

Ep #378: Success vs. Happiness



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With Your Host

Brooke Castillo

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You are listening to *The Life Coach School Podcast* with Brooke Castillo, episode number 378.

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.

Hello, my friends. I am in Colorado and I am so excited to be here. It is gorgeous here in the summer. I've come here by myself, so I can reacquaint myself with myself, which is amazing. I have been enjoying a 90-day relationship with my boyfriend Rahul that turned into a nine-month relationship with him and we just recently decided to end our 90-day nine-month relationship and pursue other things.

And we're still totally in love with each other and we're still very good friends and I'm very sad but also very excited about the possibilities. And so, I'm here in Colorado, hiking my dogs and breathing in the mountain air and having an amazing time.

My puppy, Rocket – those of you who are following along, this is redundant. Those of you who are following along in *Five Pounds Stronger* already know this, but he's got a little limp. So, I haven't been able to hike quite as much as I want. But I'm very excited about being so fit and hiking these mountains. It is gorgeous here. And about all the possibilities that are coming to me in the future.

We do have the 90-day relationship class completed. It's amazing. I can't wait for you to see it. We're going to be launching it in the next couple of months so you'll be able to learn about what that 90-day relationship was that I started and how I had the most amazing – I'm going to say the most amazing time of my life, since I did that. And the work that I've done on myself through that relationship is amazing.

So, my friend Aprille introduced me to this concept – many of you may already know it – called circular dating. And she was basically saying that there's dating where you're trying to meet someone for the long-term and do a long-term relationship with somebody. And there's certain types of

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relationships where you try to find the one and you get involved in a relationship and you try to make that your forever relationship. And then there's the kind of dating that I'm doing, which is more based on this 90-day commitment idea, which has been so fantastic.

And of course, you can make it longer or shorter if you want. But if you want to learn more about it, you have to join Scholars so you can get in on the insight. We had so much fun doing and recording that class and talking about our experience and how much we learned from each other and with each other.

And one of the things that I'm taking away from this whole experience is how the social constructs of how relationships should be have really, I think, limited so many of us in terms of growing. When we feel like a relationship, in order to be successful, has to be forever or it has to be for a certain amount of time or there has to be a certain level of commitment, that sort of thing, I think we miss the opportunities for growth and for fun and for truth and for love.

And I want to share that experience with you. I plan on doing many more 90-day relationships, falling in love many more time and having you all along for the ride. So, let's go.

Today, we're going to talk about success versus happiness. And usually, when I do a podcast, I do a lot more research and a lot of preparation and a lot of kind of key points. But today, what I wanted to do is just talk about this concept in a way that will help you not be confused.

And I want to talk to you as if you're just my friend and we're just hanging out. Because I've had this conversation with many of my friends and they don't believe me when I talk about this. and so, I want to talk about the difference between those two things and what it means to be happy and how that's different from being successful and how there are many, many, many successful people who aren't happy and many happy people who wouldn't call themselves successful.

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And when we make those two things, it's kind of like – I used to do this with thinness. I used to think if you were thin, you were automatically happy. And people think if you're successful, it means you're automatically happy. And people say to me, "If I had more money, I'd be happier. And if I had a more successful business, I would be happier." And that may be true. But you're not happy because of the success.

And I think that is the really important differentiator and the thing that you need to understand is they may be correlated, but they're not the cause of. So, let's talk about what it means to be happy and why so many of us think that that is the most important endgame and how we try to be successful so we can get there.

And the definition, of course, if you think about it in terms of the Model would be that F-line. So, if you think about the emotion of happiness, you can be happy whenever you think a happy thought. So, if happiness is an emotion and all emotions are caused by our thoughts, all we have to do is think happy thoughts and we will be happy. And this is true. We will feel some level of happiness if we think happy thoughts.

The problem is, we don't want to think happy thoughts all the time because we live in a world that has a 50-50 experience provided for us. And so, there are many things about the world that we don't want to be happy about. There are many things about our lives that we don't want to feel happy about.

