

Ep #391: Religion and the Model



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Brooke Castillo

Ep #391: Religion and the Model

You are listening to *The Life Coach School Podcast* with Brooke Castillo, episode number 391.

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.

Brooke: Welcome to the podcast, everyone. I am so excited for this podcast. I think so many of you who have been studying the Model and following me for a long time are going to be fascinated by this conversation. And it's in response to an email that I received from one of my coaches. Her name is Sterling.

This is what it said, "Inclusion is important to The Life Coach School. So, I think a podcast representing major religions and how the Model works for their clients would be amazing. One of the most powerful things about the Model is that it works for everyone. I would love to hear someone representing each of the major religions talk about how the Model works with their beliefs. You could feature someone who's Jewish, Mormon, Hindu, Muslim, Protestant. And I would love to represent Catholics. Often, Catholics – and I imagine other religions – are skeptical of new-agey things. But I believe the Model leads you closer to God and I'm confident that other LCS coaches of other religions would say the same thing. Brooke has talked about the woo side of LCS and I think it would be great to talk about the spiritual side of it. Blessings, Sterling J."

So, we got this email. I immediately forwarded it to Emily and said, "Hell yes, let's do this. This is such a great topic." And one of the things that's so fascinating about me as a teacher – and this is normal for all teachers across the board – is when you're relatable to people, a lot of times people will project onto you their own religion.

So, I have been told many times, "Thank goodness you're Buddhist. Thank goodness you're Christian. Thank goodness you don't believe in God." People say all of the things onto me because they feel relatable to me.

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And I try to keep religion and the ideas of religion and spirituality very general, so everyone feels welcome, everyone feels inclusive. I love religion when it brings people together. I struggle with religion when it separates people.

So, I'm excited to have this conversation because we have many people on here representing many different religions, all of whom love the Model. And we're also going to talk about what it's like for some of our clients to kind of question the Model as it applies to religion and how we answer those questions as they come up as coaches.

So, I'm so excited to get started. Why don't we go ahead and start with you, Sterling, since you sent in the email? And what I'd like you to do is introduce yourself, the religion that you are, how you integrate it with the Model. And then at the end, I definitely want to know about your business and how you're showing up as a coach in the world. So, take it away, Sterling.

Sterling: Yeah, absolutely. So, my name is Sterling Jaquith and I'm a Catholic life coach. But I did not grow up with religion. So, I think that has helped me to view the Model, you know, outside of Catholicism and then inside of Catholicism.

And so, I converted at 25, before I got married. And I would say that the three major transformations I've had in my life were becoming Catholic – I was never the same after that. It completely transformed my life – becoming a mom – because that just kind of turns your world upside down and it changes everything – and then the day I found the Model.

And I just know that as long as I live, I'm going to tell people about the gift of Jesus loving you and that your thoughts create your results. And once I discovered that, it kind of blew open my whole life. And I had been doing work as a Catholic speaker. I had a podcast. And as soon as I discovered your work, I literally closed all of that and went, "This is the only thing I'm going to talk about for the rest of my life."

Brooke: So, you're a Catholic life coach? What does that mean?

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Sterling: Well, what I say is that I help people encounter the holy spirit. So, Catholics believe that our purpose here on Earth is to become the best version of ourselves and to become saints in Heaven. And we believe that God gives us wisdom. Like, He actually sends us wisdom and He has this perfect life obstacle course for us. Like, He set out this obstacle course and He's like, "Okay, this is the race you're going to run to be a saint in Heaven."

And I love how you talk about being willing to be uncomfortable to grow because that's exactly what our faith believes. Like, are you willing to step into the discomfort of growing so that you can become your holier self? We're all kind of called to this holiness. And it's something we're always chasing. We never reach it.

But it's like, I had read so many books, so many business books, so many books written by saints and the documents that we have in our faith. And a lot of them just didn't make sense. Or I would read them and I'd think, "Well that sounds great. But I don't know how to do that." I didn't know how to apply it.

And then it also felt disheartening because I would read about people like Mother Theresa and she had such perfect peace and she was so present. Any time you were with her, people always said, "She made you feel like no one else was in the room. She just had this complete trust and she loved everyone because she saw God in every person that she met."

But when you read about that, you're like, "Well here I am yelling at my kids, feeling like a hot mess..."

Brooke: "I am not Mother Theresa..." yeah, exactly.

Sterling: "No hope for me..." and then also, you know, so many of the Catholics that we look up to are nuns who live with no children in like a convent. And so, it's really hard to bring that into your day-to-day life.

And I feel like what the Model did was it showed me all of that junk thinking that was keeping me from just doing the things that I was reading about. I

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was reading about these tools. But I couldn't do them because I was just spinning out in overwhelm and confusion and fear and self-doubt.

And I think we have this idea that we believe that God loves us so much, unconditionally, just like you say, that we are completely worthy of love; every single human on the planet. And I think we have this idea that because we know we're made by God and he loves us, that we should be able to feel warmth because of that. Like, "Oh, I feel so warm and loved by God."

But what I have found for me and most of my clients is that if you don't know how to love yourself first, you don't even know what that feels like. And so, I think we do it backwards. I think we assume that we should feel loved by God. And intellectually we know that He loves us. But I think that that's blocked when we don't know how to love ourselves.

