



## Episode 74: BLACK AND WHITE THINKING

This is the *Become an Unstoppable Woman* podcast with Lindsay Preston Episode 74, Black and White thinking.

[music]

Welcome to the *Become an Unstoppable Woman* podcast, the show for goal-getting, fear-facing women for kicking ass by creating change. I'm your host, Lindsay Preston. I'm a wife, mom of two, and a multi-certified life coach to women all over the world. I've lived through enough in life to know that easier doesn't always equate to better. We can't fear the fire, we must learn to become it. On this show, I'll teach you how to do just that. Join me as I challenge you to become even more of the strong, resilient, and powerful woman you were meant to be. Let's do this.

[music]

Hi there, Ms. Unstoppable. Thanks for tuning in to this week's episode. We're going to talk about black and white thinking. I'm going to warn you now. It may stir up some things inside of you, I can already see them. I get some heated emails off this one because I'm going to challenge you to think in a whole new way. A part of your brain is going to want to really, really hold on to black and white thinking, but I want you to see how it may not be serving you. Okay? Pinky promise me you're going to open your eyes and your mind today, even if it feels uncomfortable because that's what coaching is. It's stretching you, it's making you grow.

As I say many times in my trainings and in my coaching, take what you love and leave the rest. Many times we're triggered by something. Triggered means you have a "negative emotion for more than seven seconds", then that means they're maybe some deeper work there and they're maybe some truth to what uprise and that triggered you. Okay? I'm going to show you why today even more. What is black and white thinking first off? It's thinking in absolutes like good or bad. Are you in, are you out? This is amazing, this is awful. This is success and this is failure.

You're just thinking in these two ends of the spectrum. Now, the media have tendencies to have black and white thinking with their reporting all the time. If you google, "The media is narcissistic", you'll find so many articles about how in essence the media feeds us this



negativity and these things on extremes because they know it will trigger our brain. We talk about all the time on the show, our brain is here just to keep us safe and if we're seeing all these threats around us, we want to go and we want to watch the news to learn about those facts so that we can stay safe.

Many of us are onto this game but still our primitive brain gets hooked there. I know I have to pull myself back many times when I watch the news and think, "All right, brain, you're really getting anxious here. Let's reel it back in." The media, as I said, is built for this. In essence, they're just trying to do their job, they're trying to sell advertising, they're trying to get viewers. If they just stayed in fluffy stuff all the time, in things that were more neutral in their stories, then less people would tune in.

Now, I'm just going to give a specific example of how I saw this recently. I listened to a podcast called *Guru* and I believe there's also a Netflix special on the same topic called *Enlighten Us*. It's about a self-help guru, whatever, personal development, personal whatever you want to call it named James Arthur Ray. James was-- Gosh, in the early 2000, he was in the movie *The Secret*, you may remember those days. He was just in this new age kind of personal development realm. We had the old-school people, the Wayne Dyers and then we brought them like the Tony Robbins of the world. Then James is in this next group of people. This is right before we had social media and things of that sort.

James got a lot of publicity obviously from *The Secret*. Then he also would go into these live events from what I understand, where he would then get clients from that where he's like, "No. I do things like a podcast." He posts on social media and truly, I get a lot of clients just from referrals. Initially, somebody found me typically from something online. He didn't have that, so he would go to these live events, get clients and he would then get them in this funnel of you go to these events, you pay a little bit of money. Then you go to this next event, you pay more money, you go up this funnel until you get to this event called Spiritual Warrior.

In the Spiritual Warrior event, he would do more extreme things. Each event got more and more extreme. At the Spiritual Warrior event, he would do this thing-- Gosh, I don't even remember what they called it and it wasn't even the right name for it. In essence, this sauna of things. He just pushed these people to an extreme, he didn't set it up right, so three people ended up dying because he'd pushed their bodies to the extreme. He was just doing some really weird and wacky stuff, to be honest with you of like, "Don't trust yourself, trust me," and all that stuff.



When I'm listening to all this, I'm listening from an ear of-- Some of his stuff was actually really good, talking about the way that bring works, some personal development, and manifesting, and all that stuff. It's very similar to some of the stuff I teach my clients here on the podcast, I just put a different spin on it. What happened is James just got his ego go way out of control. He sounds like he got a little greedy in there. He just kept pushing more and more extremes to get people to pay more and to do all that stuff.