And so, when we think that happiness is the goal and when we pursue happiness as if it were the ultimate destination, we end up being unhappy because it's impossible to stay true to ourselves and in integrity and have an authentic experience of the world and be happy all the time. And when we judge ourselves against that level of happiness, we can make ourselves feel even worse.

So, if we may have been happy 50% of the time but then we're upset that we're not happy the other 50% of the time, now we've just made ourselves

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more unhappy. Do you see what I'm saying? We're less happy because we're not happy more? What? That doesn't make any sense.

So then, people want to go about trying to get happy, get happier by creating success. They think if they go out into the world and they're more successful – and maybe it's in terms of money. Maybe it's in terms of your job. Maybe it's in terms of a relationship. Maybe it's in terms of raising your kids – then that will somehow make you happy.

Now, the truth is, if you believe that success will make you happy and you get some level of success, you will think thoughts that will make you happy. But if you expect the circumstance, the amount of money, the person, the marriage, the children to make you happy and you don't feel happy, you're actually going to be miserable because you don't understand the concept that it's the way that you think about your life that creates that emotion.

So, one of the things that comes up for a lot of people and one of the things that I try to help people understand is that when they say, "Well I don't need success to be happy, I don't need money to be happy," I say, "Of course you don't. You can be happy without it." There's no reason to believe that you have to have those things to be happy. But they also do not have to be at the expense of your happiness.

So, when people say to me, "I don't want to pursue more money. I'm already happy," as if one will take away from the other, as if the pursuit of success will somehow take away that level of happiness. And this is a very key point I want everyone to think about.

If you believe that the more success you have the less happy you will be, you will stop pursuing success and you will cost yourself success for an invalid reason. And if you're chasing after success in order to be happy, you will burn yourself out with the hustle and you will ensure that you won't be happy and that you won't be more successful.

I want to break it down again because this is the key point. If you think success will cost you happiness, you will stop pursuing success. And if you

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think success will give you happiness, you will hustle so hard that you will ensure that you won't be happy once you're successful.

I've watched it happen both ways. I've watched people wave off success so they can quote unquote remain happy. And I've watched people sacrifice their happiness in order to be successful.

What I want to teach you is that they are very independent things that can be very complementary. When you learn how to focus your life in a 50-50 way and allow the happiness to be at a 50-50 level, you will find yourself being less unhappy about your unhappiness. So, you won't be unhappy about your unhappiness, so you won't be compounding it and you will actually invite more joy into your life by accepting the parts of your life that aren't the most joyous.

And when you allow for that, you will have more energy, you will have more ideas, you will have more creativity, you will have more in your life to create from. You will have more energy. You will have more fuel. And it will be easier for you to create success.

When you use the energy of happiness to create success, that's when you scale your own happiness. You pursue success with the joy of already having it. I know you've heard me say many, many times, "Think about that goal you want in your life. Think about that feeling you want to have in your life that you think maybe success will give to you, and feel that now." And instead of waiting for the success to feel that feeling, use that feeling now to create the success.

So, I want to share with you how this has worked in my own life. Because I'm not just saying this, but I am one of the rare people who feels happy and who is successful. And I don't have the hustle energy and I don't have the burnout and I don't have the exhaustion that most of my peers who aren't part of The Life Coach School struggle with, with their success.

Their success actually costs them their happiness. Because they're in constant pursuit of it, they don't get to enjoy it.

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So, in my case – I'm thinking of one of my friends who I talk to about this. And he'll say to me, "Well, it's more important for me to just enjoy my life. It's more important for me to be present. It's more important for me to not hustle, so therefore I'm not going to pursue success. I'm going to give up on that dream in order to be happy."

And I'll say to him, "But I have both. How am I able to have both? How am I able to generate the wealth and the success and the jobs and the offering and the contribution at such a high level and also maintain a level of happiness at 50% that fuels me to be able to continually contribute and to want to contribute for the rest of my life?"

I have another friend who is very successful but can't wait to stop being successful, can't wait to stop pursuing it. It's not a place that he wanted to land in terms of successfulness. He just wanted to succeed and be done with it, to cash out, so then he could be happy.