And so, I show them, if you begin to just form a deep and unconditional loving relationship with yourself, what it does is it removes that block and it shows you how He has been loving you the whole time, but you didn't know it.

Brooke: I love this. You know, as you're speaking, I'm thinking about, you know, there are so many different religions. And I feel like, a lot of times, religion brings up our differences, you know. Like, you're saying God loves us, and for someone else, that may feel like they don't like that terminology or they don't like how that sounds or whatever.

And I think, as you're talking, I'm like, "It's so beautiful that we all find our way to our best lives in different ways." And if this religion helps you feel closer, like you said, to loving yourself, to feeling God, to being in that space, how can that be a bad thing? It's such a beautiful thing.

And if someone else has a different way of doing that, that's a beautiful thing too. So, I think that's one thing that's kind of cool, I think, about the Model is, if you can use the Model to actually help yourself feel more aligned with your own religion, with your own self, with God, like, in my opinion, there's nothing that can ever be said that's wrong about that.

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Sterling: Absolutely. And I'm a huge fan of other religions and I think we can all do a much better job of loving each other. And I think that is the ultimate expression of being our highest self, is that we put more love into the world. And so, we should see each other as growing communities that create safety and help people grow and support each other.

And I think that's what's so beautiful about this call is we were all laughing before we got on the call and I have so much love for all of these women and I know that they are leading people to be their truer selves.

Brooke: Yes, which is such a beautiful thing. So, did you have any conflict between the Model and Catholicism. Did you have anything come up that you kind of had to reconcile? Or did it all feel like it was kind of a sweet fit from the beginning?

Sterling: It was a sweet fit for me. But I knew that if I was going to kind of burn my business down and come out saying I was a life coach, which might have been like, "I'm a circus performer," you know, to a bunch of Catholic people, I just thought, "Well, they are not going to receive this well unless I sound super grounded and authentic about it."

And so, I went and did a ton of research into the Bible and into the Catechism, which is kind of the book that we use in conjunction with the Bible for our faith. And then we have some very popular books that lots and lots of Catholics read, like Story of a Soul by Saint Therese.

And I had read some of these books before, and again, they had some feel-good moments. But then I would just go straight back to my life thinking like, "Well I have no chance of being that person." And when I started reading them again and I pulled them all out, I just realized, they were all 17th century life coaches. That's all they were. All of them were life coaches. All of them.

And all the things they say are, "Manage your mind. Be love. Be present. Be willing to be uncomfortable for the Lord. Be calm." And so, one of the things that the Bible teaches is that when we walk closely with God, we

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have these fruits of the spirit. “You will know them by their fruit,” by the outward way that they’re living.

It’s kind of how you say, “It doesn’t really matter what people say. We know what they’re thinking by how they show up in their life.” And so, I won’t say all of the fruits, because there’s nine of them. But the three in particular that I think show up for us is love, peace, and self-control. And that, for me – I didn’t need to know anything except that when I teach people the Model, love and peace and self-control start showing up a ton.

Brooke: Yes, that’s so cool. That’s so good. So, let me just clarify, before we move on, I want to clarify – so do you work with Catholic women? Who is your target audience of people that you work with?

Sterling: Yeah, so I met you and you blew up in my life and I’m like, “I’m going to build a giant company for all Catholics.” So, we actually have a membership, like a monthly membership for women. And we’re just about to launch the men’s side. And I do that with another LCS coach. Her name is Lorissa Horn. And so, we run this membership. And then I do one on one business coaching. We actually have three LCS coaches on the membership side that do one-on-one coaching.

And I used to do that. But I always know that once that kind of got going, that I would step out and run the business side of things because I’ve always been in business. So, the four of us right now are just crushing it and it’s so fun.

Brooke: I was going to say, your business must be doing well. You’re making money?

Sterling: Yeah, we’re making a lot of money and our goal is to get 10,000 Catholics in our program within five years, so we’re doing it.

Brooke: Okay, so if I’m a Catholic and I love the Model, how do I find you?

Sterling: Everything is at madeforgreatness.co. There’s no M on the end. And I will tell you, that comes from a famous Pope who said, “The world

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offers you comfort, but you were not made for comfort. You were made for greatness.”

Brooke: Yes, amen. That’s so good. Thank you so much, Sterling. Thank you for writing in and kind of being the inspiration for this. It’s so beautiful. Okay, let’s move to you, Sara. Tell us all the things about you and the religion you’re in, everything.

Sara: Okay, I’m Sara Kenana. I’m a certified Muslim relationship coach. I help overwhelmed Muslim women prioritize themselves and find satisfaction in their relationships.

Brooke: Love it.

Sara: So, ever since I discovered you – first of all, I didn’t know what a life coach is, I would say, about five years ago. One time, a friend of mine told me, “Oh, you’re just like a life coach.” And I’m like, “What is a life coach?” I literally Googled it that day, and then guess who showed up...

Brooke: Oh good, our Google search is working, my friends.

Sara: It is working, yes. So, you showed up. Obviously, Tony Robbins and the rest. But I was drawn to you. And so, ever since that day, I listened to your podcast every single day. I think you were at 100-something at the time. So, that by itself changed my life. Even my husband noticed how I changed. Because I was this – you know, I’m a mom. I have four kids under 10...

Brooke: Oh, my goodness.

Sara: Yeah, and I wanted everyone in the world to change to feel happy. Like my husband needed to change...

