

TRANSCRIPT OF EPISODE 24: “WHEN THINGS GO WRONG”

Hello, podcast universe! Welcome to Episode 24 of the 100% Awesome Podcast. I am April Price and I'm so happy to be here sharing the podcast universe with you. I just got back from a quick trip to Dallas where I got to go to The Life Coach School Modelthon, which is like a whole day, hours and hours of running models and seeing how our thoughts are always the problem and always the solution in our lives.

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It was just so amazing for me to be there to see Brooke Castillo coaching and I just feel so lucky to have been exposed to this work and to have such incredible teachers. Their contribution to my life has been incalculable and I am so grateful that regardless of self-doubt or fear or insecurity or whatever they had to personally work through to put their work out into the world, I'm so grateful that they did it so that I can have a better life and I can see what's possible in my own life.

I know you already know this but there was a time in my life when I just felt so hopeless about who I was and the way I was showing up in my life and I just wasn't the person that I wanted to be. And my coaches changed all of that for me by showing me how it was only my thought keeping me stuck and unchanged and I want you to know that coaching can do the same thing for you. It really can and if you sign up for a free coaching session, I'll show you exactly how.

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So today on the podcast I want to talk to you about how to move forward in your life and find peace when things don't go as planned, when things don't go the way they're supposed to and your life doesn't turn out the way you thought it was going to.

So tonight at dinner I was kind of talking to my family about this and what I was going to teach and my daughter asked me what it was gonna be about and I told her, "It's about what to do when things don't go the way they're supposed to." And her eyes kind of like filled with tears and she said, "Oh that'll be good," because right now her life doesn't look the way she thought it was supposed to. She's supposed to be in China and she's here with us. She's supposed to be teaching English to cute little Chinese children and instead she's here applying to cook fast food at the Sonic drive through, right? Things are not the way they're supposed to be.

And really this is probably the case for all of us. We all have an idea of how our life is supposed to go. We all have thoughts and expectations about our life and our kids' life and the way that it was going to go. And because it's our plan and because it's our idea of how things are supposed to go, we also think that it's the right plan and that's the way things are supposed to be.

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And then as life starts to unfold nothing goes according to plan. There are illnesses and death there's job loss and tragedies. Our kids get sick, or they have learning disabilities, or mental illness, or birth defects, or they get deported from China. Our marriages are painful or hard or abusive or cold or just not what we expected them to be. There's infertility and infidelity and insufficient funds, right? There are natural disasters and there are natural consequences and all of these things.

There are just a million ways that things can go wrong and do go wrong. Which is fine except that we are very committed to the right way, to the right plan, and any deviation from the right plan or the way things are supposed to go makes us feel as though something has gone wrong. So, there are a million things that could go wrong and do go wrong. And yet the real problem is that we think things should never go wrong.

The problem with this of course is that not only do you have the pain of the trial itself the disappointment of the thing itself, but you also have the additional frustration of thinking it's not supposed to be that way. So, for example, my daughter, of course, was so sad to leave China. This is disappointing and sad and heartbreaking for her. But when she thinks it shouldn't be that way, on top of that sadness she also has some anger and frustration.

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And this is the same for all of us when we think this isn't the way it's supposed to go. In a sense we double our pain. Not only do we have negative emotion about the thing that has happened, we also have some anger and frustration and resentment that it's not going the way that it's supposed to. When life doesn't go the way, it's supposed to then we think that one of two things has happened:

1. Either we're wrong and we've screwed up and we've messed up the plan in irreparable ways and now we can't have the life we want.
2. Or the universe is wrong, and we are the victims of the whims of God or fate or the universe of the world and we can't have the life we want.

Do you see? We make it mean that it's either our fault or it's God's fault and either way now we can't have the life we want. And the story that we spend so much energy defending is it's not supposed to be this way. Either I screwed up or I got screwed, but it wasn't supposed to be this way. We spend enormous amounts of energy trying to get back to the original plan and trying to figure out where everything went wrong and then feeling hopelessly flawed or unavoidably cursed.

