

Ep #471: Defeat



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With Your Host

Brooke Castillo

Ep #471: Defeat

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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 friends. So happy that you're here. I'm imagining that some of you have come to this podcast today because of its title, and because maybe you're feeling defeated or you've been defeated and you need some help.

And that is one thing that I have heard time and time again, and I have actually done time and time again with podcasts is search for a title, found it, and gotten the help literally that I needed on the exact topic that I needed from a free podcast.

And so if that is you, welcome. Welcome to the podcast today where we are talking about the lovely topic of defeat. And it's a topic I haven't covered before and I found it really interesting preparing for because it seems to me that so many of the people I love are going through some type of defeat right now. It's really fascinating.

And I'm going to differentiate between two types of defeat and what we mean by two types of them, but some examples that I have are my son, a couple of my best friends, and myself in some areas. And the question becomes, how do we overcome defeat without quitting?

So many people are coming to me like, "Okay, I'm done with this. I want to move on. I can't do this anymore. I want to quit. I want to start over." And what prompted me to record this podcast right now is one of my friends just sent me a text and she just said, "I just want to start over and move to Mexico. Is there a reason I shouldn't do that?"

And I replied, I said, "Yes, because it seems easier to do that right now but it's not, so don't do that." So one of the reasons why it's important to understand defeat and how to utilize it and how to overcome it is so you don't quit too early or you don't quit altogether on something that's really

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important to you. And also that you don't let a defeat go unutilized. Defeats can be amazing building blocks for success.

So first, I want to talk about the definition of defeat, which is overcome by adversity or losing. Being beat. I went to the Googles, that's what it said. Being beat, losing, defeated, overcome by adversity.

So if we want to distinguish, as we do with everything in life coaching, between the actual circumstance of defeat or being defeated and the thought line and the feeling line of feeling defeated. And the reason why we need to distinguish between these two things is because it's very important that we understand what we can control and what we can't control, and how some defeats we create in our mind, and some defeats are really factual.

So the more specific you can be about your defeat, the better you are going to feel. And I know that might sound strange, but when we are in vagueness and we are describing the feeling of defeat, or a defeat that we've had in our life, or feeling defeated by life in a very vague way, we are going to feel so much worse than when we talk about a very specific incident of defeat.

So let me use the example of my son Christian. If he's not playing well in golf and he calls me and he's like, "Mom, I'm just feeling so defeated. I just can't seem to get my golf game on track," that's a really vague defeat that he's describing.

He's talking about in general, he's feeling defeated about the way he's playing golf. And that's a very difficult thing to work on because the feeling is vague, the thought is vague, and the circumstance isn't even real because it's not specific or factual because there's both wins and defeats in life, in golf, in vague circumstances.

So I will always ask him, "Okay, let's talk about a specific incident. Let's talk about playing golf today, or let's talk about your last tournament, or let's talk about a certain hole." And we can garner so much information and process so much emotion and utilize that defeat so much better if we take them one

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at a time, specifically one at a time. And we make sure that the circumstance line is factual and that we're not just feeling defeated about this generalized mood that we're in.

So, whatever it is that you are feeling defeated about, or that you have been defeated in, make sure you write down the facts of it. So let's say I went and played pickleball and I lost a game that I played with my partner. And I feel like I wasn't playing well, I feel like he wasn't playing well, I feel like we didn't have the chemistry that we needed to win, and I start feeling defeated.

And I literally was defeated, so that's my C-line. I lost the game 11-0, let's say, I got my butt kicked. And I'm feeling defeated because I'm thinking, "I'm not good at this, I don't play very well, I can't win this game." Now, if I'm beating myself up and creating suffering on top of the loss, there's a lot of work I can do there to clean it up, and I'm going to give you some questions that you can ask yourself to process that defeat.

But in that moment, I always just let myself feel it. Just for a little bit. I hate losing, whether it's in my business where I've executed a strategy that didn't work out and kicked my butt, or I tried a marketing funnel, or I tried a business model that didn't work. And I can really put in that C-line the defeat that that was and the loss that that was.

I just let myself kind of think all the ugly thoughts and feel all the ugly feelings for a little while. And for me, it's usually never longer than a day that I dwell on that. Sometimes it takes longer because I'm processing it, but mostly, I let myself do it within 24 hours and then I move on to working on it.

So that's a really important tip if you've been defeated. And I tell the same thing to Christian when he's golfing. If he loses a tournament, or if he messes up a round, I say, "Give yourself 24 hours." But if it's a hole that he's on and he's in the middle of a tournament, he can only give himself 30 seconds because he's got to move on to the next hole.

