

Ep #506: Sturdy Self Love



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Brooke Castillo

Ep #506: Sturdy Self Love

You are listening to *The Life Coach School Podcast* with Brooke Castillo episode 506.

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.

Hey gorgeous friends. I just woke up early this morning and came out to my desk to record this for you all. I'm literally still in my robe. My hair is a hot mess, I have my glasses on, this is truly raw podcast recording. Maybe that's why I don't do it on video.

But I felt compelled to come out here today and record this because of all the coaching I've been doing lately and where everyone seems to be at with themselves. And I have done a lot over the years, I have done a lot of episodes on love, unconditional love, self-love, worthiness, self-appreciation, all of these topics.

And I know that so many of you have changed your life because of the teachings that I have in there because you've told me and you've told me that it never even occurred to you that it was something you needed to focus on.

And many of you told me that you've never considered spending time loving yourself because it seemed selfish, and it seemed like something that would take away from other people, and that you learned that the opposite is true. The more you love yourself and really pay attention to your own desires and your own care, the more available, the more impact you can have, the more contribution you can make to other people.

And so I just wanted to record this as a little reminder about what self-love is and how you can implement it faster. If you are really struggling with this, go do a search on my website, on the podcast page, there's a way you can search and search for self-love. And just put in the queue all of those other episodes as well.

Ep #506: Sturdy Self Love

This will just be kind of a refresher and a reminder of putting this at the forefront of your work, of your practice, of your self-coaching practice, of your mental work with yourself.

So first, let's talk about what self-love is and what it isn't. I think a lot of times people think self-love is like romancing yourself. And let's think about it in terms of a relationship. There is the courting that happens, the romance, the fluff of relationships where there's a lot of production, especially in the beginning.

There's a lot of performative action to delight the other person into feeling great about the relationship, feeling great about you. And there's nothing wrong with that. That's a beautiful thing. I love that. I love romance. And I encourage you to do that with yourself often.

I always talk about flirting with yourself in the mirror. I think you should always give yourself a little wink in the mirror, just as a little flirtatious thing that you do with yourself to let you know that I see you, I got you.

But that's not what I'm talking about here. I'm talking about more of a fierce love, more of a really sturdy, ongoing, "I am your person" love. And when a relationship gets to that point, there may be less romance, maybe not, but what's there is much more of this sturdy, ongoing, consistent, committed, supportive love. And that's the kind of love that I'm talking about having within your relationship with yourself.

Now, for those of you who are new to my work, and for those of you who just need a reminder, your relationship with yourself has three main parts. There's your relationship with you in the past, there's your relationship with you in the present, and there's the relationship with you in the future.

And these relationships take on different forms of action and communication and thoughts. And so I like to think of them kind of in these separate categories so when you go to evaluate your self-love with

Ep #506: Sturdy Self Love

yourself, your relationship with yourself, you can see kind of how you're doing.

So let's start with your relationship with your past self. Your past self includes your past in your childhood, your past in your teenage years, your past in your 20s, your 30s, depending on how old you are, your 40s, your 50s, it's your relationship with yourself yesterday, it's your relationship with yourself five minutes ago.

And many of us, when we look at and evaluate our relationship with our past self, it is not loving. It is actually very mean. It's actually very dismissive. It's actually very critical, or even indifferent. And it is amazing how often I'll work with a client who avoids their past self, who avoids that relationship with themselves.

And if you think about being in a relationship with another person, if you're avoiding them, which means you basically have blocked them, you're not responding to them, you're not listening to them, you're not healing with them, there's going to be no growth there.

And a lot of times, when we think about our past self, we don't think about that being an opportunity for growth, for development, for cultivation. We just see that as something that's over and done with and thank goodness and we're filled with regret and blame and guilt. And we don't realize that our relationship with our past self is going to create our present emotional state with ourselves.

So we can't hate on our past self and then love our present self because as we all know, time doesn't actually really exist. So you can only have a thought, you can only have a feeling in this moment, even if it's with your past self.

So we use the construct of time in order to evaluate these relationships but know that everything is happening in this moment. So you can't disparage

Ep #506: Sturdy Self Love

your past self and try to be really loving with your present self. It just doesn't work.

So the first thing we need to do is really - and we can start with our most immediate past. How are you feeling about something you did yesterday? How are you feeling about something you did 20 minutes ago? How are you feeling about your immediate past self? How are you thinking about yourself in those thoughts about your past?

And one of the things that I've really cultivated within myself is a sturdiness, is a seriousness when it comes to having my own back. Because to me, that is the purest form of self-love for me is having someone that is there consistently. And I think it's because I have always been the one that's there for me, and I can't always say that about the other people in my life and when I was growing up and those sort of things.

I always had me and a lot of the people that I thought had me too didn't. And so I want to make sure that if there are people in my life or people in the world that don't have my best interest, who don't care about me, who don't care about my success, who don't have positive things to say or don't want to be a positive force in the world, that I have my back when it comes to those people, and I have my back when it comes to myself being one of those people.