In the podcast and on the Netflix show, they really spun him as, "He's this bad guy. He's this con artist. He was borderline leading a cult." The reality is did James do some bad things? Absolutely, but he wasn't all bad. I can just hear an episode after episode of this *Guru* podcast. They were trying to spin every single thing that he did and make it seem like he was this bad guy. That's very typical on the media. They find somebody as like, "This person is a murderer. This person is this," and they just start spinning things.

This is why a lot of celebrities, they hate the media. They're like, "This is so annoying in regards to the way that I'm sun--" Then they have to go through this whole PR campaign to be seen as someone good again. Then all of a sudden, people love them again. It's just this whole love-hate relationship. Right? Again, we see it a lot in the media, we see it a lot in the US here with politics, especially right now, everybody is very divisive, it's very polarized. Republicans a lot of times are seen as racist, and greedy and antichrist-like. Democrats are seen as baby killers and not good with money and so many other things.

We love to just label on both ends of the spectrum. Then we also see this in TV shows and in movies with relationships. "I love you. I hate you. You're amazing. You're awful. Come near me. Go away. He loves me. He loves me not." We just see all these ups and downs and that's what keeps us tuning in. We don't want to just see two people who are in a boring we in love, we want to see the passion, and the romance, and the breakups, and the pain. That makes for great entertainment. That's why reality TV a lot of times is a little bit scripted because reality in general, it's just a little bit neutral.

We also see this a lot with religion, "You're a sinner. You're a saint. You're going to heaven. You're going to hell. That's a good behavior. That's bad behavior. Are you with us? Are you against us? That's the voice of God or the devil?" Can you see the two here? Even I was thinking about the angel and the devil on your shoulders. It's like, "Is it good? Is it bad?" Then many of us have this black and white thinking all the time and because we're surrounded with it, with things like the media like I said, in politics, what we consume in religion, we're just like, "Oh, this is just the way you think. This is just the way it should be."



Black and white thinking is very toxic in your life. I'm spotting black and white thinking in myself and with my clients all the time. In fact, I didn't really know what black and white thinking was until about a year ago when I was doing relationship coaching and my coach in essence, gave me this book called *How We Love*, how do we take the test? She said, "Well, you have this vacillator voice." The vacillator's all about black and white thinking.

If you are client of mine, you're like, "Okay, got it, Lindsay, I know this. We've already talked about this." If you don't know what a vacillator is yet, I encourage you to listen to my podcast called *Your Inner Mean Girls*. Then when I just did overcoming your inner mean girls, because those two are going to help supplement this one. Again, it's really important you understand what that vacillator is because she's the one that's generating this black and white thinking.

Just know this is not healthy behavior. It is very normalized, but it doesn't mean that it's serving you in any way. We have black and white thinking. It's likely impacting your relationships, it's likely impacting your career, the way even you eat, the way you think about yourself. It's everywhere. I say often the way we do one thing is the way we do many things. Even if you have a pattern of quitting a lot or you just find yourself on this roller coaster of emotions, of these ups and these downs, it's likely you have black and white thinking.

Like I said, I'm catching it all the time, I'm catching with clients. Many times, we don't even realize we're doing it. I'll give you an example, I call it the client reselling. This client came to me and she said, "Lindsay, I just don't feel that confident at work. Here are some of my thoughts when I'm around a certain person who triggers me is that I'm not as good as her. I'm not enough and all this stuff." I said, "Great. Okay, you've got the awareness. Now, how do you want to intentionally think about it?"

Then she immediately went to, "I'm amazing, I'm awesome, I'm wonderful." I said, "Okay, granted, you can definitely think those things but why do we need to go so extreme? It seems very black and white and we had been talking about black and white thinking." Then I said, "What if we just go more neutral?" She's like, "Oh, my gosh, I didn't even think about that." I would have maybe not caught that in myself too. It's very subtle sometimes when you're an outsider looking at it, like I am, as a coach, you can spot it pretty easily.