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So, watching my daughter deal with her own sadness and wrestle with the idea that it shouldn't have happened this way reminded me of another time in our life. So, a number of years ago when our kids were little, we decided to take them on a ski trip for Christmas. And our kids up to this point had not done a lot of skiing. In fact, I think the only place they'd ever been skiing was in Michigan which cannot be considered real mountain skiing. Anyway, so this Christmas we went to Park City, Utah and the mountain that we were skiing on was very, very large.

And at the ski resort that we were at, all the green easy trails were at the top of the mountain and so you would get on this tram at the bottom and it would take you to the top of the mountain where they would let you off and you could ski on all these green ski runs. So we get on the tram, we get up to the top of the mountain, we get our kids on their skis, and we teach them how to make a pizza with their skis to slow down and how to put their skis straight like French fries to go fast. And we skied together for a couple of hours.

Well, about lunchtime is started to snow really hard. And it started to snow so hard that we couldn't really see very far in front of us and the kids were frozen. It was Christmas Eve. So, we decided, "Okay, we'll just call it a day." And to get back down the mountain, you have to get back on the tram. Well, we looked at the line for the tram and it was huge, right? Everyone else was getting off the mountain too, because

the snow was just coming down. And we didn't want to wait an hour in line just to ride the tram to the bottom and we'd already paid for ski passes until the end of the day, so we decided, "Hey, let's just ski to the bottom right. We don't need to wait for the tram we can just ski to the bottom."

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Now I know you already know it's going to happen, right? I had never been on this mountain before, but I had a map and I thought, "Okay I can see a way down through green and blue runs pretty much to the bottom. There's a couple a little sketchy place but I think we can get to the bottom." So, we set off. But the snow starts coming worse. And then the wind picked up and pretty soon I have no idea where we are on this map. All of the signs for the runs are covered in snow and there we are with our four kids, brand new skiers on these steep mountain slopes in Park City, Utah try to get to the bottom of this mountain.

And I'm telling you it was rough, right? The kids kept falling. The mountain was so steep—it was way too steep for them and every time they fell their skis would come off and get lost like four feet down in the snow. I'd have to go over there and dig them out. Every one of them was crying. I was crying. They were screaming. I was screaming right? And my daughter kept saying "We're not supposed to be here. We're going to die up here. We're not supposed to be here!" Right?

So not only was it very hard work to get to the bottom of this mountain in the middle of this snowstorm—that was enough challenge right there—but then everyone was upset and crying and angry and frustrated that we were there in the first place. They all thought we should be on that tram. We should not be here on this mountain. And as difficult as the trip to the bottom was, it was it made even more difficult by this thought that we shouldn't even be there at all. This is not how things are supposed to be. It's Christmas Eve. We're not supposed to be here.

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What I want each of you to see is that not only is the challenge you're going through hard and difficult, but what often makes it even more difficult for each of us is the belief or the thought that it's not supposed to be this way. "We're not supposed to be here in this storm, on this on this mountain, facing these challenges. I'm not in the right place. Something has gone wrong." Right?

And the resistance to what is can become so heavy that instead of spending our energy on managing the challenge ahead of us, we spend our energy resisting the fact that we're there anyway and thinking it's not supposed to be this way. My children had so much resistance to even being there on that mountain that they couldn't spend their energy trying to get down the mountain. At one point I just had to look at all of them and I'm like "It is what it is. There's only one way down now. We've left the tram. There's only one way down. Put on your skis. We have to go down."

I want to offer you that it may be the same for you in your life. There is the difficulty of the challenge itself. And then there is the added heaviness of thinking it shouldn't be this way. There is the difficulty of leaving China, but then there's the heaviness that comes with thinking it's not supposed to be this way. There's the sadness of divorce, but then there's this additional heaviness that comes with thinking it wasn't

supposed to be this way. There's the pain of infertility, but then there's this added heaviness that comes when you think it's not supposed to have turned out this way. There is the grief of death but then we add additional heaviness when we think it's not supposed to be this way. There's the devastation of a diagnosis but then there's additional heaviness that we add when we think it's not supposed to be this way.