So if you know about the human brain, which you do because you listen to this podcast, you know that the human brain loves to criticize and find fault and scare the crap out of you. And you have to be committed to kind of counteracting that with an argument for peace and for love and for worthiness and for support and for compassion.

And when you start beating yourself up for something that you did in the past, it is your responsibility to stop the fight. And when someone else is maybe beating you up for something, or someone else is having thoughts, or a family member is having an emotional reaction to you or something

Ep #506: Sturdy Self Love

you've done in the past, it is your responsibility to yourself to love yourself through that process.

And when you love yourself through that process, you will be able to put love back into the world. You do not want to match your own criticism with more criticism. I've seen this happen a lot where you recognize yourself criticizing yourself in the past, and then you criticize yourself for criticizing yourself. It doesn't work, my friends.

So understanding our relationship with ourselves in the past and noticing anywhere where you are being anything other than loving is an opportunity for you to heal. I think a lot of times when we talk about healing our past traumas, a lot of us think that means going and talking to perpetrators, going and talking to people who are being unkind, going and talking to people who we think are hurting us. That is not what is absolutely necessary, and it's definitely not the first step.

The first step is to look at your self-relationship. Your relationship with yourself in the past, and see where are you the one who isn't loving? Where are you the one who isn't being kind to you? Where are you the one that isn't being forgiving and generating feelings of worthiness for you? That is your work in loving yourself in the past.

Then we can shift our attention to the present. Now again, as I said before, everything really only is in the present. The thoughts that we have about our past and about our future are being experienced here in the present. But when we start looking at our relationship with ourselves in this moment, we can find a very powerful source of emotion. And we can generate that for ourselves in this moment.

If we wake up in the morning and we generate for ourselves, as a gift to ourselves, positive thoughts about ourselves and positive emotions for ourselves, we are going to vibrate on a much higher emotional level throughout the day. And when we're vibrating on that emotional level, it's

Ep #506: Sturdy Self Love

easier to be kind to ourselves. It's easier to be loving, it's easier to be compassionate to our past and future selves too.

So a lot of times, someone will come on a coaching call with me and they will just start unloading all of their negative thoughts. And this is a beautiful thing. This is what coaching is for. This is exactly what they should be doing on a coaching call.

But what happens is as they're talking about all these negative thoughts, they don't even realize that they're optional. They don't even realize that these negative thoughts are going on in their brain without their permission.

So one of the things I do in coaching is I help them become conscious of those negative thoughts, negative judgments against themselves, negative criticisms, and you would not believe some of the things we can think about our own selves. Things we would never think about other people that we end up thinking about ourselves. And not even being aware of the negative impact this is having on us.

And it is relatively easy to come up with thoughts that are positive and that you believe. And this is a huge difference, and I want to make sure we understand this difference between this idea of just affirmations for the sake of affirmations, or this toxic positivity where we're pretending to be positive but we aren't actually being positive. That's not what I'm talking about here.

I'm talking about finding thoughts that are true that you do believe. And this is something that coaching really helps with because I can help my clients reach for a space where there is something that's real. "I have done good things in my life," that's true. I have done good things in my life.

Now, the brain may want to argue with that, but it's a difficult thing to argue with because you're not saying, "I've only done good things in my life." You're just saying, "I have done good things in my life." It's an anchoring

Ep #506: Sturdy Self Love

thought that you can think on purpose and live into that will generate feelings of compassion and pride and worthiness and awesomeness.

“There are many things that I am good at. I have been kind. I can be kind. I have the capability to be kind to myself and to others.” See how these thoughts are true, they’re believable, they’re not pie-in-the-sky, fantasy silliness. They’re grounding, they’re sturdy.

One of the thoughts that I use all the time is, “I love myself no matter what.” That is the gift I give to myself and to my creator, to the force that created me. That is my gift because my life is the gift that was given to me and I will cherish that life, which is me, which is myself. I didn’t create myself but I will love myself fiercely because of that.

And when I think that, “I love myself no matter what,” I feel strong and capable and compassionate and loving. And that is a statement that I can make to myself as a declaration. So when you’re looking at your present life, what are you thinking about yourself?

One of the questions that I ask clients a lot of the time is what is your relationship like with yourself? How do you feel about you? And really, I would say about half the time, people say, “Not good. My relationship with myself is not good.”

And what’s amazing about that is that our relationship with ourselves is one of the only things that we have 100% control over. We can love ourselves no matter what, no matter what anyone else does, no matter what’s happening in the world, no matter what anyone else says, no matter anything that we’ve ever done, no matter anything we’ve ever said, any mistake we’ve ever made, any transgression we’ve ever had with another person, we can still choose to love ourselves and them fiercely. And no one can take that away from us.

Ep #506: Sturdy Self Love

We can't make other people love us. We can't make relationships work if the other person doesn't want to. But we can make that choice for ourselves. We can make our relationship with ourself work.

So when we're beating up on ourselves, either in the past or in the present, we are doing the opposite of what self-love would do. So we can ask ourselves when we're taking action when it has to do with ourselves is, "What would love do in this situation? What would self-love do in this situation?"