Now, in my own life, I have black and white thinking often too, especially on my marriage. If my husband frustrates me, say for a couple of days or longer, I will start to have the thoughts, "Oh, why did I get married? I want out of this." It's not black and white of like, "I'm in. I'm out. This is good. This is bad." I have to stop myself in those moments of, "Okay,



I want out of the marriage. Why did I do this?" I started to ask myself the questions I'm going to share with you in a bit to get out of that extreme black and white thinking, because going from, "My marriage is awesome," to, "My marriage is ugh, awful," has made an impact on my marriage.

I realized that since doing marriage coaching, because I just thought, well, this is just again, normal, because that's what I saw around me. That's what I saw with my parents even. Many times, we inherit black and white thinking. Most of us grow up in an environment where we see this, not just with the media, but with our parents. It's especially there when a parent has what's considered a personality disorder, like borderline or narcissism.

In my home growing up, it was a lot. It was everywhere. These were the things I heard on the daily. Some of those may be triggering to some of you, just right out the gate. I heard a lot that Republicans are awful people and Democrats are amazing. Every single thing that went bad, my parents would blame Republicans. I remember my mom driving and maybe she got cut off or she didn't like something another driver did, and if they were in what appeared like a car a Republican would drive like an SUV or a van, men were really big in the '90s, then she would be like, "Oh, god damn, Republicans." That was really seeped into my blood.

The other thing I got a lot as a kid is if I did not get 100, then I was told that I had failed. It was just seen as well, until you get 100, 100 is what we strive for here, right? It's a black and white of all or nothing. If somebody made a mistake, it was very quickly labeled as, "That person is bad. That's a bad thing," versus like, "Oh, that person just made a poor choice kind of thing." This black and white thinking also stems from people who are naturally really passionate people, because they're deep feelers, they're empathetic and so they have these high highs, they're able to experience things like high extremes of joy and passion and creativity and love. Then they also experience really low lows, a lot of sadness, and anger, and shame. That is a beautiful thing.

I'm in that boat with you if you're in there too. I love that about me. At the same time, it is very exhausting as well. I've gotten to a point where these two extremes of awesome and awful and good and bad has taken a lot out of my nervous system. I've seen how these patterns, yes, they've gotten me to the point where I am today. That's not an all bad place but where I'm growing to next, this stuff doesn't serve me anymore. All right?

Start to think about that, too, as I'm talking today as like is this pattern still serving me, because I just got to a point where I didn't need as much of that drive and that passion and



these high-level feelings or these low-level feelings to get me beyond where I am today. Now I need to just stabilize and I need to, in essence, build upon what I have versus this drive of go, go, go, go, go, go, go, go and cut out anybody along the way who my brain has labeled as "bad" or not serving me or whatever. Instead, really think, "Okay, I really want to deepen my marriage," and figure out how to have a very successful long-term marriage and relationship, which I haven't seen, I haven't done. I don't have a lot of long-term relationships under my belt because of this black and white thinking and things with my business and things of that sort.

Where we're wanting to get initially, well, eventually, I should say is for you to be in this neutral ground. This does not mean you're numb, it means you're neutral. I'm going to talk a whole another podcast on neutral versus numb. Neutral is really just saying, "I'm here. I'm present. I'm open to whatever life gives me, and whatever life gives me, I know that it's going to be 50/50 no matter what, even if it's something amazing. Say I win a trip of a lifetime and I get to travel the world on this trip. Yes, you're going to experience joy, and excitement, and love, and all those things with it, but there's probably also going to be some feelings that don't feel so great with it and some things that happen along the trip that maybe isn't that awesome.

Same with something you're going through that's really awful. Yes, it may seem really awful at the time, but there's also some amazing blessings then. Really, everything in life that we go through can be looked at as very neutral. It's our thoughts about that that cause it to not be neutral. This is why I love the tool, the self-coaching model so much. I know I've been talking about it so much on the show. If you just haven't listened to any of those episodes, I really encourage you do. I think the best one where I described the model is in the solve any problem episode. Go listen to that one.

In essence, the model is saying, "Let's just look at the circumstance of what's going on and whatever that is, we want to make it as neutral as possible." For a lot of people with politics, they think Republicans are bad, like my parents would. Well, that's really a thought. Republicans, one of the things I didn't like about Republicans were some of their financial beliefs. Really, the circumstances, Republicans in general believe X, Y, Z, believe in low taxes, believe in not taxing the rich as much or whatever it is.