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He was defeated by one hole but now we got to do the next one. So it's really important that you understand how much space and time do you want to give yourself. And I complain and whine and feel bad and hurt and lick my wounds for as long as is needed, up to 24 hours.

I always encourage everyone to process their pain, to process their defeat, to process their emotion when they get punched in the mouth, is what I call it. But then after that, when you don't analyze and look at your thought line, you can perpetuate that defeat and you can make that defeat mean something that will ultimately create a lot of unnecessary pain in your life and may lead you to quitting.

So you want to make sure that you're separating out the defeat from the thoughts. So for example, if I was to go out and play pickleball - I don't know if I've told you all this on the podcast before but my partner and I went to go play pickleball at a country club and everyone was at least, I'm not exaggerating, I'm 50 years old, everyone was at least 15 years older than us.

And they beat us so badly. We're both athletes. They beat us so badly. Now, we could have walked away from that defeat and this wasn't just one pair of people. Everyone there was so much better than us, they just destroyed us. And we walked away from that situation and I could have thought, "I shouldn't play pickleball, pickleball's not for me, this isn't something I should be doing, I should pick a new sport, I'm not good at this."

And I could have stayed in those thoughts and never played again. But instead, I took, I think it was probably about an hour, to feel bad. I got my butt whipped by my pickleball friends and they were all much older than me and I took a minute to just feel it.

So that's the most important thing. We're differentiating between the circumstance and our thoughts, and even when the thoughts are negative, we're allowing ourselves to process that pain, indulge in that pain, be in that pain for up to 24 hours.

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And then after that point, we are really going to move on and do the work that we need to utilize the defeat, to utilize the opportunity that we have to have been defeated, to have failed, and make ourselves better from it and because of it. You are always going to be better when you take a defeat and use it to learn.

Sometimes, it's an opportunity that you wouldn't ever have had unless you had been defeated. So let me give you some questions you can ask yourself when you've had a defeat.

Question number one is why did I lose? Now, the answers to these questions are all - especially if it's new, this is why I want you to give yourself a minute to process it, the answers to these questions are all going to be very judgmental if you haven't had enough time to process your defeat.

But if you have, then you can answer this question very factually and very logically. So here's how it would sound different. If I asked myself the question why did I lose, "Because I suck, because I'm not good, because they're so much better than me, because I haven't been playing long enough, because this is not the sport for me." That's going to be my initial.

But once I process it and I sit down, none of those answers are useful and they're all just judgments. The reason I lost is because I had five serves that didn't go in, I didn't come up to the net soon enough on three shots, and I missed two returns.

For my son Christian, if I ask him why did I lose, "Because I suck at golf, because everyone's way better than me, because the wind was blowing," whatever. Not useful, not helpful. But if I say, "No, why did you really lose?" "Well, I three-putted on this one, my drive went left on 13."

All of a sudden, we can look at the facts. We can see throughout the round where exactly he lost the round and where he could have corrected an unforced error. Do not underestimate the opportunity you have here by asking that question.

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So the first question is why did I lose? The second question is could I have won and how? Yes, because if you answer the question why did I lose, then you should have the answer for how you could win and that yes, you could have won.

So now we've created this gap. We've created a gap that has the journey between it that solves defeat. It's amazing. If those serves would have all gone in, if I would have returned that serve, if I were to come up to the net sooner, all of a sudden it's just math. This is what I did that caused me to lose and this is what I could have done to win, and now I have the gap in between the two.

Let's say it's with business, and let's say you did something in your business to execute a strategy. So maybe you hired a bunch of people to support in a certain marketing strategy and it didn't work, and you lost a bunch of money, and you lost in the strategy and you're feeling defeated.

And you've processed that defeat, and then you're ready to really go in and analyze it. So you ask yourself, "Why did I lose? What really happened?" Instead of saying, "I hired a bunch of people that I shouldn't have hired, and I don't know what I'm doing, and business is hard, I should have never gotten into this, I don't think entrepreneurship is for me," take a breath, get over yourself.

Once all that's cleared out of the way, then ask yourself, "Really, why did I lose?" We didn't have enough people sign up for the thing, and the reason we didn't have enough people sign up for the thing is because we didn't set up the funnel correctly, we didn't set it up timely enough, we didn't spend enough money on the funnel. Whatever the actual reason is that you lost.