We wanted to create and contribute and amass enough wealth to then enjoy his life. And surprise, surprise it doesn't work that way and it didn't work that way. And there's a sense of void and emptiness that he's now experiencing even though he has all the monies, had all the dreams come true, hustled all the way to create all the things. And there's a level of satisfaction from that success, but also a level of emptiness because it didn't provide the happiness that he thought it would.

It's almost like buying a new car. It's like once you get to that place – I watch my students do this. It's like they make a million dollars, but then they want to make two and then they want to make three and then they want to make five. And I love that for them because it requires them to grow and up-level themselves and explore. But when I get a student that thinks that they're going to be happier at five million than they are at two, they are very confused.

It's still going to be 50-50. The level of happiness will not be increased, so then people will say to me, "Why would I pursue more success if I'm not

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going to be happier?” And I remind them, the reason for success is not happiness. Happiness can fuel our success, but it’s not why we go after it.

And because we’re taught so often that the pursuit of happiness is the goal and that happiness is found in a thinner body and a great relationship and lots of money and a successful, respectable profession, we end up being very disappointed a lot of the times in our lives when we can’t maintain that level of happiness, even after that accomplishment.

It’s like when you hear about all these gold medalists or you hear about all the lottery winners or you hear about all of these very successful businesspeople that just can’t maintain – my dog is so cute. Can you hear him barking? He’s having a good dream. He’s barking in his dream – that the pursuit of that happiness and finding that happiness and creating that happiness for themselves has nothing to do with that success.

So, one of the ways that I want to encourage all of you to approach this is to first of all separate them out. Success is fun and success is amazing and success is a growth opportunity and success is exciting as you’re creating it. But it doesn’t make you happy. And that doesn’t mean you don’t go after it. It just means that you designate those chores within your brain to different things.

So, as you’re pursuing happiness, you’re going to work with your thoughts. You’re going to activate thoughts that activate emotions that feel happy. And whenever you’re pursuing happiness, that’s all you have to do.

Now, can you create circumstances in your life that make it easier for you to think thoughts that make you happy? Sure. But it’s the hard way. Manipulating the circumstances so you don’t have to manage your mind is one way of doing it, but it’s exhausting.

When you manage your mind in order to be happy, circumstances can change or not and you can still feel that level of joy. So, once you understand that skillset, the skillset of happiness in terms of managing your mind and creating emotion from that place, then you separate that out and then you look at success as something different than happiness.

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And success isn't something you create in order to be happy. It's something you create from happiness, from fuel, from the joy of happiness. And you have to define for yourself what success is and what it means for you.

And I want you to be very careful here because a lot of us try to be too virtuous when we're defining success. We try to be too moral when we're defining success.

What I want to encourage you to do is define success based on your deepest desires, your truest desires. What is it that you have within you that wants to be expressed, that wants to be created, that wants to be achieved? Are you willing to sacrifice a little comfort, maybe even a little happiness in the temporary so you can pursue the biggest dream of your life?

A lot of times, what happens is we pursue a big dream, we write down a big dream, and then we all of a sudden feel anxious and scared and upset and mad. We cost ourselves some happiness. We have to work our way back with our thoughts in order to then be realigned so we have the fuel to achieve our dreams.

And we'll be knocked off of that many times with doubt, with frustration, with fear. We'll have to go back into our mind and regenerate what it means to think in a way that creates happiness. And when you have both, when you have both success and happiness, it's not because they depend on each other. It's because you've pursued them and focused on them.

And if you can maintain your happiness all the way to success, it will be much easier for you to maintain your happiness once you're successful. If you rely on your success to make you happy, you will most likely sabotage your success.

Separate them out. Keep them individual pursuits. Learn them as different skillsets and always know that they're both available to you. You have to define what they are and then you have to go after them in different ways.

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Success isn't going to make you happy. But you should go after it anyway. Have a beautiful week, my friends. Talk to you soon. Bye.

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