Brooke: I still kind of want that a little bit, if I’m being honest.

Sara: I’m almost there. So, like my kids needed to be a certain way, my husband, the stranger in the street, everyone. So, until I understood – and

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really, when I got into certification, I noticed how it aligned perfectly with Islam. And I didn't know it.

I've heard what is said in the Quran, what Prophet Muhammad – peace be upon him – said. Like, for instance, Prophet Muhammad – peace be upon him – said, “These are a result only of the intentions. And the individual is rewarded only according to that which he intends.”

And I didn't get that until I understood – you tell us in certification, like, sometimes you can make the same deed or the same action. But the result is totally different every time. Depending on what? The thought. The thought leading it, the thought that is creating that feeling and fueling that action. And you'll totally get a different result every time.

So, that clicked for me. And I've had it all along. And then I totally understood it at a deeper level, once I understood how the Model works. And even with the changing part, like I wanted everyone to change, like, “They're not doing this right...”

So, it was said in the Quran, “Allah will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves.” So, starting with ourselves, looking into our thoughts, having that awareness, that compassion, that acceptance to us and outside of us and shifting our focus from the uncontrollable outside situations...

Brooke: Yeah, circumstances, yes...

Sara: And then looking into what we can control, which is our thoughts, our intentions, our awareness from within. And then aligning that with our values, whichever that might be, and aligning it with our hearts, like our Fitrah. Fitrah means innate state. We believe that God creates all humans in an innate state of goodness, like you said, babies are always lovable, they're always worthy. And that's basically what is said. So, I mean, I was studying – and you can see my notebook here, it's full of stickers...

Brooke: If you guys want to see the video, go to the website. She's holding it up.

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Sara: Everything. Every time I was studying something I was like, “Oh my god, this is what is said in the Quran. This is what Prophet Mohammad has said.” And I keep writing and writing and I see how they’re going hand in hand. And really, that’s so beautiful because, as I said, it changed my life so much. I was like, “People need to know this.”

I went from feeling resentful, feeling overwhelmed with kids, feeling so stressed out, feeling all the things, thinking, you know, “You need to change so that I feel – once this happens, I’ll feel okay.” But knowing that I have control over my feelings by just looking into that and just having unconditional love for me and for others, dropping my manuals to others, having healthy boundaries, all of these little things really clicked. And once they did, it changed my life.

And the last thing I want to add is that there’s a saying by Prophet Muhammad – peace be upon him – that the best people are those who are most beneficial to people.

Brooke: Interesting. I love that.

Sara: Yeah, and when you hear this, you think, what is meant is, you know, teachers, mentors, coaches. But it really goes beyond that. Everyone can benefit others. Even an engineer, a doctor, a contractor. Like, once they purify their intentions, once they have intentional thoughts and think deliberately of why they’re doing this, knowing the why behind their actions totally amplifies their result and it turns all their life into an act of worship, to have humanity, to complete each other, to have acceptance and love. And as Sterling said, just building that humanity and that contribution that we all can give in different ways.

Brooke: Yeah, I mean, what I hear you saying and what I think is so extraordinary about it is I think, in our religions, we’re being called to live a certain way, to align ourselves to a certain way. And if the Model can help us align in that way that we’re choosing to within our religion, I mean, that’s an extraordinarily beautiful thing. I love that. So, tell me about the coaching that you do.

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Sara: Yeah, so I, right now, I do one-on-one coaching for Muslim women...

Brooke: Right, Muslim women only?

Sara: Yeah, this is my niche. But actually, I do have a couple who are non-Muslim. So, it's fine. But this is what it is for niche purposes. We go through like three months coaching. And obviously, it is renewable. And it's been a journey. It's been my own journey and it's always going to be progressing, just like my clients as well. So, it's been wonderful, very fulfilling.

You know, the day I found out about life coaching, I remember that day. I was shaking. I was shaking. Like, I felt it. And I tell my husband, "I think I want to become a life coach." And he's like, "What?" Yeah, none of us...

Brooke: That's what they all say.

Sara: Right. And I was like, "And I know where I want to get it from." Then we talked about the logistics and he's like, "Can't you find A \$10 course?"

Brooke: I mean, you can.

Sara: I know, you can, definitely. But I was like, "I don't think I want to." So, I mean, long story short, I did buy like three \$10 courses that I literally went – I went through half of one and I was like, "That's it. No, I'm going to Brooke. That's it." So, yeah, it's been a blessing ever since.

Brooke: Awesome. Okay, so if somebody who's a Muslim woman, or someone who's not, wants coaching with you, how would they find you?

Sara: They can go to www.saralifecoach.com...

Brooke: S-A-R-A?

Sara: S-A-R-A, yeah, no H.

Brooke: Okay, saralifecoach.com, alright.

Sara: Yeah, or they can find me on Instagram @saralifecoach.

Brooke: Okay, beautiful. Okay, let's move onto you, Chelsea.

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Chelsea: Hi there. My name is Chelsea Paxton. And I am a faith crisis and faith transition coach. I work with members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints; Mormons. I grew up in the Mormon Church. I was born in Salt Lake City, raised in the Church. And in the mid-90s, when I was in high school, I went through my own faith crisis and faith transition.

