

Ep #525: Say vs. Hear



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Brooke Castillo

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You are listening to *The Life Coach School Podcast* with Brooke Castillo episode number 525.

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, beautiful friends. How is everyone? I'm truly amazing. I love, love, love this time of year. As I'm recording this, I am hanging out with one of my best girlfriends at her house. And we have been playing pickleball and talking incessantly and going out to beautiful dinners and taking walks. The weather is gorgeous. Life is amazing. I'm also so hyped up on my son and golf and watching him golf and how he's playing. And so, I don't know, life just feels sweet and amazing.

And I wanted to share a concept that I recently used in discussing golf with my son. And throughout the years, you all have seen a lot of the tools I've created, a lot of the concepts I've created, the models I've created, have come from my own personal work and coaching that I've done with clients and also with my kids. And this one is just so powerful, I feel like golf is such a metaphor. It's such a life metaphor. And you'll see so much of that with people who play golf and will talk about how it's just like life.

And recently, we were at a golf tournament, and Christian, it was a five-day golf tournament. And so much of golf is mental, and how you show up to every single shot, to hit every single shot, and how you show up with the people that you're playing with, and how you show up for yourself.

And so, I've watched a lot of golf, and I've watched my son play a lot of golf. And I know his mannerisms and I know what he's thinking by the way he holds his head, by the way he demonstrates it physically.

And one of the things that I had been noticing that he had been doing on the course was when he would get on the green and he would miss a putt, he would put his head down and put his hand on his forehead and shake

Ep #525: Say vs. Hear

his head at himself and just kind of express this level of disappointment, sometimes disgust, sometimes anger on the putting green as he was taking these putts, and especially, of course, when he misses these putts.

And so, I can see how when he misses a putt, he has this physical, mental, obviously emotional reaction to having missed the putt, and then I watch how this affects his game hole after hole after hole. I also notice the opposite, right?

So I notice when he makes a lot of putts, or he's hitting the ball straight and doing a really good job with his irons, he has a very different response physically, which comes from his mentality, right? So the way that he's thinking, the way that he's feeling is affecting his actions on the course.

And I see this so much in all of us in our lives. How we interpret circumstances in our lives, how we interpret our own results in our lives will then determine our next model. Will then determine how we think about the next thing, how we feel about the next thing, and what we do when it comes to the next thing.

And so, I wanted to have a conversation with him, because he had just finished golfing and he was going to go out the next day and golf again. And I wanted to talk to him about how I had noticed this, and how I had noticed the effect this was having on his game. And we've talked about it before, but I wanted to ask him some questions in a different way and see if I could have him hear it in a different way.

And so, what I said to him is, if you were on that putting green, and you were making a putt, and your coach, the best coach you can imagine, was standing there helping you, what would he say to you when you miss a putt? How would he react to you if you missed a putt? And he was thinking about it for a while, and he's like, oh, mom, you kind of put me on the spot. I don't know, I'll have to kind of think about it.

And I said, well, let me ask you this. Do you think he'd be shaking his head at you, and putting his head in his hands, and just looking at you with

Ep #525: Say vs. Hear

disappointment? And he was like, no, that would definitely not be helpful. It's already hard, that would make it worse.

And I said, right. I said, so I want you to know, when you are on that green with yourself, you are your own coach. And so, when you're missing a putt and you are shaking your head at yourself and being disgusted with yourself and being outwardly disappointed in yourself, there's two components of what's going on for you.

One of the components is what you feel like saying to yourself, which is obviously like, I'm disgusted, or I'm disappointed, or that sucked, or what is wrong with you, or get it together. Why can't you make a putt? Right? This kind of negative rhetoric. And it's what we want to say. It's what we feel like saying to ourselves.

I have this same experience playing pickleball. I notice that I want to get mad when I miss a shot, or when my partner misses a shot. And I want to indulge in frustration, and in disgust, and in disappointment in that moment, right? And that's what we are wanting to say to other people, to ourselves, when we're coaching ourselves, right? And that's the knee-jerk trigger reaction that we have from not doing well, not getting the result that we want.