You want to make that as neutral as possible, because really, again, everything that happens in our life is pretty neutral. It's our thoughts about it that determine our feelings about it. When clients come to me and there are all these ups and downs, and I say, "Okay, we're going to get to this neutral place," they look at me funny and think, "Is that really where I want to go?" Me having grown here, especially this past year is I've been super



intentional about it. I'm like, "Trust me, honey, it is awesome here." I still have passion and I still have my beliefs but being in this neutral place is wonderful.

You're going to build so much momentum from this place, so much stability from this place, and you're still going to be you, but without these extremes, and a lot of drama that comes with those extremes. As I said, black and white thinking harms your relationships, it harms your career, it harms the way you think about yourself. It even harms possibly some of the habits you're doing in your life, especially with eating and shopping and things of that sort.

Let's get really clear on the steps you need to take when you are experiencing black and white thinking. Okay, are you ready? We're going to go through four steps. The first one is you have to just first be aware of it. If you're thinking of something in extremes, you're using the words, always, never, impossible, perfect, awful, amazing, good, or bad. Those are just some examples. That is a flag. "I may be having some black and white thinking." Give you some examples of how this can look. "I am always doing X, Y, Z." I hear my husband say this one on repeat pretty regularly. "I am always the one cleaning up around here."

One that I told him recently in a fight and I've shared this on the podcast, but you never plan dates anymore. Some people when they're really going at it in a relationship, they'll think it's impossible that this relationship could work. A lot of times when clients start working with me, they'll start putting me on this pedestal and they'll start saying, "Well, Lindsay, you're so perfect," or, "You're so amazing, or awesome, or whatever." I start to realize, okay, this person has black and white thinking because they're starting to idealize me.

What happens when people do that is the only place I can go is down. I'll start talking them out of it if we haven't yet talked about black and white thinking, and I'll be like, "No, you're the one that did da, da, da. You're the one--" because they think that I'm, in essence, the one that saved them. They don't think in that way, but I'm the one who's so amazing giving them results. It's like, "No, it's mostly you. I'm here to help you along the way." Really, I'm doing that because again, I don't want them to put me on this pedestal and start to think that I'm all good because what happens then is if one thing happens where I'm not good in their brain anymore, they can very quickly label me as bad. Then all of a sudden, we have a day where we do some coaching that gets uncomfortable or whatever and they're like, "I want to quit. I'm out of here."

I have a client right now like this. We've actually coached for a while together. The coaching itself that I had with her one-on-one was a lot of hand-holding very soft because



that's what she needed at the time. Now, she's in a group program. I've told them even just going into the group is it's a different style of coaching. It's more generalized, it's not specific for whatever that person needs. It's more of a kick in the butt. She's come at me many times of like, "I really want to quit this. I really want to quit this because it's making me feel uncomfortable."

She's come at it too of like, "I'm building my awareness," not like, "I'm definitely going to quit." Right? Which has been great but she's starting to realize on a deeper level this black and white thinking because for a while, she had put me on this pedestal. The other thing is when somebody is saying, "My body is awful," or something else is awful, or your body is amazing, or this is amazing. A lot of people do this with goals. Like, once I make a million dollars, then it's going to be amazing.

I catch this actually with my husband a lot too because I've said many times on the podcast, he's a money guy. A lot of times when he's thinking about his money goals, and like, "Oh, we have this in the bank," it's like, "Oh, that's like it." When I get to this destination, it's going to be amazing there. I'm like, "No, we're going to get to that destination, it's going to be the same life, we're just going to have more money in the bank."

I love what Brooke Castillo from Life Coach School says about this is like no matter where you are, with any goal or any place in life, life is always 50/50. I'm a big believer in 80/20. I like to think life can be 80% awesome, or good, or bad or I don't know how we want to view it, we don't want to go black and white but it's in those yummy emotions. 20% up to 50% of the time, it's in that not so yummy emotions. That's just the way the human journey is meant. It's just like, we don't know dark without light, we don't know cold without hot. Sometimes we don't know these "negative emotions" without these "positive ones" and vice versa.

Taking that off is realizing no matter what destination you get to in life, or what you gain or achieve or whatever, it's so just going to be you getting there, but likely with more money or a new job or whatever. Now, of course, when you're changing your mindset, and you're growing, and things of that sort, yes, just do things shift and all that, but there's still always going to be this element of things that are uncomfortable when you get there. For a lot of people, sometimes this can be a huge letdown and they'll go into this black and white thinking spiral of, "I thought this job was going to be so amazing. It's not this huge, high standard of amazing, but I thought, and so it just must be awful."