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The idea that our life wasn't supposed to go this way that this wasn't the plan creates its own heaviness and that heaviness leaves us powerless and resentful and angry and frustrated. It leaves us wondering what we did wrong or what somebody else did wrong and needing to blame someone else for the wrongness of what is happening in our life. I want you to know that you can just drop the part that says it wasn't supposed to be that way.

This is only a thought that is completely optional and when you're willing to give it up and allows you to move forward in your life and get down the mountain rather than staying stuck in frustration and resentment. Giving up the thought that it wasn't supposed to be this way allows you then to just experience and feel and learn what you need to from the experience without blaming yourself or others and saying stuck in this negative cycle of pain and shouldn't be's.

So I want to give you a little example and this is in the broad scheme of things a very insignificant problem. Let's say that from the outset, but I want to show you this on a small, meaningless level so that we can apply it in our lives to the big trials to the big questions to the big things that are bothering us.

[12:36]

So very late on Saturday night we got a call from our son who had been out celebrating Garba with some of his friends and he said he had a flat tire and he asked if we could come and pick him up. Well when my husband got there, he found that my son had had the flat tire some distance from where he was now, and he had continued to drive home regardless of the flat tire. (Never give up! Just keep going!) Only to end up dragging the car along the road and tearing off the bumpers and damaging the car.

So it took David quite a while to get back home and when he got home I asked him what had taken so long and he told me what happened and he said that they had to go out and collect parts of the car along the street before they were able to come home. And I laid in bed talking with my husband, I kept saying, "I don't understand." And then he'd tell me again what had happened. And I'd say, "But I don't understand." I said, "What did he say?" right? "What was he thinking? I don't understand."

So, what I want you to notice is that in my mind I was resisting what is. I'm thinking this shouldn't have happened. I'm thinking in my mind that destroying an entire car should not be the result of having a flat tire. And so my mind is like "I don't understand" right? It can't compute.

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And my mind started to like spin and undo reality and it started offering me all these really helpful thoughts like:

Why didn't he pull over? If you just pulled over, we wouldn't have this problem.

If he had called us for help, then we wouldn't have this problem.

If he had just stopped. Why didn't he stop?

If we had told him what to do when he has a flat tire, then this wouldn't have happened.

If he had more experience as a driver then this wouldn't have happened. Right?

And I kept trying to think in my mind what could have prevented this from happening. And on and on and on my mind went resisting what was and trying to insist on what should have been. What I want to see is that none of the thoughts my mind offered changed a single thing. I'm lying there in bed and I'm arguing with reality and none of that is repairing the car. And as I laid there and thought, "This should have turned out differently," this thought made me feel angry and frustrated. And as long as I continued to believe that a flat tire shouldn't result in thousands of dollars' worth of car damage then I would continue to feel irritated and frustrated.

[15:09]

Okay so now on a much more significant level we often do this with the heaviest realities in our life. We have this thought that it shouldn't be this way. Our child shouldn't be sick. Our husband should be able to provide. Our marriage should be trustworthy. And as long as we think that it should be different than it is, we spend all of our energy in this frustrated angry place.

So when our kids first started driving we happened to be at a work function and I was talking to one of David's colleagues and he told me, "Oh when my kids started driving I just decided that every one of them was going to crash the car and I could just count on it. And I just had this thought they're all going to make a mistake and they're going to crash the car. And then when they did it wasn't ever a big deal." So, in other words he was telling me that he had eliminated the thought that this isn't how it should be. He simply expected his kids to crash the car and this completely eliminated his need to argue with reality when they did.