And of course, this applies to anything in life. This applies to anything that we're trying to accomplish, anything that we're attempting to be excellent at. And it's not the best idea, in my opinion. It's not the most useful thing to do, is to allow ourselves to indulge in saying that.

Now, if we didn't have to also hear it from ourselves, and be the receiver of that information, and experience the effect of that, it might be okay because it might just be a venting thing that we're doing, and that might be fine, and we could just vent our own frustration. But what I thought Christian was missing is that he was also at the effect of that disappointment. He was also the one on the receiving end of hearing it.

And I knew that it probably, if someone's expressing disappointment, and disgust, and frustration at you, it probably causes feelings and

Ep #525: Say vs. Hear

interpretations of shame, of sadness, of inadequacy, insecurity, right? And we don't even realize that in expressing our own disgust with ourselves, we're also receiving that from ourselves. Those thoughts are also going to land in our own brain, and we are going to hear, feel, and then act them out.

And so I had a conversation with him about this, and I said, what do you think about this idea of consciously deciding what you're going to say to yourself when you miss a putt? Consciously deciding something that might be very useful, might be very helpful in that moment to help you in that situation, instead of discourage you in that situation.

And what he said to me was like, it's so interesting that you're saying this to me, because there's a guy that I played with, I played golf with a couple months ago. And as I was watching him play golf, I noticed that he reacted the exact same to every single shot. So if he hit it in the water, or if he made a hole in one, he had the exact same effect, the same energy around his body, and his stance, and how he showed up. And he didn't let those negative shots, the bad shots, affect him in a negative way.

And I said, I think that's the key, right? Because your physiology when you're golfing is so intricate. Like how you hold your body, swing the club, focus your attention, read the greens, all of it is such a mental aspect. And if you're feeling tense, tight, disappointed, insecure, worried, hesitant, that's definitely going to affect how you show up and hit the ball.

So for you, I want you to imagine how this would apply to your life. How would this apply to how you show up to do whatever it is you're wanting to do in your life. Whether it's to be an amazing employee, be an amazing parent, be an amazing business woman, trying to accomplish something in a sport that you're trying to play. Are you talking to yourself in a way that feels warranted, but not realizing that you're also at the effect of the way that you talk to yourself?

So one of the things that I think would be really powerful for all of us to do, like for Christian, is to write down what you say to yourself when you miss a

Ep #525: Say vs. Hear

putt now, and write down what you would like to say and hear when you miss a putt.

For some of you, for maybe some of my life coaching students, when you are on a sales call and the sales call doesn't go well, and you get off the call and you haven't made the sale, what is it you need to hear from yourself? And what is it that you're actually saying to yourself? And are you doing that in a conscious way? Are you giving yourself encouragement, love, motivation? What is it you need to hear in that moment?

One of the things that is so challenging about life is that we want other people to behave in certain ways that make our lives easier. We want other people to be supportive and encouraging and nice and kind and lovely to us. And yet we can't control them and we can't control how they react and what they say to us.

But what we can do, and we most often don't do, is control our own rhetoric, our own communication, our own opportunity to say things to ourselves that we actually want and need to hear. And I think that this is one of the secrets to living a conscious life, is to really sit down and ask yourself what your needs are. What do you need to hear? What do you need to say in order to get to that next level of your own life?

Now, this is a process. This is something that will take some effort to do. And the best type of effort that it will take is an increase in your own awareness and an increase in your own consciousness. I noticed this just yesterday. I was out on the pickleball court and I noticed that my partner was struggling to keep the ball in play and to, you know, just making silly mistakes.

And I noticed myself physically getting tense and getting frustrated and getting mad about how our team was doing, right? And what I was saying in my head to him in my brain was causing me distress, was causing me frustration, was causing me not to play as well because I was in a place of low performance when I'm thinking in such a negative way, right?

Ep #525: Say vs. Hear

And so it's not even just what I'm saying to myself, it's what I'm saying to other people in my own brain that affects me in a negative way. I still have to hear myself saying it. And this was a profound realization to me.