Then all of a sudden, then they're quitting their job. This is happening a lot with people with black and white thinking. I did this in my early 20s. I was like, "Oh, I'm just going to get a call. I just got to get out of here." I labeled it as awful because there was just some things that happened. I was like, "Oh, I'm done with college. Let me get out of here." Then it was like, "Okay, well, I'm going to do this thing. Then that was awesome and awful.

Then the next thing was awesome and awful. Anytime there was any awful on there, my brain just quickly wanted to label it as awful because I had just built up such this high expectation of awesome that when anything "went bad", it was like, "This is awful, I'm out of here." This happens a lot, a lot of quitting, a lot of moving around, just a lot of this frantic action that we've talked about on the podcast. If you haven't listened to that episode, I know I'm voicing so many other episodes, but that's a great one, *Massive versus Frantic Action*.

We want to get you again to this place where you're just very calm, very neutral. Now, even I have clients sometimes come to me and say, "Lindsay, I just feel so at peace and just so neutral all the time." I'm like, "Exactly. This is what we've worked towards. Isn't that awesome?" It's just so weird. I'm like, "I know, right?" As coaches, we're taught this in a lot of ways. We're taught if we come in with anything more than neutrality when somebody brings us something and it's not "clean coaching" and we have attached to some outcome for that client and that is a big find that we need to do either some self-coaching on ourselves or get coached by another coach.

I actually caught this in myself recently, one of my clients said she got back with an ex that we had worked on for many months for her to leave. It came out of left field for me. When I got her email, I shouldn't have been checking my email to begin with at this time because I was making dinner. I got this email. I was like, "Oh, fuck," was what I was thinking and I found myself just getting frustrated and all that. I'm like, "Whoa, wait a second, Lindsay, you have obviously attached to this. This is not clean coaching, you need to be just always be neutral with things, because that's what clients are coming to us for, is neutrality and allowing us to show them their brains and their feelings." That's not about me at all, right?

I've had to really learn on a deeper level how to practice this neutrality and I've done it pretty well in my coaching. I'm having to do it even more in my personal life, as I've said. Again, the first thing is the catch, if we're thinking of something in extremes, and it's so important, you become aware of that because if you're not aware of it, you can't go and do the next steps. It's so important that you become aware of your thinking in extremes.



As I said, it's really tricky. This is one of the reasons why I have a coach. This is why people hire me as their coach is to show them their brain in a way that they may not be seeing because they're so close to their own brain. If you spot it and you've got the awareness, awesome. Now, if you find yourself acting in extremes, because that may come first before the thoughts of it, here are some behaviors to look out for. If you're just having really big ups and downs with emotions like, "I love you. I hate you. I'm in. I'm out," that can be a sign you're in this black and white thinking.

If you're feeling like you're wanting to push people away, if you're wanting to quit things, especially abruptly quit things, that's a sign. If you're finding that others just have this fall from grace thing, again, I've tended to do this with people that I've admired. It's like this person is so awesome and so awesome and then all of a sudden, I'll learn something about them that's maybe not so awesome and I'll think, "Oh, man." I'll start to have all these seeds of doubt about them. I'll have to catch myself and say, "Wait a second, Lindsay. This person, here's all the awesome things about them or wonderful, whatever term we want to use. Yet, here are some things that's not so great and that's just how it is."

People are not one or the other. They're both. Every single person, every single situation, as I keep saying has good and bad in it. It's not one or the other. We're all mixed in with both of these things. It really comes to my brain to do that. Going back to spotting patterns for you is again, that fall from grace, if you just feel a lot of disappointment, a lot of disappointment in something. Remember, when we talked about that dealing with disappointment episode, I talked about that when we feel disappointment, that's really a cover for us feeling sad, but because sad feels a lot of times it's weak, will turn to anger. We'll just come out firing. It's like, "I don't want to do this. I'm out of here. Da, da, da, da, da," all that stuff.