So, I kind of adopted this when he told me this. I kind of adopted it and when my daughter drove the car through the garage wall and my son backed up into someone else in the drive-thru lane and when my other daughter rear-ended someone coming out of the school parking lot, I just remembered what he told me. "Your kids are going to crash the car. You can just count on it." Right? And every one of them has. And because he gave me that thought I never had to argue that it was supposed to be any other way.

So, as I was laying there on Saturday night arguing with reality and thinking like, "How could we have prevented this?" I remembered his comment. I remembered this thought that he gave me: "Your kids are going to crash the car. Every one of them. Just count on it." Right? And in that moment on Saturday I had a choice: I could continue to think it shouldn't be this way; I could continue to think we should have one child who can keep a car intact, and I can continue to think that which would make me show up impatient and frustrated and angry.

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Or I could accept what is. The car has been crashed and I can stop being frustrated and then I can be able to access the place where I can feel better and help my son. So, I want to show you what happened for me. I was laying there angry and frustrated and when he gave up the thought it shouldn't be this way and simply chose the thought, "They're supposed to crash the car," I was suddenly peaceful. Nothing had gone wrong. My kids are supposed to crash the car. Do you see? The thought I should have one child who doesn't crash the car was causing all this pain. But if I believed they were supposed to all crash the car, then there was no problem at all. And the next day because I knew that nothing had gone wrong and they were all supposed to crash the car when he said, "Mom I'm really sorry about the car." Then I could just put my arm around him and say, "I know. What did you learn?"

Now I know what you're thinking. You're thinking, "But how can you just be okay with kids crashing the car?" Right? "How can you say that's just supposed to happen when it's not?" What I want to show you is that you only think it's not supposed to happen. It actually is supposed to be exactly like it is. It's supposed

to happen and how do we know that? We know it's supposed to be this way because it is this way and saying it should be different or it isn't supposed to be this way doesn't ever change it. It just is telling your brain: "It's supposed to be this way." That allows your brain to stop arguing with reality and move on so that you can show up the way that you want to.

So Byron Katie says: "When you argue with reality you lose, but only 100% of the time." And this is what we're doing when we think it wasn't supposed to be this way, we lose 100% of the time. We're spending our time arguing with what is and then blaming ourselves or others or God for the bad hand that we've been dealt.

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So let's go back to Saturday night. If I say it's not supposed to be this way, then I'm angry and frustrated. I feel terrible and I can't help my son from that place. I feel angry and he feels ashamed and guilty and we lose 100% of the time, as Katie says.

Instead if I accept that this is exactly as it's supposed to be then I can drop my resistance and see what needs to happen next. I don't have to feel terrible. I don't have to feel angry and frustrated. And I'm then in a position to teach my son. I don't have to feel angry and he doesn't have to feel ashamed. I get to teach and he gets to learn, right? But this is only possible when I accept what is and then decide how I want to show up for my son. I can't do that when I think it should be different.

So here's what I want to teach you:

1. First when we think it's not supposed to be this way for whatever we're going through in our life, we are adding to our pain. We are making our challenge heavier. We are losing because we're trading the present experience for an argument that we can never win. Saying it should be different never makes it different.

[20:51]

2. One of the things that Byron Katie teaches is that everything—everything—is exactly the way that it's supposed to be. She wrote, "Could it be that all along we have lived the life we should have lived and that everything we've done has been what we should have done?" Now

Now for some of us, this is a difficult thought and many of us resist this because we think that if we say that this is the way it was always supposed to be then we're saying it's okay. See, the trouble is that our life is full of challenges. It is full of painful, hard, difficult, things, and we think by saying that's the way it's supposed to be, then we're also saying it's okay or it's good or that we condone it in some way. It doesn't mean this. It just means that it has happened and you can stop arguing about it. It is what happened and you can stop trying to change it. It is what it is and you can stop wishing it was different. It is what is and you can stop rehearsing and rerunning and reliving it so that it can somehow turn out differently.