And it made me think about if you're sitting in a room and let's say there's three people sitting in the room and one of the people in the room that isn't you is talking to the other person in a really negative way. And they're saying really negative kind of mean things to them. And you're there being the witness. You're there experiencing it because you're in the room even though they're not speaking to you, that's going to have an impact on you, right?

That's going to have thoughts that are going to be triggered in your own brain based on what that person is saying. And it's going to affect you. That's what it's like for you and you when you're judging somebody else. You're having to hear your own negativity, your own blame in your own head.

And I was thinking about this and like understanding and analyzing it. And still it was so tempting for me to judge and to vent and to blame. It was such a powerful inclination that I had. It was like I was outside of my own body watching this happen, watching myself want to indulge in such negativity and feeling the pull of that.

And it really helps me to watch myself do this. So then when I see other people being super negative towards me, towards other people, towards themselves, I get it. It's like this powerful surge of energy towards negativity is oftentimes the most easiest indulgent thing for us to do.

And to curtail that, to stop that, to redirect that is the highest energy thing. It requires us to expend the most amount of energy to direct our thoughts, to become conscious, to stay aware, to be aware, to make an effort, to be kind and constructive and useful in that moment. This was all like in a split second after one pickleball shot, right?

In the grand scheme of things, a putt on a green and a shot on a pickleball court don't matter at all, right? They really don't in the big scheme of things.

Ep #525: Say vs. Hear

But if we can use those moments as opportunities to use the highest level of our brain, the highest part of our capability in terms of our intellect and our self-control in those tiny moments, it will increase the total quality and consciousness of our entire lives.

And so whether you're using a sport like golf or a sport like pickleball or a business, managing employees is another great example. You have an employee that makes a mistake that costs you a lot of money, for example. And the initial reaction that you may want to have is to vent to that employee and be like, what in the actual hell are you doing? How did you miss this? I need you to not do anything like this.

First of all, venting to an employee like that who realizes that they've made a mistake is not useful at all. It's not constructive. But also you have to experience the effect of that within your own self as the own witness of watching your own behavior.

And not only that, you have let your primitive brain, you've let the part of your brain that's indulgent, that has urges, that is triggered to control you. And when you can get that under control and you can manage that in a way that allows you to have a knee-jerk reaction and not act it out, there is a sense of power, internal power that you have. And the benefit that you get from being a person who acts in a way that is more constructive is extraordinary.

And the reason why I say this is very difficult is because I know for all of my clients, and for me as well, that those knee-jerk reactions, those indulgences are patterned in our brain. They are the path of least resistance. They are the easiest thing for us to do. And so if we're not paying attention and we're not being conscious, which sometimes just seems like too much labor to do that, to stay awake, to pay attention, to not give in, to not throw a fit, right?

That's our emotional maturity as adults. Like we have the responsibility and the opportunity to really manage the person that we most want to be. And

Ep #525: Say vs. Hear

the more we practice it, the better we get at showing up being who we want to be.

It doesn't mean we won't make mistakes and that we won't overindulge, but so many times we'll be out on that golf course and my son is playing with young men who are in their 20s mostly, and the amount of energy that many of them put into throwing fits when they miss golf shots is fascinating to watch.

And to watch them throw their clubs and break their clubs and yell at themselves and swear and freak out is very interesting. And Christian doesn't do that. I've told him so many times, like if I ever see you break a club or act out like that, like that's just not representing who you want to be as a person. Like you need to be able to control your emotions. But not only that, it affects your game in such a negative way.

And this is both regulating your emotions in positivity and in negativity. So for example, Christian was playing against, he was playing a match play against another player and they had tied it up towards the end. They had tied it up. The opponent that Christian was playing against made this very long putt and afterwards he's like, yes, let's go. Like just really like celebrating in a like, ah, kind of way.

And it was really interesting because I was like, oh, I wonder if that's what he needed to hear in order to play well on the next hole and knowing how you need to show up for yourself. But it was really interesting because I was with someone who knew this boy that Christian was playing with. And, you know, he basically said to me, he's like, no, he's getting overstimulated by this and he's probably going to have a hard time on the next hole. He knew what kind of player it was. And that's exactly what had happened.