The other thing is if you're eating in a way where you're bingeing especially if you're bingeing and purging, which again, this is beyond this podcast, that's definitely you need to go seek help for that. That's an eating disorder at that point, but if you had a pattern of that in the past or you're just doing the bingeing part, that's a sign of black and white thinking. What else do I have on here? Oh, if you expect someone needs to be on the exact same page as you about something or many things, then that's another sign. It's like we all have to think alike in order for us to be all in, that can be black and white thinking. If you view something as responsible or not responsible. Again, it goes to that good or bad.

Right now, my husband and I are watching a trashy show to be honest, it's called *Filthy Rich* and it's with Kim Cattrall in it. It's just in the first few episodes but it's about in essence, this family who's very highly religious and they've built this huge brand based on



their religion and being these public figures but behind the scenes, they do all these corrupt things. It makes me think about again, this black and white thinking of here's my good self and then behind closed doors is my bad self. Again, we see this unfortunately so often in religion of people like, here's my good things and all the da, da, da, da, da and then they just go and they turn almost to these extremes versus just being this neutrality of, "Yes, I'm kind of good and I'm kind of bad," versus putting on this show and hiding these deep dark demons inside of them.

Again, those can be some behaviors of black and white thinking but release, catch yourself if you're thinking in extremes. If you've caught yourself in that behavior and that thinking, then you need to ask yourself how is what you just thought or said not true. I'm reading a book right now. It's an oldie and it's by Byron Katie and it's called *Loving What Is*, and I've had this book for many years and for whatever reason, every time I pick it up, I just can't get through it. I get really tired when I get through it and I know why, because it's a big stretch for me. It's really teaching me to love everything in front of me. It's taking an essence this next level of this black and white thinking and bringing neutrality with it.

The really first question that Katie always ask people is they'll come to her and say, "My husband's a cheater. He does not love me," or something, whatever it is. She'll say, "Well, how is that not true?" Or she'll say, "Is it true?" For you wanting to spin this question is say if you come and you say, "My body is awful," I want you to then ask yourself again, how is that not true? Sometimes, I mentioned with my marriage, I'll be like, "Oh, why did I get married? This is awful." Then I'll stop myself and say, "How's that not true?" I'd be like, "Okay, let's see." There's so many amazing things in your marriage. It is 80% good and then here we go back with the black and white thinking. It's 80% pretty good. [chuckles] They said, this stuff is deep, these patterns. It's 80% pretty good and 20% kind of not as good. That's okay.

When you're going into this, "Oh, I want to get out of here. This is bad," it's just not true. Just asking yourself that question alone of how is this not true, we'll start to tell your brain of, "Okay, let me see some patterns here or some evidence for how this could not be a black and white situation." If we do the body one of, "My body is awful," how could that not be true? Well, my body is keeping me alive right now. My body is healthy. I love my skin or my hair or whatever. It's not all bad. It's just I don't really like my stomach or I don't really like my weight right now or whatever. That's where you again, you start to bring this neutrality to it versus thinking in these extremes.

Then the next thing that I want you to do is because in essence, when we think in black and white thinking, we really power up the nervous system in this kind of fight, flight, or



freeze response and we want to calm that. The first thing as I said you're going to do is ask how is this not true? That's going to calm it a little bit but then I really want you to just be able to feel. Okay? Start to ask yourself, what is it that I feel when I think this extreme or black and white whatever you want to label it as thought. If I go back to the example of my life and I think, "Oh, I wish I didn't get married. I don't like this. I want out," I'll just recognize the feelings of, "Oh, I feel anxious right now. I feel scared and I feel, I don't know, a little trapped and things of that sort."

I'll just start to recognize what those feelings are and then I'll go deeper with it. I'll start to ask, "Where am I feeling this in my body?" It's like, "Oh, I feel this in my throat," or, "I feel this in my head or my shoulders and my heart or wherever it is, my stomach," just really start to describe where it is in your body or find where it is in your body and then go deeper and describe it. Be like, "Okay, it's in my throat. It feels like someone's choking me. Something's really, really tight on my throat and the energy inside just feels really heavy. It's almost like this big thing is in my throat and I just need to get it out."

Again, you're just going to start to describe it to yourself. The more you can describe it, the better. I know it feels really silly to do this, but this is how we all should be taught to feel our feelings. If you're in my coaching program and you're like, "Lindsay, you never taught me this," this is what's coming up for you in the new Authentically Awesome. That's a second part of my coaching program. You're getting a taste of this now because I'm going to teach you how to feel your feelings even more.