And then our relationship with our future self I think is one of the most important relationships in the expression of self-love. I've said this before but I think it's really important to remember that when I try and teach discipline, when I try and teach the concept of honoring your word to yourself, which is the highest form of discipline, it's deciding with that highest form of your brain what you want for your life, and then committing to doing it, and then doing it is I think the highest form of self-love we have for our future self.

Because when you cultivate that relationship with your future self, which is, for example, I am going to eat healthy food for my body and this is what I'm actually going to eat, and then we eat that healthy food, we are paying it forward for our future self. Our future self gets the benefit of that.

Now, notice how that becomes compounding because as my future self, I can look back to my past self and give her a little wink like, "Hey, thanks for the hookup. Thanks for taking care of me. Thanks for eating healthy because now I'm experiencing that benefit." Now, all of a sudden, my relationship with my present self and my past self has gotten stronger and better and more committed.

My relationship with my future self is now better because I want to hook her up again. I want to take care of her again. I want to make a bunch of money for her. I want to treat people well. I want to develop good relationships for

Ep #506: Sturdy Self Love

her. I want to set her up in this wonderful life that I have the power to create for her.

And then when I am in that future place, then I can look back at my now past self and have so much love and compassion. I think about my past self and I just love her. I love how hard she's worked, I love how much she's created, I love how much time she spent thinking about all of her clients and all of the value that she can create because now, when I get on a coaching call and someone says to me, "Oh my gosh, you've changed my life so much," I know it's my past self and the work that I've done that has created that present moment opportunity for me to be in gratitude with my own client.

So the healing work of the past, the present work of mental and emotional strength and consciousness and practice to keep the mind in a positive focus, to keep the emotions as positive as possible, to make sure we process any negative emotion and pay attention to that, not be afraid of negative emotion in the present is what's going to help us create the future.

By setting big goals in the present for our future self and honoring our calendars that we set from that highest part of our brain, we are developing very steady, sturdy self-love for our future self.

I know that I can count on myself to take care of myself. I know that in the future, I will now be my past self. That relationship is ongoing. And I want to be the best possible past self I can be for my future self, and I do that in the present moment with planning, with considering her.

I mean, I think about my future self like I think about my kids. That unconditional love. I want to do everything I can to make sure that she's okay, that she's better than okay, that she's awesome.

So let me give you just a quick exercise that you can do is sit down, get three pieces of paper, past, present, future, and ask yourself the question,

Ep #506: Sturdy Self Love

how can I love my past self more? How can I love my present self more?
And how can I love my future self more?

And one of the important distinctions that I have really clarified with myself recently is that there is this thing that happens with your present self that may feel like you're loving her that's actually buffering and seeking pleasure that ruins your relationship with your future self.

And this is why overeating or overdrinking, for example, perfect examples, I may feel like I'm loving my present self by drinking seven drinks at a bar, having so much fun with my friends, drinking, doing shots, whatever craziness y'all are doing.

If we do that, it may feel like love in the present moment, but if it's not love for all three components of ourselves, it's not self-love. If it doesn't honor our past self, our present self, and our future self, we can't call that self-love. It has to be a net-net-net positive.

So when you're thinking about those actions that you're taking in the present, you want to always consider how will this affect my past self, my future self, and my present self? That's the full sturdiness of self-love.

And having your past self's back and having your future self's back in the present, meaning you always have her back no matter what, it's kind of like with your kids. They can make mistakes, they can do things wrong, but you always have their back. You always help them learn, and you're always loving on them. That is what we're asking for us to do to ourselves so we have that same benefit of our own immeasurable love that's more powerful than any kind of ass-beating you could give yourself.

A lot of you think you need to beat yourselves up in order to get what you want. That is not sustainable. You can love yourself so fiercely, so hard that you don't allow yourself to do things in the present that would injure your future self. You don't allow yourself to do things in the present that would criticize or throw under the bus your past self.

Ep #506: Sturdy Self Love

You stand up tall right now in this present moment with honoring all those components of yourself, and that is a choice you can start making right now. It doesn't matter if you've always been mean to yourself, if you've always let yourself down, if you've always been critical, if you've always questioned your self-worth.

You can start right now in this moment, say, "Okay, from now on, I've got your back, girl. I got you. I will love you no matter what. I will practice unconditional love with you. I will practice loving you." And the strategic byproduct of that, my friends, is you will get better at loving.

If you can love yourself, past, present, and future hard and sturdy and meaningful, you will have so much more love to give to everybody else in your life, which is what the world needs more of. You can't get good at loving if you don't practice loving.

Practice thinking loving thoughts, practice feeling loving feelings, and practice doing loving things to yourself first, and then spread that out to the world. We need more love, my friends. Start with you. Have a gorgeous week everyone. Talk to you later. Bye.

Hey, if you've ever wanted to work with me as your coach, now is the time to do it. You can join me in Get Coached in Scholars by going to TheLifeCoachSchool.com/join. This is going to be the best year ever. It's your turn to change your life. Let's go.