This never allows you to move on and learn and grow and then use your experience to become who you want to be. It's only keeping you stuck in resentment and anger and regret. Let me read this one more time: "Could it be that all along we have lived the life we should have lived and that everything we've done has been what we should have done?" If you believe that you can get to so much more peace about your life and the way it is turning out.

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3. Okay, the last thing I want to offer you is that one of the most powerful thoughts you can practice is the thought that all of what is happening is happening FOR you. Every single thing that happens—the hard the difficult the excruciating the painful—everything that happens is happening FOR you. And in the moment, I know this is hard to see. In the middle, it feels like nothing could be further from the truth.

So my son and I have been watching this World War II documentary and it just is so excruciating to watch the back and forth, the wins and the setbacks, the losses between the Allies and the Germans. And like we're watching this documentary and part way through, it's just so discouraging to see how badly the Allies were doing and how much they were up against. And at one point I told my son, "Like I don't think we're going to win this. It doesn't seem like we're going to win." And he said, "You know how it ends. You already know who wins." And of course I do. But in the middle, it seems like it's all gone wrong. And it seems like we're way off track and nothing is going according to plan. It seems like we're going to lose.

And this is how it is for you in the middle of your life, in the middle of the plan. It seems like it's all gone wrong. You feel like where are we off track. Nothing is going according to plan. We are going to lose here. But what I want to know is that you just in the middle. It's all supposed to be happening exactly as it is it's all happening FOR you. If you choose to think this thought, it will change the way you see your life and all the experiences you're having in it. It will allow you to get to peace for what is rather than being in resistance of what you wish wasn't.

[24:24]

Let me give you one other example to see if I can explain this better.

In 2005 we moved into a new house and when we bought this house the market was at one of its very highest points. And five years later after the market had crashed and the housing market dropped, this house was worth half of what we had paid for it. Then after that they eliminated my husband's position at the hospital, and he had to find a new job. And this new job required us to move, which meant that we owed much more on this house than we could sell it for, and we needed to move, and we had to short-sell the house. And I kept thinking, "It wasn't supposed to be this way."

I kept trying to figure out where it had all gone wrong right. Either we had made a terrible mistake, or we were the victim of someone else's mistake, but either way something had gone wrong. And I spent years after that, in regret and shame and pain, trying to figure out how the plan had gone so wrong and trying to mentally retrace my steps to undo what could not be undone. And I would do all these mental gymnastics:

we shouldn't have bought that house
we lost so much money
we'll never recover
why should we suffer if we had nothing to do with this market crash?
why did this happen.

And then I would think like well maybe we're just bad people
we're bad with money
we make bad financial decisions

[25:51]

And around and around and around, I went for years feeling angry and frustrated and victimized because I thought: "It wasn't supposed to be this way. This wasn't supposed to happen."

And this is what we do as humans. Life happens around us and it doesn't go according to plan. We don't get the job. We can't have children our husband dies unexpectedly our child gets addicted. Our business fails. We lose our house. Our loved ones get sick. And then we spend all of our time and energy and thoughts trying to undo what is, trying to figure out where we messed up or where someone else messed everything up for us. We spend all this time trying to figure out which decision was the wrong one and how to go back and how to change it. And this is an utter waste of time.

For us, as long as I believe that losing our house wasn't supposed to happen then I could never move forward and create a new future. I was stuck arguing with what was rather than examining, "Okay, what now?"

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And thinking this one thing shouldn't have happened was destroying my present. It was changing the way I viewed myself. It was changing the way I viewed my worthiness and my life and my relationship with God. When I finally figured out that what had happened to our house and to us was not only supposed to happen but it had actually happened FOR us, for our benefit, it wasn't until then that I could use what happened to become who and what I wanted to be.

And just as I couldn't be the kind of mother I wanted to be to my son when I was thinking "It wasn't supposed to be this way," I could not create what I wanted in my life financially or spiritually when I believed that losing our house wasn't supposed to happen and that either we messed up or we were the victims of the universe. From that place I could never ask myself, "Now what? Now who do I want to be and how do I want to feel about me and my life?"

