul about it. And it was so great when I was talking to him about it. He didn't try to make me feel better about it. And that was really powerful for me because it helped me get through it faster because I had space from me and him to feel bad about it, to be in that space of yuck for a little while, and to kind of process that emotion through, which was really nice.

I think sometimes people have to do this work with themselves when it comes to setting goals. I was talking to some other friends about, like, "Tell me about when you think you suck. Tell me about when you make mistakes and show up as less than you want to be."

Ep #376: Sometimes I Suck and It's OK

And one of them said, "When I'm nonproductive and I'm lazy. That's when I suck the most. And then I'm not producing the results I want and then I'm beating myself up for it."

And it's actually really similar because you're either going to beat yourself up for it in a way that isn't productive. You're going to lash out. Or you're going to be defensive and justify it. None of which will get you anywhere closer to the results that you want to be getting from the procrastination delayed in the first place.

So, if you ever look at yourself like, "I've procrastinated all week and I didn't get that work done." Human. That sucks.

A lot of people are saying to me, "Oh, well here's the good news. I didn't get any of my work done all week, but I didn't beat myself up either, so that's good." Kind of... but here's what I think is better. If you don't do all your work all week and you procrastinate all week, I think it's okay to feel bad about that.

I think it's okay to have thoughts about that, that you're disappointed in yourself. And if you allow yourself to be disappointed in yourself and you allow yourself to hold space that you sucked last week and that you're human and that you are going to suck sometimes and you feel that negative emotion, from that space you can create positive emotion.

If you blow it off and discount it and ignore that you're disappointed in yourself by saying, "But at least I didn't beat myself up," you're going to miss the opportunity to grow.

I do not think you grow through shame. But I do think you have to process shame to get to the other side of it, to grow. You can't deny it. You can't pretend it isn't there and say, "Oh, well I overate 17 days in a row. But the good news is, I didn't beat myself up." And I'm like, "Listen, I don't ever want you to beat yourself up for anything. But I do want you to process negative emotion."

Ep #376: Sometimes I Suck and It's OK

I don't want you to beat the crap out of yourself, but I want you to allow yourself to feel your own disappointment and your own sadness and understand it so you don't do it anymore.

A lot of people tell me that they feel like they suck when they're unaware of what's going on, when they're not paying attention, when they miss cues and say the wrong thing or they're not aware of what was going on with a friend. Maybe they were having a hard time.

And my suggestion for this is always start with yourself. When you start paying attention to your own thinking and you start paying attention to your own mind and your own feelings, you will be almost telepathic with other people. It's crazy. The more you understand yourself, the more you understand humans because you're human.

The more you understand thoughts, the more you understand thoughts. The more you understand feelings, the more you understand feelings because you are understanding them for yourself and then you can feel them in other people. I'm not saying you feel their feelings, but you recognize them because you've recognized them in yourself.

And that awareness – like so many of my friends I'll be like, "What's going on? Tell me, what is it?" They're like, "Oh my gosh, how do you do that?" Like, I've been there so many times, people trying to front that they're not having a hard time with something or pretending like they're good when they're not. I can always feel – I can't always do it, but a lot of times I can feel that and be like, "What's going on? I want to talk to you about this. I want to hear about this from you so we can process it and move on."

Lying to save face – I talked about this a little bit earlier. But notice all the little lies you tell in order to look good. You know you're lying when you do that. And you're going to feel the suck of that on your energy. You're going to feel that in your life. You're going to feel that disappointment in yourself for not having the courage to tell the truth.

Ep #376: Sometimes I Suck and It's OK

I think these little lies add up to big lies. You end up lying to yourself about who you are when you tell little lies about things. And I'm talking about hiding too.

I'm talking about hiding how much money you make. I'm talking about hiding how successful you are. I'm talking about hiding how much you eat, hiding how much you don't eat, hiding how much you like or don't like something or someone.

