

## Ep #477: Authentic Giving



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With Your Host

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You are listening to *The Life Coach School Podcast* with Brooke Castillo episode 477.

Hello beautiful friends, how's everyone doing? How are we doing on this beautiful day? I am in Arizona where it is getting very hot, very steamy here. Actually, not steamy. It's a very dry heat, but it is definitely hot here and I'm about to head out of the state.

And as some of you know, I used to have a place in Colorado that I would go to and spend the summer. We spent all last summer there, me and all the kids, my adopted kids and my kids' friends and my kids and I don't think we could have had more fun than we had last summer. That was so amazing.

But this summer, my kids are off and about and Christian is about to go to London to play golf and Connor is about to go to Colorado to look for a house. He just recently graduated. So this summer, me and my man are traveling all over the place to get out of the heat and we're going to be working as we travel and enjoying this beautiful country and out of the country too, of this beautiful world of ours. It's what we're going to be enjoying.

And that was one of my intentions if you read the *5 Questions to Ask Yourself* podcast, if you listened to that then you'll know all about my traveling-working adventures.

So today, we are going to talk about authentic giving. And I think this is a very important topic to dive into, as we explore through some of this work together, our true identities, who we ultimately want to be, what our ultimate goals are, and how we want to show up in this world.

And there is a lot of giving that happens in a very obligatory and inauthentic way that I think can actually be detrimental to relationships and to your own psyche and to your own self-esteem, and frankly, to the world.

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And one of the reasons why I think there's a lot of inauthentic giving is we are taught at very young ages that to be good people we need to give and we need to share and we need to be selfless in many ways. And I think especially as children, we are often asked to kind of give against our own will certain things.

I know that many of my friends and clients felt this way and were actually pretty traumatized by a lot of the things we were asked to give against our own will. And that could be even just a hug to someone, or time to someone that we didn't actually want to do.

And I think there's a debate over whether we will raise super entitled children if we don't ever expect them to sacrifice or give against their own will. And I actually don't agree with that sentiment or argument at all. I think that when we teach true authentic giving from our hearts, it is so amazingly awesome, it feels so amazingly good that we will automatically raise authentic, generous adults, and we will be that for ourselves.

So when I was researching for this podcast and thinking about some of the concepts, one of the things that came up in the research is that there are in theory seven forms of generosity, seven ways to give. We can give our thoughts, we can give our words, we can give money, we can give time, we can give things, we can give influence, and we can give attention.

So I thought this was interesting because I think, how do you give someone your thought? Isn't that just words? And how do you give someone your time? Is that the same as attention?

But regardless, being able to see that there are different ways to be generous, different ways to give I think is helpful. So I wanted to include it just so when we're talking about giving, when we're talking about being generous, we're not necessarily talking only about time, attention, or money. We're talking about lots of different ways that we can give and that we do give.

And so in this podcast, I really wanted to help differentiate between inauthentic giving and authentic giving. And I'll break it down. Let's start

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with inauthentic giving. I want you to think about in your own life how much of this you may be doing with other people, but also how much other people might be doing this with you.

So the first type I think of inauthentic giving is giving to get something back. And it's inauthentic when that isn't spoken. So a lot of times, you're doing a trade with someone that's a spoken trade. That's not the same as giving something. You're expecting something in return. I'm giving you money, you're giving me a product, or I'm hiring you to work for me, you're giving me results, I'm paying you money. That's not what we're talking about.

We're not talking about trades that are agreed upon. I'm talking about giving, which if you're expecting something in return and it's unspoken, it's not an actual trade. And I would say that there is a lot of this that happens and creates a lot of disappointment in our lives when we do this because we're not giving for the sake of the gift. We're not giving for the sake of simple generosity. We're giving in the hopes or expectation that someone will feel obligated or will want to give us something back.

I find this to be inauthentic. It's not the true give. Second one is giving to manipulate how someone thinks of you. If I'm trying to control how someone thinks about me, or perceives me, and that's why I'm giving is to kind of have them see me as a giving, nice, kind, generous person, and that's the reason why I'm giving, that to me is inauthentic.

It's actually a manipulation. It's an attempt to manipulate someone else's perception and if it's not coming from an authentic place, it's very inauthentic to try and convince or show someone that you're something that you're actually not authentically.

The third one is giving out of guilt. Feeling bad, feeling guilty for maybe having something that someone else doesn't have, and giving something to them even though you don't want to, giving them something only because you feel guilty and you're trying to relieve your own emotion of guilt by giving.

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Another one is giving because you want to think of yourself and you want other people to think of you as a good person. It's not being a good person, which who knows how anyone even defines that, but giving to have that perception of yourself or have someone else have that perception of you as a good person, that's a very obligatory way to live your life to be someone who gives a lot so they can have that perception when it's not authentic.