And at that time, there were no podcasts or Facebook groups or Instagram or anything like that. And so, I went through that kind of by myself and did my own research at libraries and things of that nature. And I spent the next decade or so deconstructing and trying to find my way in the world.

Brooke: So, let me just interrupt you real quick. What is a faith crisis? Like, what actually happened?

Chelsea: Yes, so I think one of the easiest ways to explain it is when you have cognitive dissonance. So, I grew up in the Church and was a fully believing member. My family was. My parents, you know, were in the Church too. And you're given a very specific set of beliefs and a structure, and almost like a script as far as how to live your life.

And it worked beautifully for my family and for myself and my friends. But then, it got to a point for me when I had new information and new experiences, like a new circumstance, essentially, that didn't reconcile, didn't match that script, that set of beliefs.

And so, it does feel like a crisis because, in the LDS Church, the Church really does shape every facet of your identity. And it certainly did for me. I wasn't just going to church for a few hours once a week. It was something that really shaped my entire life and generations of my family.

And so, it feels like an existential crisis because everything shifts in a way. And so, that's what I would describe a faith crisis as.

Brooke: So, did you end up leaving the Church or you're still with the Church?

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Chelsea: Excellent question. When I was 17, I decided to leave. So, I spent about a decade or so, actually even more, researching and deconstructing and doing some of these things, trying to figure out, how do I keep the beliefs that I love about the Church, that I'm so grateful that I was raised in this particular belief system and things that I want to keep and stay with me? And how do I continue to personalize my faith and personalize my spirituality and be authentic and true to me and who I'm becoming?

It's really tricky. There's not really a map for how to do that. So, I came across your podcast and at the time, there was something going on in my life and it was wrapped up in my faith, it was wrapped up in my family history, and your work really helped me. It was the future-self work that I was really able to step into that moment with so much clarity, so much love and compassion for myself.

I imagined my future self, my current self, my 17-year-old self working together and it was just this really powerful moment. And that's when I knew, "Okay, I've got to join Scholars." And then after a few months of Scholars, "Okay, I've got to become a life coach."

And as I was in CCP, I noticed that I have this very unique perspective as someone growing up in a faith like the LDS Church, who loves the Mormon Church, who loves Mormons and really wants to help. This is still part of who I am. That's something I claim. And I also know that we have permission to evolve in our faith. We have permission to personalize our faith.

It's allowed, to question and doubt the belief system that you were raised in or converted to. Because oftentimes, when we are in a very structured faith, organization, or institution like a church, we don't know that it's okay to question.

Sometimes, when we have those circumstances that come in our life that trigger a thought or cause us to question, if we can't question the Doctrine or the history or the leaders of our Church, sometimes it goes in that, "Well, there must be something wrong with me. Maybe I need to try harder."

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Maybe I need to double down. Maybe I did something wrong. Maybe I'm being deceived or I'm a sinner." And those thoughts can be very harmful. And so, I help people know that it's okay to question and doubt your faith. It's okay. It's allowed.

Brooke: What I love about what you're saying is, first of all, oftentimes when we question stuff and we turn away from it for a minute, it can actually bring us back deeper. And the other piece I love about what you're saying is, like, I think a lot of times, when people are members of a religion, they think they have to believe every single thing fully, completely, or something is terribly wrong with them.

And what I love about what you're saying is, "These are the things that I love and that work for me and make my life better. These are the things that I don't agree with, that I don't want to have be a part. And this is how I identify myself because of that." Instead of, I see a lot of people end up hating on their own religion that they grew up with and kind of deleting all of it, even the good stuff because of the one thing or the second thing. So, I love your approach to this. It feels really healthy to me.

Chelsea: Yeah, and the Model is such a beautiful, empowering thing for people in this space after they've experienced something like a faith crisis that are trying to figure out what to do and are they going to use this as a moment to really strengthen and edify their faith and come back to the faith? Because that is absolutely something that happens. Or have they gotten to a point in their faith development – because there are stages of faith that we progress through as humans – and are they at a point where that particular belief system no longer serves them and is there a place for them to move onto?

And the Model is a beautiful way to really think critically. Because sometimes, in our faith traditions, we forget to do critical thinking sometimes. Like, "What does this mean for me? How does this impact me? How do I want to feel about this?" And to use that as a self-discovery tool, to again personalize that faith and to keep the things that serve you, that really build you up that you love, that lights you up.

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And then, the things that don't fit, it's okay to let those go and it's okay to continue in your evolution and search for the next thing. And it's all allowed and it can be really difficult and challenging for sure. But it can also be something that really strengthens you and, you know, changes your life in amazing ways. So, it's the honor of my lifetime to help people in this path.

Brooke: Yeah, I can imagine. So, do you coach on any faith crisis, or is it mainly through the LDS community?

Chelsea: Yes, that's such a good question. So, I did grow up in the Church, I've experienced a Mormon faith crisis, so I understand the unique situation of that and the language of the Church and the culture and all of the things that happen when people are making these decisions, for sure. But I also, as part of my own faith, you know, path, I ended up going to college to study religion and I ended up getting a Master's Degree in theology because I'm just so fascinated and I love learning why people believe things and how that shapes their life. So, I can absolutely help someone regardless of their faith tradition because we have more in common than you would think...

Brooke: You understand them all.

Chelsea: Yeah, we have a lot more in common.

