

Ep #379: When Feelings Hurt



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With Your Host

Brooke Castillo

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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 beautiful friends. Today's a big day. I'm so excited about today. I'm actually in Denver, Colorado. I came here to watch my son play golf. He was qualifying for a pro tournament. Out of 100 people, he took third and qualified. He shot a 66, qualified for his first pro tournament.

It's a big day in the Castillo family. So Chris Castillo flew in, his best friend Jared, Harvey flew in, and we are all here celebrating Christian. He's about to play in his first pro tournament tomorrow. I couldn't be more thrilled to be his mama.

We have been through some rough times in golf and in soccer and this was such a proud moment for me, for him, such a huge accomplishment. I'm so excited to be alive right now during this time with my son. So lots of celebrating going on.

Today, I'm going to talk to you about when feelings hurt. It seems like a lot of the coaching that I've been doing lately is with people who don't want to feel their feelings, and I don't blame them because feelings hurt.

Now, there's a couple concepts that I want to discuss with you. I want to make sure you fully understand before we get into the meat of this topic. But basically, all feelings are, the way that I define them is they are vibrations in your body.

There's a difference between what we call a sensation and a feeling, and this is just The Life Coach School, how we define everything. So a sensation is something that originates in your body and travels to your brain. It's something that is involuntary and a physical reaction.

A feeling originates in your brain with a thought and goes into your body. So a sensation for example would be hot or cold or a pinprick or if someone were to touch you or if you were to feel hungry. Any kind of involuntary

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reaction that your body has is a sensation. And it's a physical sensation that you're not going to be able to control.

And a feeling is a vibration in your body caused by a thought in your mind. There's a lot of overlap with sensations and feelings in the brain. Like when they map brains, they sometimes see that emotions cause that physical pain and physical pain of course can cause us emotions. There's a lot of overlap there.

But for the sake of talking about feelings today, I want to stick with the definition that feelings are vibrations in the body caused by thoughts in the brain. Sentences in your mind.

Now, a vibration in your body can be positive or negative. You can have a positive vibration that feels pleasurable and you can have a negative vibration that feels negative.

And my premise and theory and what I teach is that there's a balance between positive and negative, there's that polarity in the universe, in the world, in your human life that balances out and is meant to balance out the world, literally. There's supposed to be good and bad in the world, there's supposed to be positive and negative in the world.

If you don't have one, you can't have the other, so they create that balance of our experience. So lesson number one is feelings are vibrations in our body. Lesson number two is we have a 50/50 experience in the world of positive and negative emotions.

In order to feel a positive emotion, all you need to do is think about something amazing, wonderful, awesome, and you will feel that in your body. If you experience a negative emotion, think about something terrible, awful, dangerous, painful, and you'll feel that negative emotion. That is emotions, that is feelings in a nutshell. I use the word emotion and feeling interchangeably.

So what we're going to talk about today is what it means when feelings hurt. When you have that negative side of the 50/50 equation. What does it

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mean to have your feelings hurt literally? Like you experience them as painful.

And sometimes you would describe it as uncomfortable, sometimes you would describe it as excruciating, sometimes you would describe it as mildly annoying. Anything on that negative side is what I'm going to be talking about today.

And most importantly, I want to talk about what you should do. That's what people will ask me. They'll say, "It hurts. What should I do? How do I stop hurting?"

And I think that's the first kind of assumption that people get wrong. And the assumption is if I have a negative emotion, the goal is for me to get rid of it, is to stop it, is to make it hurt less. And what I'm going to suggest in this podcast is that actually, the opposite is true.

When you are feeling a negative emotion, when you are accessing or creating a negative emotion within your body, the goal is not to retract from it and to stop it from happening as quickly as possible. The goal is to move through it and access it and let it vibrate through so you can release it.

And when you have an agenda of not feeling pain in your life and avoiding pain and avoiding hurt in your life, you end up with a very small life. And so there's two components to this question. This idea that it hurts, what should I do? My first answer would be let it hurt. Let it hurt.