When you don't actually feel good giving, when you don't feel like a good person, you don't feel like that's who you genuinely are, that you're actually trying to give to compensate for that in some way.

And the last one, which kind of encompasses all of them is giving at your own emotional expense. When giving makes you feel depleted instead of generous, instead of filled up, instead of some sense of personal accomplishment for doing something that you genuinely want to do, it actually makes you feel emotionally depleted.

Now, this isn't to say that you might give something to someone that would make you feel physically depleted, like maybe you help them move, or you help them do something in their life like workout or something, I don't know, walk with them somewhere in a way, or help them take care of their kid that would make you feel physically depleted. That's not what I'm talking about.

I'm talking about emotionally depleted, like you're giving to someone and maybe they're not showing you appreciation, or maybe they aren't appreciative of what you're doing, and because you're not giving authentically, their response is really determining how you're going to feel emotionally.

And that's how these all go together is if you are doing something for someone because you want them to appreciate you, you want them to feel a certain way, you want them to respond in a certain way, that's what all of this emotional guilt, resentment, inauthenticity comes from. And so it will end up making you feel emotionally depleted when you do it, and that's one of the ways that you can tell whether you're giving from an authentic place or not.

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And I've heard a lot of clients say, "Well, I did this for this person and they didn't even thank me, and I did this other thing and they didn't even respond, they didn't do the same thing back, and I would never do what they do in their lives." So it's always kind of this tit-for-tat I'm doing this in order for them to appreciate me, to give me some attention, to acknowledge me, to give me some approval.

That can end up being emotionally depleting if the person doesn't respond the way that you want them to respond because that's why you're doing it, in order for them to give you something back, even though that isn't the spoken deal that you have with them.

And I think we are literally trained to do this. I think we are trained to give in a way that is inauthentic, that is an attempt to change the way we feel about ourselves, change the way the other person feels about us, or to perpetuate this idea that we're a good person even though the action isn't coming from an authentic place. It's an inauthentic play in order to create the pretense or the perception of "goodness."

So what is the downside to giving? I mean, besides the obvious emotional depletion is it creates inauthentic connections with people. It creates obligations and relationship debt and interferes with true connection if the person doesn't respond the way that they want you to respond.

And I will say that I have had a lot of instances where people have given things to me that I did not want, that I did not ask for, and then expected something back from me. And it's almost - I don't know what the right word is for it but it's almost like an unwilling debt, like someone's putting you in debt without your permission. They're running up the credit card that they gave you and they want you to pay the bill.

And I want you to really think about this in your own life if you're doing this to other people, or if you have people in your life who are doing it to me. So it's kind of like, I'm going to give you this attention, I'm going to give you this time, I'm going to give you this money, but I have an expectation that is

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unspoken that you will do the same. And I'm going to give you this, even if you don't want it, so then you will feel indebted to me.

That is a recipe for pretense and inauthenticity and lack of communication. So if you've been listening to this podcast for a while, you know that I feel very strongly about telling the truth. I feel very strongly about giving when it's authentic and doing things from my heart that are only coming from an authentic place and not doing any kind of people-pleasing or approval-seeking activities.

I'm not 100% with this. I catch myself people pleasing, I catch myself feeling resentment, I catch myself still falling into these old patterns. But most often I'll catch myself and pull myself out of it and tell the person the truth, and when I do, there's always a sense of vulnerability and connection that comes from that. The truth is I don't want to do this thing and here's why. I don't want to give you this time, I don't want to give you this attention, and here's why.

Okay, now let's switch to what is authentic giving. How do you know if you're giving from a very authentic place? And I think that people fear that if they don't give inauthentically, if they don't give from a sense of obligation, that they won't ever give anything to anyone because who would ever want to do that?

And the opposite is true, I promise. If you only give when it's authentic, I think you will find - I know I did for me - that I give so much more. Because I'm not adding any strings to it. I'm not adding any obligations to it.

So the first component of authentic giving is you give because you want to genuinely and you really like your reason. You give because you want to genuinely and you really like your reason. And how do you know whether you're giving genuinely or you're giving based on some kind of socialized expectation?

You will know because you can ask yourself this question. Would I give this to this person if I could do it anonymously? If they would have no idea it was me, would I still give this to them? This time, this attention, helping



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them move, helping them with their kids, giving them money, whatever it is, would I give even if it was anonymously is a great way of testing whether you're giving from an authentic place.