And so it comes down to just really knowing who you are, who you are and what you need and what you need to hear. And you have to be careful because sometimes you think what you need to hear is aggressive negativity in order to get yourself to do something. And I just want to offer

Ep #525: Say vs. Hear

that nine times out of 10 when I work with a client or with myself, that is not the most effective, sustainable way to treat yourself or to treat other people.

You may get short term results by screaming at someone, you know, behind a counter somewhere. But have you been the person that you want to be to yourself, to the people around you, to the people you're showing up to? And if the answer is yes, then you're living a conscious life. And that is the distinguishing thing.

And so I think a lot of times we just want to know that the way that we talk to ourselves will be the most useful for our own lives. And we need to remember that just because we want to yell at ourselves, just because we want to scream at ourselves, just because we want to be pissed at ourselves, that indulging in that there are repercussions because we are the person at the effect of that as the yeller and screamer and negativity giver and blamer, and also as the person receiving that disdain from our own selves.

It is the biggest negative impacting thing that we can do to ourselves, is to not have our own backs and beat the crap out of ourselves and to express loathing to our own selves and think that there is no impact. There is a huge impact. And that type of indulging can pick away at your self-esteem and at your security and at your sense of well-being so much faster than anything else that you are doing that you may not even be aware of.

So make a list of the things that you want to hear from yourself. And if that's difficult for you, say what would you want to hear from your parents? What would you want to hear from your spouse? What would you want to hear from your best friend, your coach?

I've had a lot of people come to me and they say, you know, I like being coached by you because you say so many positive things to me. And that's why I come, because I know you believe in me and I know that you'll encourage me and I know that you'll help me look at my own brain.

And I'm like, yes, of course, that's why you come to me. But also you can do that for yourself. You can be that best coach. You can be that best

Ep #525: Say vs. Hear

person towards yourself. You can pay attention to not just what you hear, but what you say to yourself and what you want to say to yourself.

I was doing a call the other day with one of my groups in Scholars, and I was sharing a lot of the things that I say to myself on a regular basis and when I look in the mirror and when I'm going through challenging times. And as I was saying all these things out loud, people were like, oh my God, that would be so amazing to hear from myself all the time.

Like, you're awesome. You're amazing. No matter what, you make this world better. The world is better because you're in it. You're here to do amazing things. You're not perfect, nor do you need to be perfect. You're going to show up 50-50, and that's beautiful. There's nothing wrong with you. You are worthy. You're amazing, right?

Just on and on and on and on. As Abraham would say, it's just like a rampage of appreciation for yourself. And if you feel awkward giving yourself those types of accolades, I want you to really discover why. Do you feel like you don't deserve it, especially when you're not performing at the highest level? Do you feel like if you're too kind to yourself that you won't work harder, you won't show up, you won't stick to your plan?

I have personally found that the opposite is true. I have personally found that when you show up in the kindest, most supportive way for yourself, you will respond. And for me, it's a very different tone of voice. It's not like, it's okay, go lay down and rest. It's more like, it's okay, you got this, let's keep going. For me, that's the type of encouragement I need and the energy that I need.

And I think Christian would agree. Like, he doesn't want to miss a putt and just be like, that's all right, no big deal. He's not going to want to hear that, like this indifference. But if he's like, hey, listen, the reason you missed that putt is because you were just slightly aimed right, or you just didn't read the green right, or this is what you could do next time. It's very constructive and helpful.

Ep #525: Say vs. Hear

And yeah, we're acknowledging that it wasn't the result that we wanted. And we're also encouraging, hey, this doesn't mean that the next shot isn't going to be amazing.

How you talk to yourselves is how you listen to yourselves. You need to make sure that you're not indulging in a bunch of negative nonsense, especially if you're not aware of it. Repeating messages that you're just used to hearing all the time is the most detrimental thing you can do.

So make a list. Sit down, make a list of all the things you want to hear, and then practice those things to yourself, even if it feels awkward. And in the moments that you want to be negative, see if you can find a pause, see if you can find some consciousness and prevent yourself from going off on yourself. I promise you, it'll change your life.

All right, my friends, have a beautiful month, and I'll talk to you next month. Take care, bye.