I want you to feel what that feels like in your body to stop trying to resist hurt, to stop trying to resist pain, to stop trying to avoid discomfort. But just letting something hurt for as long as it needs to hurt. That is one of the secrets of the universe.

It's one of the most important skills I can teach any of my students is how to allow pain to be there and allow it to hurt without reacting, without resisting, without buffering. Now, there's a really important distinction that I want you to make when you're accessing and feeling your own pain.

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When you have pain, emotional pain, it is because you have a thought causing it. So you're thinking a thought and then you're feeling pain. This is different than the thoughts you have about your pain. Now, stay with me for a minute.

Your T line is your thought causing your F line, which is your feeling. But you could also put that feeling in your circumstance line and have thoughts about your pain. And I would say that most of the unnecessary suffering that happens in the world is caused by thoughts about pain and not thoughts causing pain.

When we judge our pain and beat ourselves up for our pain and avoid our pain and buffer our pain and then judge ourselves for avoiding and buffering our pain, we create unnecessary suffering. When we allow for the 50% of pain that will be our lives, we actually reduce our suffering.

When we open up to the possibility and let pain be what it is, we reduce our suffering by moving towards it, by opening up to it. So when you say to me, "It hurts Brooke, it hurts, what should I do?" I say let it hurt. Let it burn. Let it go. Allow it. Feel it.

Whatever your feeling is, let it be. Be the observer of it. Notice where it is and how it feels in your body. Is it a heavy purse on your shoulder? Is it a sinking dark inky weight in your stomach? Is it a buzzing fear of anxiety? Is it a face crunching, burning sensation of shame?

When you can describe your pain in words without judgment, when you can allow it and feel it and notice it and watch it without judgment, you become more of who you are. You become stronger. You become more aware. You become more tuned in and turned on with your life when you allow your pain.

When you have pain, your thought should be, "Allow this pain to be here." Allow this emotional pain to be here for as long as it needs to be here. Now, remember that you are the one creating your emotional pain with your thoughts.

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And so when I tell people this, they immediately are like, “Wait, I’m the one causing this, I don’t want to feel this, I’m going to change it right away.” And I always recommend let step one be step one, which is allowing the pain. Then access the thought, and then if you can change it, change it.

But don’t skip the part where you feel the emotion because whenever you have an agenda of never feeling pain, you’re going to have an agenda of hiding from your own brain, hiding from your own life, trying to reduce the number of negative thoughts you have.

The problem when you try to reduce the number of negative thoughts you have, you reduce how much you’re living your life. The bigger the goals, the more negative thoughts you’re going to have. The bigger the life, the more negative thoughts you’re going to have.

We don’t want you to reduce the number of negative thoughts. We want you to be able to allow the pain caused by the negative thoughts and then change the thoughts. It’s a never-ending story that you’re going to be going through. You will never eliminate your negative thinking, especially if your life is huge.

You don’t want to eliminate your negative thinking. You want to get good at allowing pain to be there. That is where true strength comes from is the acceptance of that 50%, allowing the negative pain to be there, and then changing it if you are the one creating it, when you are the one creating it.

So many of us compound our pain by judging it and resisting it. We think we shouldn’t be in pain, we shouldn’t be doubtful, we shouldn’t be hating ourselves, we shouldn’t be judging ourselves, we shouldn’t be feeling shame, we shouldn’t be insecure, we shouldn’t be nervous, we shouldn’t be anxious, we shouldn’t be heartbroken.

If you could drop all your shoulds about your thoughts, you would be free. You’d be free to feel negative emotion. You’d be free to walk this planet in the truth of the 50/50. I am heartbroken, I am in shame, I am in self-doubt, I am in insecurity and say yes to that as part of the human experience, as part of being a human being that has the full range of emotions in your life.

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Nobody wants to be happy all the time, I promise you. We tell ourselves the story that we want to be happy all the time but then we have to be happy about horrible things and no one wants to be happy about horrible things and horrible things exist. And we want to judge those things as horrible, but we don't want to judge our emotions as horrible.