You have no expectation of a response or anything to be returned. The benefit to you is that it feels amazing in the giving. They don't have to be appreciative, they don't even have to acknowledge it, they don't even have to say thank you. That is not the point of the give. The point of the give is to stay in your own model with give in the action line and the result is your result for you.

You'll know that you're giving from an authentic place because, number three, it will align with who you truly want to be. This is who I really want to be, I want to be a person who helps people in this way, who gives attention in this way, who contributes in this way. It aligns with who I am.

Not with who I want people to perceive me as, not as some kind of manipulation of being a good person, but of who you truly want to be now, who you actually are. Every time you give authentically, it will feel amazing to you, so you won't need a response, you won't need a reaction.

One of the ways that I like to practice doing this with friends, family, I used to do it with my kids all the time was going through tollbooths and paying tolls and paying for the toll for the person behind us. We'll pay for us and we'll pay for the person behind us. It's just a little thing and by the way, I think you should always do this. It's very fun.

But not needing to turn around, not needing to see if they saw you, not waving to them, but just anonymously giving and notice how that feels to you. Giving a significant tip on a check and not waiting to see the server's response. Donating money anonymously and not needing to be acknowledged, not needing to be recognized for that.

I think that one of the qualities that I really do like and enjoy about myself is my authentic giving and my refusal to, when I'm aware of it, say no to inauthentic giving, even if someone wants me to give them something, even if it would be easy to give them something.



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One of the debates that we have, me and my friends, and I've talked about this a lot but it's the selfie debate that we have and it's taking selfies when it's authentic, and never taking them when it's not. And so what had happened to me one time is I had agreed to take selfies at an event that I was doing and there was this long line that was about two hours long where I was taking selfies.

And one of the things that I really didn't like about it was I was just taking these pictures and people were trying to talk to me. My clients were trying to talk to me about how my work had changed their lives and how impactful it was and how much they loved me and we're trying to get through this line so quickly that I couldn't be authentic with the people.

It was like, take a picture, bye, take a picture, bye. I couldn't really hear them, I couldn't really be present with them. And so even though everyone really wanted a selfie at this event, it was an inauthentic give. I gave those selfies because someone told me that I should and then I wanted them to perceive me in a certain way because I spent all this time giving selfies.

Well, I felt like it backfired because I wasn't able to be present. I wasn't able to connect. I wasn't able to be there for their stories. And so I said, "I'm never going to do that again. I'm never going to sign up to do those types of things when they're inauthentic."

And there are times now where someone's like, "Hey, can I grab a selfie?" And I'm like, "Yeah." That feels good, that feels great the couple times I've done it, and then if I'm at an event, then sometimes a line starts to form because they saw me take a picture, one selfie, and then that sense of guilt or obligation to do more because I gave one to one person so I have to be fair, and just saying, "No, that was the only one I'm going to do today," and walk away because that was the only one that I felt like I could be truly authentic with and feel proud about that decision and let people be upset if I don't want to do an inauthentic give.

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I don't want to show up for something or give attention or time or energy or money to things that aren't truly what I want to be doing. And I'm willing to deal with any kind of backlash around that.

So what about you? What are the things that you really truly love giving? You would do if you could do it anonymously and no one would know about it. I mean, there are so many things that I want to do anonymously for my family. I want to pay off their mortgages and I want to help pay off their cars and it's just almost impossible to do that anonymously and I can't send the money because they would know it was me.

So I actually go through a lot of very elaborate thinking around how I can give to people anonymously because I think we're so conditioned to feel indebted to someone who's given us something, and I don't want anyone to ever feel indebted to me. That's why I never lend money. I always just give it and I only give it when it's authentic and true and I can feel great about it, and I don't need a certain response, and I don't need a certain level of appreciation, and I don't need someone to treat me any differently because of something that I was super generous around.

And I want to know for you, I want you to know for you, where do you give and where does it feel the best? And be careful to see in your relationships where maybe you give and it feels the best because the person is so appreciative, the person does thank you so much, the person does feel indebted to you.

That's a different kind of inauthentic giving that is relying on getting something back. And I want to offer that the best kind of giving doesn't feel good because of how they respond. It feels good because you're doing it.

So maybe explore that this week. Give in anonymous ways, give in ways where you don't expect anything back. You may get something back and you may get a lot of appreciation, but find those things that you would give, even if you didn't get those things back. Because if you're giving because someone is appreciative, you're giving for the response. Not from an authentic emotion fill up from the actual give.

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Alright, I hope this was helpful for you all. This is a really important concept in my own life and it's not just because I have a lot of abundance financially. It's because I have a lot of abundance in terms of time, energy, words, and that I really love the feeling of being a giver from that authentic place.

Alright my friends, have a beautiful week. I'll talk to you next week. Bye-bye.

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