Be aware of that in your own life, that fronting. And the process is the same. Look at it, acknowledge it, forgive yourself for being human, process the pain of it, and then apologize if you want to. But mostly, I think it's important for us to remember that when we jump into blaming someone, when we jump into justifying something, we're just trying to feel better. And it doesn't work.

It doesn't work to try to feel better that way. It doesn't feel better to live in shame or live in guilt or deny it. It feels so much better to accept it, own it, process it, and move on.

There's no reason for you to feel bad about something that you did. You did something wrong, there's no reason for you to feel bad about that forever.

Is there a reason to feel bad about it? For most of us, we want to feel bad about things that we do, that we think are wrong or hurt other people. And so yeah, I think it's worth it to process that pain and to go through that grief and to go through the guilt and to go through the frustration, always.

Not in a way that beats yourself up and tells yourself you're a terrible person and you're awful, but in a way that says, "Yeah, that wasn't your best work, Brooke. You probably shouldn't have said that in that way and you probably don't want to do that again. You can see how that hurt that person." And then just be with that.

Be with it. Be in the space of maybe understanding why you did it, how you could have made the mistake, forgiving yourself for being human, processing the emotion, apologizing, and then moving on.

Ep #376: Sometimes I Suck and It's OK

Owning your life, in my perspective, means owning that life is 50-50. It's the perfect balance between positive and negative. And human beings are awesome and awful. And that includes us.

And you may be someone that says, "I don't really do awful things. I don't really do bad things. I don't really make mistakes." And that may be you and you may never have to do this work. But it could happen that maybe inadvertently you hurt someone. Maybe you accidentally hurt someone. The process is the same.

And it will be especially hard for those of you who don't make a lot of mistakes, who don't suck as often as the rest of us, because you won't be skilled at doing this. But when you're skilled at forgiving yourself for being human, you take more chances. You put yourself out there more. You say more things. You risk more. You show up more. Which ultimately means I think you evolve more.

So, if you're living the biggest version of your life that you can if you're showing up in the biggest way you know how, you're going to suck sometimes. You're going to fail and do it wrong. You're going to hurt some people. Don't react. Accept it, find out what you're missing, listen to it, hear it from their perspective, process the pain. Forgive yourself for being a human being. And then move on.

Sometimes, I suck. Sometimes, I do it wrong. Sometimes, I make all the mistakes and I'm filled with shame, I'm filled with pain. My face gets hot. I feel terrible. I feel sad. I feel frustrated. I get mad at myself. And sometimes you do too. Sometimes, you will go through this too.

And I want you to know, no matter what it is, no matter what you've done, no matter how much you wish you hadn't done it, no matter how much of a mistake it was or you did it on purpose, whatever, I understand you. You're human. There's no reason to beat yourself up forever on it. There's no reason to deny those feelings about it. Process them through.

It's okay, my friends. It's okay that you got that one wrong. It's okay that you made that mistake. It's okay. You're a human being. Follow this

Ep #376: Sometimes I Suck and It's OK

process. Do not be resistant to apologizing. Apologizing is the easiest thing you can do in the world. I apologize all the time. I have no shame in apologizing.

I have no shame in accepting something as my fault, even if it isn't. It's so much better than the alternative. I want you to really think about that. I would much rather accept something as my fault than blame someone else when it isn't theirs.

It's always like, "Well, maybe I don't remember doing that, but maybe I did. I'm open to understanding this. I'm open to seeing where I did that." And immediately, I feel relief because I stopped fighting it and justifying it.

Acceptance is so much better than blame, my friends. And way too many of you have your dukes up right now. You're resistant. You're yelling. You're mad at how other people should behave. You try to defend yourself.

But when I ask you, so many of you when I'm coaching you, when I ask you, "Is what they said about you true? Can you find truth in it?" Most of you say, "Yes." And when you say yes, I see the relief. I see the fight end. I see the resistance end. And that's when the work begins.

We're all human, my friends, and it's okay. Have a beautiful week, everyone. Talk to you soon.

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