Now, you will be tempted to say I don't know, but it's really important that you answer the questions. Why did I lose and could I have won and how? And typically, the answer, could I have won, is always yes. If you would have done this, this, this, this, this, this, then you answer how.

So just know, could I have won, I mean, rarely the answer will be no and it's fine if you want to answer no. But I want to encourage you to answer

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yes. Had I taken more time to hire the right people, had I spent more time with them, had we done more tests in the beginning, had we spent more money, I could have won. Now we can close the gap.

And really understand the difference between winning and losing as it applies to you specifically and the situation specifically. So remember, the first question is why did I lose, the second question is could I have won, how, the third question is what can I learn from this?

Now, let's use my example with pickleball. I can learn that simple things like returning a serve and making sure my serve gets in has really nothing to do with my opponent, has to do with my skillset, could help me win. And so then I've learned that it's not these fancy volleys people are doing, it's not their strategy, it's not their technique, it's not that they're that much better than me. It's that I have some things that I could work on in my situation.

Every game and every defeat will be different, but in that situation, then I can learn, okay, I need to do better on that serve, I need to really focus on it, and I probably need to practice it a lot more. Then I can go out and practice that serve, making sure it never goes out no matter what, and save myself five or six points by making sure that my serve goes in, and now I've learned something.

I've made myself better. I've paid attention to something. Because I can say, "Hey, it's important to have my serve in," and tell myself that. But when I lost a game because my serve didn't go in because I analyzed the game and I see it's because my serve doesn't go in, then there's a whole 'nother level of motivation for me.

Same with golf. It's the putting. The reason I didn't win is because I three-putted too much, now I'm going to work on putting. What can you learn from the gap that's between the loss that you had and the win that you could have?

For me in business, sometimes it's don't hire fast. Take your time. Don't be in a hurry. Sit down and make sure you have everyone's thoughts and opinions on everything. Make sure everybody isn't being rushed, everyone

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has time. Make sure there's no mistakes in the code. Those sorts of things. And then all of a sudden, you have a level of knowledge and a level of knowing and a level of motivation to do those things that you didn't have before.

And then the fourth question is what's next. The first question is why did I lose, the second question is could I have won, how, the third question is what can I learn from it, and the fourth question is what's next?

This question is incredibly important because it takes you away from the defeat and into the future, and that's where we need to head. So if you've been defeated in a strategy that you executed in business, you may need to make adjustments in your company to solve for that. Or you may need to sit down with everyone and have a new strategy plan. You may need to change the team. You may need to let some people go, bring some new people on.

And if you do those things, you'll start looking forward into what you can do to win. With golf, maybe you need to practice your putting. With pickleball, maybe I need to practice my serve. Maybe I need to play more games. Maybe I need more practice. What is next? What can I do in the future?

The sooner you can move on from a defeat by creating a new plan for your future, the better. Your failures can be soil for the flowers of your success. I have used my failures.

And even though you just feel like you get kicked in the teeth and you feel like you're embarrassed, or you feel shameful because you've let people down, or you've let yourself down, or people are watching you lose, if you can stay focused on processing the defeat, separating out the actual defeat from your thoughts, and getting really specific with it and asking these four questions, you will be able to use every single defeat you have in your life to create so much more success.

The more defeats you have, the more you learn. The more you learn, the better you get. The better you get, the more you win. Make sure that if

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you're feeling defeated, that you get specific about it. Do not let yourself live in a world where you think you're a loser.

You may have been defeated multiple times, you may have signed up for a tournament, got your butt kicked. You may have signed up for business, everything you try isn't working. You may have gone out to the golf course and you can't get one hole to cooperate with you. That's fine. That's part of life.

And if you process your defeats and you learn from your defeats and you grow from your defeats, you will get better. If you complain and stay in the state of not separating your thoughts, not getting specific, you can be in a defeated state in your life for a long period of time. Do not do this to yourself. It's completely unnecessary.

And if you're one of those people that has been feeling defeated by life for a long period of time and you don't even know what the defeat is, you feel like, "I can't even get specific," pick one. Even a small one, the last thing that happened where you felt defeated. And get as specific as you can about it. Do not allow yourself to live in the land of vague, to live in the land of I don't know. That will destroy your wellbeing.

Get specific so you can solve for the defeat and move on. And one last thing, losing sucks. Being defeated sucks. Not winning sucks. Letting yourself down sucks. Let it suck, but just for a minute. And then move on.

Because ultimately, my friend, you're worthy of every win that's waiting for you. And it is waiting, as long as you don't quit. Have a great week everyone. Talk to you later. Bye-bye.

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