When I finally decided that it was supposed to be this way and that everything had gone according to plan, that I was supposed to make every choice and decision I had in the way that I had, then I was able to stop being ashamed. I was able to stop feeling guilt and despair and I started to decide what I wanted in my life, what I wanted to make all of this mean, and how I wanted to then move forward. As long as I was in resistance, I could never move forward.

[28:34]

So here's the thing: we think it should go perfectly. We think it would have been better another way. On Saturday night, I thought it would have been better if my son had pulled over and called for help. But what if I'm wrong about that? What if what happened was exactly how it was supposed to go, and he learned something he couldn't learn in any other way? I thought it would have been better not to lose our house and the hundreds of thousands of dollars that we had put into it. But what if I'm wrong about that? What if it was exactly how I was supposed to go, and I learned something that I could learn and no other way? What if it was all FOR me?

What I want you to see is that thinking it should be different doesn't change the facts. Thinking it should be different doesn't reverse time and stop my son on the road when the tire went flat. Thinking it should be different doesn't undo the housing crisis or give me my money back or undo our short-sale. It just makes me feel bad. It just makes me resent others. It just keeps me as a victim. It never allows me to be different, show up differently, or become who I need to be.

Whatever trial you're experiencing, it's supposed to be there. Remember that your education is God's business. And just because it's hard or painful or devastating or excruciating doesn't mean it's not supposed to be there. Thinking that the universe is always working in my favor or that it's all happening for me, doesn't mean that it turns out perfectly. It doesn't mean that it's going to be wonderful and perfect and blissful and easy. It means that it's working in your favor—your long term favor, your eternal favor. It means that God is working for your good and that might not feel good.

[30:30]

So I have a client who asked me if I thought that God was involved in the details of our life. And behind that question is an assumption. So for my client, in many ways her life has not turned out the way she planned. It has not gone the way she wanted it to or ever imagined that it would—for her, for her husband, or for her kids. And so, behind this question is the idea that because it hasn't gone according to plan, God then must be a hands-off God, he must not get involved in the details or interfere with the natural order of things.

And I don't pretend to know how God intervenes in our lives, but what I want to point out is that we often believe that if God is involved then it should all be good. If God is in the details of our life, then there should be significantly less struggle and pain involved. This is not the case.

For my client, since it has gone so wrong, she concluded that He must not care or that his role is very hands-off. He's more of a watcher. But what if God is involved in the details when it looks nothing like you thought it would look? What if God is totally involved when it's not going the way you think it's supposed to go? What if he is right there creating exactly what you think should not be, and what if all of that is happening FOR you? What if according to your plan is not the plan at all?

[31:57]

What I want to offer you is that thinking things are not the way they're supposed to be is only adding to your pain. There are two thoughts: One thought says, "It's all gone like it's supposed to." And one thought says, "It shouldn't be this way." Neither one of them is true. They're both just thoughts. They're both just ways of looking at your life. They are optional thoughts and these optional thoughts are causing us to feel and act in a way that helps us. Or these optional thoughts cause us to feel and act in a way that is hurting us and keeping us stuck.

And you get to choose.

The reality is that for each one of us life has not gone according to plan. Each one of us could build a case that it didn't turn out the way it was supposed to. The trouble is that believing this only adds heaviness and suffering to our challenges. It puts us in an argument with reality that we can't win. Remember when we think things should be different than they are, we lose, but only 100% of the time.

[33:14]

The way to move on and learn and grow and escape all the resentment and regret and anger that comes with resisting our challenges is to believe that we are living the exact life we're supposed to. Nothing has gone wrong. It was all supposed to happen exactly as it has. And it's all happening FOR us. This thought will change the way you see every circumstance and challenge and unwanted situation in your life. It's all happening for you...and that my friends is 100% awesome.

I love you for listening and I'll see you next week.