Brooke: Amazing. I love it. Okay, so if someone wants to come coach with you, how would they find you?

Chelsea: Yeah, so I have a website. It's chelseapaxton.com. And I also have an Instagram. Come follow me on Instagram @chelseapaxton.coach.

Brooke: Beautiful. And again, as we're going through this, I know some of you are in the shower, some of you are walking, some of you are driving in your car. All of their information will be in the show notes. You go to thelifecoachschool.com/391. You can watch the video. You can get access to all of those websites, if you're worried about that, if you don't have a pen to write them down.

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Okay, let's move on to you, Ana.

Ana: Hello, yeah, so I'm a Buddhist-based life coach. And in terms of how the Model fits into this, you know, in Buddhism there isn't a god, per se. But there's a teaching that we have Buddha nature within us, like that this ultimate realization is available to every single living being. Not even just humans. But what gets in the way of us seeing that is our delusions, or incorrect perceptions of who we are, what does contribute to happiness or not.

And so, one thing that I appreciate about Buddhism is that we've all heard people say, like, "Hey, you need to be more confident. You need to be more kind. You need to do all this." And I think Sterling alluded to this earlier. But it's like, Buddhism actually has these tools to tell you how to do that. So, we have, you know, mindfulness.

And to me, what's fascinating is the Model actually lines up with the four foundations of mindfulness that we talk about in Buddhism. So, they're normally taught in a certain order, but if we're following the Model, we have the neutral circumstances, right? And in Buddhism, there's mindfulness of phenomena. So, like, can we be aware of what is actually happening without our thoughts imposed onto it?

So, it's kind of like the Model has the mindfulness phenomena. And then there's mindfulness of our mind, and so that's our thoughts. And in the Model it's like, "What am I thinking about this phenomena right now?" And then there's the teaching on mindfulness of feelings. And so, there's a lot of teachings about...

Brooke: What a trip.

Ana: I know. And then a mindfulness of the body, as we become aware of our feelings. And it's totally in alignment in that, in Buddhism, it's like the only thing obscuring our Buddha nature and our ability to fully see our potential is the way that we are choosing to perceive things.

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Like, I remember one of my favorite teachers, he said, “You know, you could be happy just like that.” And I never understood that. But after I was working with the Model, I was like, “Oh, this is what he meant.” All I had to do, it’s so simple, yet not easy.

Like, “If I can change my thought about this...” And then, like, Shanti deva, another one, is like, “If you can change something, why be unhappy? If you cannot change something, why be unhappy?”

Brooke: That’s so good.

Ana: Yeah, and like knowing the difference. So, for me, I call it like off the cushion. The Model is basically, I teach it as active meditation because what a lot of my clients – because I have a lot of clients that aren’t necessarily Buddhist. They’re like Buddhist-curious or they’re Yoginis or whatever.

But they’re like, “I do all the work. I do my meditation. I do my yoga. But I’m still a bitch.” And it’s like, “Why am I still a bitch?” And it’s like, “Oh right...” how do we take all that and apply it to the real messy world? And this is where I find the Model so awesome because it’s not like you can always go sit and meditate. But you can actively walk yourself through the four foundations of mindfulness, like through the Model.

So, for me, it’s like active meditation. You’re in it. And what I’ve noticed is, because the practices within Buddhism have been studied scientifically, like at Stanford and Harvard, they do all these EEG studies where people meditate and stuff. And what we know is there’s this magic quarter-second between perceiving a circumstance, a situation, and our response to it.

And meditation actually lengthens that pause. All you need is a nanosecond, right, to not blow up at your partner. So, if you can, like, have that space be lengthened just a little bit, like then we have a chance to choose instead of just react. And I think that’s the magic of the Model within what I teach because it really helps to lengthen that pause so we can come from our wise mind instead of our reactive mind. And then, let’s say we do blow up, we can catch it and be like, “Okay...”

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One of the things you said that's always stuck with me is, like, "Why am I choosing to feel this way right now?" And I feel like that's so powerful. Because if I have a blowout with my husband it's like, "Wait, why am I choosing to interpret whatever is happening right now in the way that I'm showing up like this?"

And, you know, one of the practices specifically is, every day, to remember that we're going to die and we don't know when. Which actually I think is funny, Brooke, because at one of the live events, we broke out and debated if that was actually true.

Because I think you were saying, "Let's challenge every belief we have." And so, that was one of our debates. So that was really fun. So, one of the practices is, like, "Wow, what if today was it?" And so...

Brooke: I love that. I think that is so clarifying. We're all going to die and we don't know when. Now what. Do you really care about this ridiculous garbage not getting taken out or do you care about – you know, what really matters? Beautiful.

Ana: Yeah, and some people are like, "Gosh, Buddhism is such a downer. It talks about suffering as one of the great..." so suffering is a great, noble truth.

Brooke: It really is. I believe that.

Ana: Yeah it's like, if you admit that it's a thing in life and stop trying to...

Brooke: Just 50% of life. That's it.

Ana: Right. And then the other is that we're going to die and we don't know when. So, instead of getting depressed about that, it's actually used as a way to motivate you. And so, it's like you wake up and go, "Damn, what would make today a good day to die?"

Brooke: Hey, what would make today be a god day to die? Come on with that question. That is amazing.

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Ana: Yeah, every day. I used to post it on Facebook every day.