As I said again, you're going to describe where it is in your body. Then you're going to just go into more details about it and just breathe through it. It's like, "Oh it's in my throat, it feels really heavy. It just feels like this big, heavy ball of something," and then just breathe through it. It's like, "Oh, okay," and then it's like, "Okay, where is this going?" Just start to describe it more and more.

This is again, why a coaching session can be so helpful. I even know of some therapists that do this. It's just so powerful when we can have somebody else hold space for this but I know you can't always have that, especially in the moment of life of you need it right then and now. You just want to walk yourself through it and feel it to a point where it feels like it's just starting to lessen. When we truly go in and feel the depth of our feelings, then that's when it just comes and goes as a wave does in the water and we'll start to push it away.

I recently had a coaching session where I did this and I said, "I had a fight recently with my husband and I've processed it in my head but I want to process it in my body more." I want



to really feel my feelings with it. She's like, "Great." This is what we did in essence. Because again, this is how we feel our feelings and we all just knew this. She's like, "Okay, where it's at?" At the time, I was like, "Well, it's in my chest and it's in my head." She's like, "Okay, well, what color does it feel like?" We described the colors and she said, "What kind of buzzing is it? Is it a fast or is it slow?" I said, "Well, the head is really fast but the heart is really slow."

We just walked through the whole thing and she's like, "Tell me more about it." I told her more and then she'd asked me more questions from there. Then by the end of our 20-minute session, it was like this whole thing had lifted off. Then it just wasn't like I was carrying this around anymore because I'd felt the depth of that feeling of it. Really spend some time of feeling through that. It doesn't have to take that long. It can only take a few minutes because otherwise, it's just going to live inside of you until you can fully feel the entire wave of whatever that emotion is.

When you have black and white thinking, it's coming from this anxious again, fight or flight response. You've got to calm that nervous system and even if you don't want to describe it, if all you want to do is breathe through it and just breathe through it and keep breathing through it, and the next thing you can do as you're breathing and maybe you've already described the feelings is then remind yourself the true and serving thoughts that you've started to think in step 2, when you said, "Okay, how is this not true?"

If you're like, "My body is awful," and maybe have this big triggering instance from that of, "Okay, my body is coming alive. My body is healthy. I love my skin. I love my hair," and just calming yourself through this. The other example I gave with my marriage is sometimes I'll just calm myself and I'll think of all the great things about my husband and about our marriage like, "Whew, okay, everything's okay. I'm going to be fine," or some other thoughts that I have.

Again, a lot of times, as I said, this black and white thinking is handed down to us. Yes, we get it from external media types circumstances or influences, rights and religion, all of that sort. It also comes, as I said earlier, this vacillator and this vacillator grew up in an environment where it was hot and cold. Many times, it came from our parent who was in and out and nice and then mean and we never knew what we were going to get into. We just developed these coping mechanisms in this level of anxiety. There are low level or a higher level, I'm just trying to deal with that.

For most of us, the thread of that is over. We have to really understand that we don't need that response anymore. This is where again, deeper coaching work can help to get you



through this. Journaling is so powerful. Do you want to walk yourself through these steps and just getting your feelings out on paper and seeing what your thoughts are?

Again, the self-coaching model is so helpful. Writing in third person even when you're journaling, of saying your name, so, "Lindsay had a moment where she felt she wanted to leave her marriage. This is what happened," and da, da, da, da, da. Then, you're going to start to see it from a different perspective. You're going to see it as a story. You're going to get more out of your emotional brain and more into your logical brain. You're going to say, "Whoa, that is definitely some thinking that's not serving me."

You're going to spot maybe that block away and thinking even more. The stuff is so helpful. It's so helpful to calm our nervous system with things. I also find that a lot of people with black and white thinking, they're very judgmental with themselves. I hear this a lot from clients that say, "No, Lindsay, what I'm experiencing right now is bad or awful. Something's gone wrong." I know we label a lot of emotions as negative and that's why on the show I'll typically say, "negative".