We want to judge our emotions as part of the human experience that we need to learn how to feel and allow. When you ignore your emotions, when you buffer your emotions, when you resist your emotions, you are resisting the very act of being a conscious human being.

You are escaping the experience of being alive. If you are nervous about something and instead of allowing that vibration of nervousness to course through your body in a way that you can breathe through, you eat instead, or you take drugs instead, or you buffer in some other way instead, you are missing out on what it means to be alive.

You are less alive when you buffer. You are less yourself. You are less vibrating, turned on by your life. This doesn't mean I want you to judge yourself for buffering either. But there's a difference between drinking a cocktail that will solve for emotional pain and actually being a person who lets emotional pain vibrate through and then be released.

I want you to imagine the vibration of emotion in your body regardless of any kind of negative emotion that you have in your body. When you allow yourself to feel it, it vibrates and reverberates throughout your body, and then is released.

If you keep thinking the thought causing it, it will keep coming back in waves. You'll think a thought, you'll feel the emotion, you'll think a thought, you'll feel the emotion. But if you get good at this, if you get good at thinking the thought, feeling the emotion, letting it go and understanding it, you can always change the thought if you want.

Many times, we don't want to change our thought and that's okay. We want to be in grief, or we want to be in pain, or we want to be in suffering

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because of something that's happened in our life and we want to process that through and move to the other side of it.

When we don't allow our feelings to go through us and expire, they compound and they come out in other areas. So imagine that energy of that emotion that you're feeling and you're avoiding it or you're ignoring it. It will come out in other areas. It will show up, it will compound.

It will make it so you are disconnected from yourself. When you use your emotions to connect to not just your body physically but to the strength of your ability to be conscious, then you also have so much more access to your mind.

And your mind is what's causing your emotions in the first place. And the goal is not to not have any negative thoughts. Hear me say this again. That is not the goal. The goal is not to be happy all the time. The goal is not to be free of negative emotion. The goal is to have as large of a life as you can possibly withstand by allowing for that 50%.

The bigger the better. The more open, the more expansive, the more strong, the more evolved you're going to be. By understanding how emotions work, by understanding that they are supposed to hurt half of the time, at some grade they're supposed to hurt, and when we reduce our upset over the upset, we've reduced half of the upset of our life.

When we stop suffering over our suffering, we only have half the suffering. We have the appropriate amount of suffering of what it is to be alive, of what it means to be empathetic, to what it means to be human. If you've never experienced a negative emotion, you're not going to be able to connect to another human being.

If it doesn't hurt when someone dies, you are missing the joy of them being alive. Let it hurt when it hurts. Even though you're the one causing it, don't try to change that thought so quickly that you miss the opportunity to process the vibration all the way through.

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So someone asked me today, they said, “So do you plan time to feel emotion?” And I said, “No, I just let it be there. I allow it to be there when it’s there.” Now, if you’ve gone through the death of a loved one, or you’ve gone through an emotional breakup, or you’re having a fight with someone, yes, it’s appropriate for you to set some time aside for you to really go into the emotion that you need to, whether it’s crying, or just laying still for a while and vibrating and just letting it ache.

Let it ache sometimes. I recently just let myself cry. You know that boo-hooing. I was on the phone with someone and I just let myself just go all the way in to the primal cry and to feel that pain through. And as I was doing that, as my body was reacting to that vibration, I felt the most beautiful release of energy.

Like such a pure, clean release by processing that emotion all the way through. And I felt exhausted on the other side of doing that, but I also felt cleansed. And the same is true when I’m feeling anxious. I’m like, “It’s okay baby,” to myself, “It’s okay baby, just feel anxious, just feel afraid, just allow it to be there, allow it to buzz.”

Allow yourself to be this alive. Don’t go dead in yourself with food or alcohol or drugs or porn. Stay alive in the vibration. No emotion is ever going to harm you if you allow it.

When we suppress our emotions, when we push them away, when we avoid them, when we buffer them, that’s when they become the biggest problems in our lives. Emotions aren’t problems when they’re felt. When they’re felt through.