Brooke: I've got to write that down on a post-it. That is good. Okay.

Ana: Yeah, and this is what is available to us when we take a moment to pause. And the Model, I think for me also, it's like ultimately the mark I want to leave on the world is to love people, to feel love, and to show up in a way that I'm proud of. And I feel like the Model helps me be more in alignment with my integrity so that I can make today a good day to die.

I'm not going to be there and go, "Damn it, I wish I didn't let that really insignificant thing control my happiness." And instead, I was able to choose where all my life energy went.

Brooke: That's brilliant. God, I love that. So, you work with other Buddhists? Who do you work with?

Ana: Yeah, so I work with wannabe Buddhists, I say. Because it's funny, the Dalai Lama said, you know, "Don't use Buddhist teachings to become Buddhist. Use them to be a better Muslim, to be a better Catholic, to be a better..." like, use these teachings for your own jam.

Brooke: I love that.

Ana: So, I actually have people from a lot of different religions. But I'm Buddhist-based, so that's...

Brooke: Got it.

Ana: And they do tend to be a bit naughty-naughty, I have to admit. Like, a lot of my people, they're spiritual and they like to meditate, but they're a bit of rulebreakers.

Brooke: I like, "They're a little bit naughty-naughty."

Ana: they're a bit naughty, yes.

Brooke: My kind of people.

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Ana: I have a podcast called The Rebel Buddhist Podcast. I almost called it Naught Buddhist. So, Rebel Buddhist Podcast. And I have a membership program called Freedom School where I teach a lot of these foundations of mindfulness and kind of how to apply it to the real and messy world. And then, I also have an adventure mastermind, where I take women out and we have amazing adventures that might scare you a little bit, make that reality of this life in permanence...

Brooke: Like what? Like what am I doing on this adventure?

Ana: Oh, like rock climbing, surfing, just kind of pushing your edge a little bit.

Brooke: And you take a physical group of people out to do it? Oh, beautiful.

Ana: Yeah, well it's like a part of a six-month program and we have two retreats where adventures are integrated and then we work on tis curriculum together.

Brooke: Amazing. Okay, how can people find you, Ana?

Ana: You can go to anaverzone.com and you can check out Rebel Buddhist Podcast, super fun. Yeah, I'm on Instagram too.

Brooke: Awesome, awesome, thank you. Alright, Phoebe, let's go to you next

Phoebe: Hi, everyone. My name is Phoebe Grace Montemayor and I'm here to represent the Christian faith, the Protestant faith. And basically, what we believe is that Jesus is the Son of God and He came down on Earth here to live a perfect life that we couldn't live and He died on our behalf for all of our imperfections so that we could live life and love in abundance and have a deep, intimate and close relationship with God without having to do all the striving and the killing ourselves that someone mentioned here on the panel already, which we often do across all religions. So, I'm so glad that that's something that was already said because there's a lot of deconstructing that needs to happen.

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And one thing that the Model really helped me reconcile was that I realized I was looking for love in all the wrong places, growing up, and even after I became a Christian. I grew up Protestant. But I wasn't living it out. It was just kind of a thing that we did on Sundays. But when I kind of...

Brooke: I think a lot of people can probably relate to that.

Phoebe: Yes, dressed up, all the things, but didn't necessarily live it out during the week. So, when I had my own version of a faith crisis, like Chelsea was saying, in college. That's what got me searching for a little bit more. Because if I didn't want to believe this – and I knew I didn't have to. I didn't have to live with this.

But that's where I started seeing that I actually wasn't living in love. I wasn't receiving the love. I wasn't giving myself the love. And so, over the years I started that journey of really coming to that. And then, when I discovered the Model through your amazing podcast – full disclosure, I was like, "How is this going to look with my faith? What are people from my church going to think?" all those things that you were saying in the beginning...

Brooke: Yeah, because I always talk about the universe instead of using the word God, you know?

Phoebe: And I realized that there were so many alignments. Our Scripture, our Bible does talk about how our feelings, we've got to be careful with our feelings because whatever we do operates. Those are the choices that we make from our heart.

And so, when we know the thoughts behind the feeling, when we take it captive, then we can start to reflect and see, "Is this how I want to show up? Is this how I want to love?" And the Model has really helped with detangling, deconstructing, and separating the shoulds that we have in our lives, from either our religion growing up, our religion now, or even society and cultural norms.

And I think not just the Model, but so many of your concepts have been so life-changing, whether it's and-thinking, which that's why I have that on

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there. I love it. Dropping the manual and just loving, or how it takes one person to change a relationship.

That actually was really – I had to really reconcile with that. And you asked earlier, “Was there ever a time where you struggled with that?” And I remember standing up at a live event as well and talking to my master coaches because I also grew up with abuse and different traumas.

And I remember thinking, like, “It doesn’t take one person. No, that’s not true.” But then as, of course, there is some uncomfortableness that comes with being a life coach, doing the Model, really noticing your thoughts, and how it aligned with my faith was like, “Wait a second, it takes one person to change a relationship.”

And I noticed some of the thoughts I was having and how much my religion does reflect that. It only took one person to change the course of my life here on Earth so that I don’t have to strive and I can live and love and change the course of my life after here on Earth.

And in our religion, it’s Heaven. And I know various people believe different things. And so, the Model really helps separate and bring to the surface what thoughts are actually, like, hindering us from dropping the manual, helping people see where they’re not loving and having those different thoughts and expectations.