What if there's never a negative bad or wrong thing that ever happens to us? Think about that for a second. Again, if we go back to the self-coaching model, we look at every single circumstance as neutral. Even ones that we would very quickly label as bad of like a death, or a divorce, or whatever, it's just all neutral. There's nothing bad that can ever happen. What if we just take those labels off? That's what I'm encouraging my clients to do is, "Nothing's gone wrong here. You're not feeling great today. Let's talk about it."

"I just feel like I'm struggling." I'm like, "Watch the way you're labeling that because is the way you're labeling that really going to serve you?" Then what happens is you start feeling feelings, which we need to process. Then you start to have to judgment of the feelings, and so then we got to process the judgment of the feelings. Let's just take the judgment off. Let's just start to believe like nothing has ever gone wrong. There's never anything bad that can happen. It's all just a part of the journey."

I remember thinking this for the first time as I went through my divorce. I just felt like I was putting this label on myself and in essence, as I was putting this label of like, "I'm divorced and divorce equals bad," I remember having this higher moment of consciousness and thinking, "Is that really what we're going through life to do is to have this ultimate success of doing everything perfectly or is it that we're going through life to experience growth?" The way that we experience growth the most is from making what some people would consider mistakes.



When I look back on things like my divorce and other mistakes that I've made in my life, "mistakes" it's like, "Bam, that was such an amazing growth opportunity." That's how I'll start to label it now in my brain. I'll be like, "What a great growth opportunity." Didn't hit my goal this month, let's figure out how to grow from this. Great, this thing didn't happen, it hurt. We feel the feelings of this, just like I walked you through. We figure out what I intentionally want to think instead and whoop, another opportunity to grow because I just realized, it does not serve me to sit around and judge myself even when I am expecting blocking my thinking.

As I said earlier, this is coming from a childhood of experiencing a lot of black and white behavior and a lot of black and white thoughts. I want to show a ton of love to myself because in essence, the little kid version of me, that works for her. The reason I got to where I am today is because some of that black and white thinking and vacillating behavior that was like, "I'm getting the f out of here. Here's how I'm going to do it," and just having this drive for success.

This is how a lot of women become go-getters is like, "I'm not stopping until I get what I want." Then what happens is that we start to get what we want, it's like, "Whoa, wait a second. I think I may actually be sabotaging now what it is I've gained to achieve because I don't know how to hold onto it. I don't know how to be in essence, in this fight mentality anymore. How do I change it? The way we start to change it is to recognize our black and white thinking and start to in essence, change our thoughts.

Big stuff here, my friend. I hope you have some takeaways with this. If your brain is really fighting me on this one of like, "I don't want to stop labeling this thing as bad," it doesn't mean you have to. There are definitely some things in our world that is not great stuff. We get racism, discrimination, murder, all those other things, but we still have to in essence, this is just what I've chosen to believe. You can choose to believe whatever you want is taking that back and saying, "Yes, this is pretty awful or pretty bad, but maybe there's some good in this too."

Again, I know if we're looking at just the racism thing, some of you're like, "That's really coming from a position of privilege, Lindsay." I totally get that, but even when I'm thinking about gender discrimination and stuff, it's like, "Some of this is pretty awful, but some of this is also pretty awesome." This is an opportunity for women to really step up to the plates and do so many things from this. Again, take what you love, leave the rest. I just want you to start to think about what is serving you and not serving you here. Really, I'm here just to serve you however you wish.



If you do hire me as your coach, you tell me, "Here are the goals that I want to get," I'm going to be the one that's going to challenge you to get there and someone that's going to be calling you off on your BS, which is sometimes black and white thinking. Just know that, my friends. That's all I have for you today. Thanks for tuning in to the show and I'll see you on the next episode. Bye.

[music]

Hey there, Miss Unstoppable. Thanks so much for tuning into this episode. If you enjoyed it, share it with a friend. Send them a picture of this episode via text, via email, share it on social media, I'm sure they would be so appreciative to know these strategies and tips on how to accomplish your dreams. If you are ready to guarantee you're going to accomplish your goals and dreams, then it's time to start coaching with me.

In my nine-month simple success coaching system, I am going to walk you every single step of the way to ensure that you get the goals and dreams that you want. The first step is to apply for a free 60-minute consult call. Just go to [LindsayEpreston.com/apply](https://www.LindsayEPreston.com/apply) to get started. As always, my friend, remember, you're only as unstoppable as you believe you can be, so believe in yourself. You got this.