Now, there comes a time where you’ve allowed emotion, you’ve allowed it, you’ve felt it, you’ve accessed the thought causing it. There comes a time where there’s a natural progression to change the thought.

So the thought can go from - and this recently happened to me. “This shouldn’t be happening,” where I’m arguing with reality and feeling the pain and the heartbreak of that. This shouldn’t be happening to this is happening

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and that's okay. And then I shifted to this is supposed to be happening. This is happening for me.

But I couldn't get to this is happening, this is happening for me until I went through the argument with reality, the grief of loss, of something not being the way I wanted it to be, not being able to control the universe, and allowing myself to be in the pain of that.

We are always going to be in pain that we can't control the universe, that we can't make other people behave the way we want, that we can't have other people get the good fortune that we want them to have, the success that we want them to have, the happiness, the wins we want them to have.

It will be painful to watch people do things we don't want them to do. To watch people hurt themselves when we don't want them to. I love that that is life. I love that life is a risk. We're not always winning the lottery every day.

I love that there's risk in my business and in my relationships. I love that at any moment, I can get my heart broken because that's what makes my heart so full when it's not. That taking that ghastly risk, as Alan Watts would say, that ghastly risk is so worth it.

And if you know that you can handle the pain of being alive, you're always going to take that risk. You're always going to be willing to go to the place where you can feel at the highest level of emotion, to be the most alive you can possibly be.

I have felt ecstasy beyond what I thought I could and I've felt heartbreak beyond what I thought I could, and I'm standing and I'm alive and I want to do it all again. I want you to do it all again.

I've watched my son hit that golf ball into the water three times in a row and I've watched him walk off the course with his head hanging low. I've watched him cry because of all of the tournaments that he didn't make it into or he ended dead last.

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And then I watched him win. I would do it all again twice. And I want to tell you something, I would do it all again twice even if he didn't win. The possibility of the joy of winning is enough. The perception that we have the opportunity to win is enough to enjoy the game, to enjoy the process, to show up.

And being willing to enter a tournament and being willing to come in dead last if that is the case, that is what it means to show up to life. When you are sitting at home buffering away your feelings, you're missing out on the human experience of being alive.

So what do you do when feelings hurt? You celebrate that you are an alive human being. You allow those emotions to be there. You process them and then you release them. The better you get at processing your emotion, the better you get at life.

Feeling your feelings is one of the most powerful things you can do. When I have people say to me, "I don't have time for feelings, I don't have time to do all this soft stuff," I know they're not going to be as successful as they could.

Because when you're willing to walk through the fire of the emotion that will be presented to you as a human being living your best life, you will see a world I think that you didn't even know existed. Bring it on. Bring on all of life because I know how to manage my emotions.

There is no emotion that can kill me as long as I'm willing to process it. You cannot feel on purpose for the rest of your life, or you can feel on purpose. Unfelt feelings fester. What are the feelings that you haven't processed through in your life? Where is there pain that you need to allow to be released? Where is there self-consciousness and doubt and frustration and anger that you're holding in your body instead of processing it?

When you allow the process, when you allow the vibration, when you allow the emotions to go all the way through, on the other side of that is not only the release of the emotion but the strength that you achieve in knowing that

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you can do it and that you're willing to do it again and again and again, to live your life at the highest level.

So many people come in dead last in a tournament and give up because they don't know how to process emotion. They react to that emotion by quitting. They react to that emotion by walking away. But when you don't walk away, when you process that emotion, when you go through it, there may come a day, and there's a promise of a day where you will be strong enough to take that ghastly risk to come in third in the golf tournament, to come in first, to win your first pro tournament, to not give up because you want to live the biggest life.

Feel your feelings. Process them through. Allow there to be pain. Clean, pure, human processed pain. Allow it to be there. The goal is not happiness. The goal is not freedom from pain. The goal is the ability to process it through.

Have a beautiful week everyone. Feel your pain this week. I'll talk to you later. Bye.

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