And I think especially with the year that we had, the last two years that we’ve had, it’s so important to see where our thoughts are and how people are saying, like, “I can’t love this person because they believe this about all the stuff that’s been happening in our world.” And it’s like, “No, you actually can because of your thought. Your thought around it.”

And when you start to see where that is, and like what Sterling was saying, how do you come from a place of love, peace, and self-control in those situations? Because you don’t have to change the circumstances, right?

And in the Bible, there are so many people that went through a 50-50 life, the other 50, right? And the cross is even the perfect example of suffering

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yet beauty at the same time. And so, you can change how you feel because of the thought that you're having about the circumstance, even when the circumstances don't change. And that totally aligns with our faith, with the word, and that's the Bible in the protestant religion. And so, it's been a crazy ride being able to align the two and passionate love.

I love how one of your recent episodes talks about how do you love more? And not loving the people who just agree with you and have the same beliefs as you, but all people, because that's what Jesus did, you know. He loved everyone. And I love this panel of women and life coaches coming from all backgrounds, all religions because that's what Jesus is all about.

Brooke: I love that. So, tell us a little bit about your coaching practice.

Phoebe: So, I actually started working with, from the beginning, Christian women, just helping them overcome various pains in their lives. It initially started with chronic pain, so chronic physical pain or mental pain and trauma. And then it's just evolved to basically any pain in their lives. And then not just Christian women. So, I do have some clients that are not of the same faith, and that's who I work with.

Brooke: So, if you're in pain, everyone, and you want to coach with Phoebe, how do they find you?

Phoebe: I have a website.

Brooke: Overcoming With Grace...

Phoebe: .com. And I also am on Instagram. And you can find me there @phoebegracemonemayor.

Brooke: Awesome. Okay, Kayla, I'm coming round. Finish us off here, Kayla.

Kayla: Alright, okay, we'll keep the energy high, even though for me it's already tomorrow.

Brooke: Oh my gosh, where are you/

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Kayla: I'm in Israel.

Brooke: Oh, my goodness, okay.

Kayla: I speak from the future. So...

Brooke: Tell us all the things.

Kayla: I'll tell you all the things. I'm Kaya Levin. I am a newlywed coach for Orthodox Jewish women. And Brooke, every time I've said that I have a little sound in my head that goes – it's your voice saying, "That's a niche."

Brooke: Now that is a niche, my friends. Are you newly married? Are you an Orthodox Jew? Kayla is your one. You know exactly if that's you. And if it's not you, you know somebody who it is. It's a very good niche.

Kayla: Thank you.

Brooke: Take notes, coaches.

Kayla: I learned from you. Okay, so I'm an Orthodox Jew. I did not grow up as an observant Jew, so I found my way over here. And I would say that, from my perspective, what the Torah teaches us really is that God loves us, God knows everything, and there are specific things that we can do that can help or hurt our journey here on the planet.

So, especially for Jewish people, we understand you can eat Cheetos all day, day in and day out, and that's going to cause cholesterol problems, even if you don't actually understand science or understand why that's happening. So, we live the laws of Kosher, which is that there's also the things that you put in your mouth throughout the day that even though you can't understand it, there's actually a spiritual reality of what's going on here.

And it kind of gets into Kabbalah, which is past my pay grade. But essentially that there's a level of spiritual sensitivity that we use the commandments to be available for.

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So, I love that. And what ends up happening is in the Torah, we have 613 Mitzvot, commandments. That's a lot. No individual can actually keep all of those. But you end up with people who have very high expectations of themselves.

There's a lot of things that they are trying to do and it feels kind of weighty, like this is some pretty important stuff. We care, right? And especially Judaism does believe in reincarnation, but that also means that if you're here, that means you didn't finish last time...

Brooke: Uh oh, so you're already like, "Alright..."

Kayla: We all have work to do here, and yeah, so I work with newlyweds and that really comes from my personal experience, was that I got married. I wanted to do all the classes. I learned all the values, all the goals, all the what does it look like to create a beautiful marriage, and marriage is such a huge part of Judaism, right? So, creating a home and how I wanted to show up as the wife.

And then, that completely overwhelmed me and I turned into a complete basket case. I just got way outside my ability to function with that level of perfectionism, I guess, you know, that I was putting on myself that wasn't even really what was coming from the outside. But I put that on myself. And I just really was sort of spinning and would get into this, like, convinced he was going to leave me and then I would just be, like, miserable, and the entire thing was happening in my head. Literally, nothing was happening outside of me.

Brooke: He's like, "What?"

Kayla: Yeah, he's like, "I just wanted to know what we're having for dinner." So, really, what saved me was when I found life coaching, but then when I found the Model, which was a little while later, starting to see that I was getting so caught up in, "Well, this thought really is crushing."

The idea of him leaving me, like, I'm so desperately in love with my husband and if he were to leave, that's so crushing. And then I would go,

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“Oh my gosh, wow, that really crushed me, and I think that means it’s true.” I was using my feelings as a barometer for how true my thoughts were...

Brooke: Don’t do that, people.

Kayla: No. I was really good at that. I went to drama school. I’m good with feelings. I can do feelings really well. So, I was just like kind of in this place. And when I started listening to you and started learning from you, you know, just starting to question some of that. And not even questioning it. More just following the train, following the train of, like, “Okay, this thought created this feeling and this is why I’m crying right now and this is where we are.”

So, yeah, so that was my own personal thing. My own personal thing had to do with marriage. But the more that I coached, the more that I see that we all kind of have our thing. We all have our area that we’re trying to be exceptional, our area that we think that we should be better.

And what I’m always telling my clients is that values don’t go in the T-line. Values go in the R-line.

Brooke: Ooh, that’s good. I love it, yes.

Kayla: And sometimes we just get so committed to having it in the T-line. And sometimes, I’m like, I want to yank that thought away from you because it’s the thing that’s keeping you from actually doing it.

Brooke: Yeah, thinking about the value that you want to have, if it’s not creating the feeling that you need to have in order to execute it, you’re not going to get it in the R-line. That’s genius. So good.

Kayla: Yes, so once they can see that and once they really – and sometimes it takes a lot of time, just watching that Model and being like, “Wait a second, this is where I show up when I keep thinking that a better Jew or a better woman or a better wife or a better whatever, mother, would be different. Okay, wait a second.”

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So, now they're willing to let me move it down to the R-line. And then we get to go and find the Ts. And the Ts are hilarious. They're so different. They're like, "You know, my life is as luxurious as a bubble bath," or something just completely different has them showing up present and loving and exactly the way that they want to be showing up. And it's just, I mean, so much yummiier to be in that headspace in the first place. So, that's a big piece.

Brooke: What were you going to say? You were going to say that some of your clients had come to you kind of challenging the Model based on their religion. Do you have an example of that you can share with us?

Kayla: Yeah, I have two big areas. The first one is the idea about circumstances being neutral.

Brooke: Yes.

Kayla: So, I sort of see it from two ways. The question that I'll most often get is they'll say, "You know, we have the Torah and the Torah says that there are things that are good and there are things that are bad. So, are you telling me that a person who decides to stop keeping Shabbos..." the Sabbath, "That that's neutral?" So, then they kind of get stuck on that.

So that's one piece of it. And that one's kind of easy because we're just tracing the thought. We're not having – and I'll say this, "We're not having an ethical discussion here." We're really not. We're just watching what happens when you're thinking, "This is terrible."

Maybe it's working, I don't know. Let's just see. So, that one, that's how we look at it. The other one that's really big is the R-line, especially to do with money. Because according to Jewish belief, on Rosh Hashanah, our Jewish New Year, you know, we pray and we fast and we do all the things between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. And then after that, that's the plan for the next year.

That's how much money you're going to make this year. This is what's going to happen. It literally says who will live and who will die. All those

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things are decided on those days. And so, then people will say, “It was already decided. So, how do I get to just put whatever I want in the R-line?”

Brooke: Interesting. Okay, how do you address that?

Kayla: So, I just do it as this is my job. Part of my job, especially when I see myself as a coach, part of my job as an entrepreneur is the belief. So, we have a concept on Judaism of Hiskhayves which is like you doing your job. So, if it says I’m going to live for a year but I decide to live on the couch and not eat for the next three weeks, I’m not going to live for a year. We are partners here in this relationship.

Brooke: Ah, that’s good.

Kayla: So like, part of my job, my Huskhayves in my business is to believe more. And it’s hilarious because my limit on what I think I can make, if God’s the one who decided, it’s probably more...

Brooke: I’m pretty sure it’s higher. He’s not like, “No, no, no, no, no, settle down...”

Kayla: Yes, so I think that’s the way that I resolve that with the R-line is, when you drop into belief, you’re doing your work, you’re doing your piece.

Brooke: I love that. That is so good.

Kayla: And it’s okay if it doesn’t come out to the exact decimal point that you were looking for. You know that you’re doing your job and that’s all we’re here for. That’s what I think so many people were saying here is, “What is our job? What are we trying to accomplish here in this lifetime?”

Brooke: So good. Oh my gosh, how fun was this conversation? I love it. If people want to coach with you, how do they find you, Kayla?

Kayla: firstyearmarried.com.

Brooke: firstyearmarried.com, okay. So, I want to say, obviously, we are not representing all religions. And even the religions we have represented, we haven’t represented a non-biased view. Obviously, this is our opinion of our

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religion, where we're coming from. But I love the conversation, I love having coaches here who believe in the Model and believe in their religion in such a way that they're enhancing each other. And I know that there's lots of people who listen to my podcast who have lots of questions about this. And I love that now they have resources they can go to and get the help that they want and it will spark wonderful, amazing conversations.

I feel so, like, blessed. As you are all talking, I feel so blessed to have you in my community, representing such different beliefs and such different ways that are all, like, I feel moving us towards evolving and growing and, most importantly, love.

So, thank you so much for your time, for coming here today. Thank you all for listening to this amazing podcast. I know that maybe it got you thinking about something in a new way. I hope it did.

And if it can help you understand, maybe, I think for me, my love of religion comes from the ability to bring us together and the ability to create community and the ability to help us evolve into the best versions of ourselves. So, I think we did a little bit of that today.

So, thank you guys so much. I appreciate each and every one of you. I hope that you'll go check them out, follow them on Instagram. Even if you're not part of their religion, you could probably learn something from them.

Have a beautiful week, everyone, and I'll talk to you soon. Bye, everyone.

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