

Podcast Episode #006

One Question to Ask Yourself For a Guaranteed Breakthrough

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Announcer: Welcome to the Lift Your Life Project with Coach Pamela.

Pamela: Welcome to the Lift Your Life Project. I'm Pamela Mitchell, also known as Coach Pamela. This is the podcast devoted to helping you meld your personal self and your professional self into an enhanced version of your best self. My goal is to help you take control of your work and your life, feel more relaxed and confident, and experience the satisfaction and fulfillment of a sustainable successful life. Yeah, all good stuff. Speaking of good stuff, lots of good stuff for you today. In our Tales from the Coaching Front, I talked about the one question to ask yourself for a guaranteed breakthrough.

I like to say that this question brings instant clarity. Yeah, good stuff there. In Ask Coach Pamela, I answered a question that comes up time and time again during my coaching sessions. I swear, every client has asked me this. I get asked this in talks, everything. How do I change negative thoughts? I've got some really good advice for you there today that can actually bring about a change as well. That and more for you. Lots on top, let's get this show started.

Announcer: Now, it's Tales from the Coaching Front.

Pamela: I had a call recently with a client where we were talking about a situation that she's facing where she is staying up too late. This is creating a lot of problems because even though she knows better that she should be going to bed, she's still staying up. Mostly surfing online and then finding that she's really tired the next day. I can relate to this because actually it's a problem that I actually struggle with myself. As I'm listening to this as often I do during coaching I'm thinking, "Yeah, I know that one." Anyway, she was talking about the noise in her head that was telling her that the online task that she wanted to do, this thing that she was interested in looking at, that it needed to be handled right that moment.



That that noise was so loud that it felt almost like a compulsion and even though there was another part of herself saying, "You need to go to bed. You know you need to go to bed," that that other compulsive part of her was really, really nagging at her and it was just a lot of conversation going on in her mind. We were discussing this and then she asked me this question. She said, "I'm hearing all these noises in my head and one side of me is saying I should do one thing and another side of me is saying I should do another thing, how do I know what's really true?" What I said to her then was when I am struggling about what I should do and there's a lot of noise in my head about, "Hey, I want to do this one thing but this other idea says, "No, no, no. You need to do that.""

There's just a lot of back and forth with the ... As we call them in coaching, committee members arguing inside their heads. I said, there's a question that a therapist that I once went to gave to me and I use this question as a touch stone to cut through all that mental noise. The question that I ask myself when I am arguing inside is, "What's the most loving thing I can do for myself right now?" She took a moment and she said, "Wow." I said, "If we ask you that question last night, what's the most loving thing I could do for myself right now, what would you have said?" She said, "I would have said go to bed."

The power of that question? It asks our heart not our head because what's happening in those moments where there's a lot of noises is that our head is in a mental argument. We have to find a way to tap into the heart because the heart will show us the truth of what is really the right thing for us to do in that moment. Now, here's a thing to understand: just because you now know what the most loving thing that you can do for yourself is right now that doesn't mean necessarily that the noise in your head stops. You can expect that all the excuses that your head would have used to get you to do what you should have been doing that those will all still be presented to you.

The difference from when you asked this question versus not asking this question is if you don't ask it then you're arguing back and forth, should I? Should I not? When you say, what is the most loving thing I can do for myself right now and you decide to follow it, everything that comes up in your head, every question, every compulsion you can actually problem solve. You can find a new way to do this. Let me give you an example from my own life. I have been on the road quite a bit lately. I had two weeks of just back to back travel and giving talks and all of that and so when I finally got home on a Saturday afternoon I was just exhausted. However, I knew that in a week I was going away on another trip.

This trip even though it's work also has some fun and some play. I knew that I needed a bunch of new clothing for this because I just did the Konmari thing, the magic of tidying up. The name of that book, I don't know. Marie Kondo's book which I'll probably talk about in another episode. Anyway, suffice it to say that it involves tossing a lot of



clothing and only keeping those things that spark joy. You'll be surprised to find out how little truly sparks joy when you start sifting through. I was working to reduce the wardrobe and as I'm sitting here I'm thinking, "Gosh, I really need to go shopping. I need to get some things for this trip," because I knew that I had quite a bit of work to do.

I wasn't going to be able to do it during the week and I was leaving the following Saturday morning. However, I took a step back and I asked myself that question that I gave to my client. I said, "Pamela, what's the most loving thing you can do for yourself right now?" The answer came. I need to stay home. Pamela, you need to stay home. You need to stay home and you need to go get some rest. I made that decision, I'm like, "Okay, I'm going to stay home. I'm going to get some rest." That didn't mean that that task that was going through my head didn't need to be completed. I still needed to get some clothes for this trip.

I couldn't change the details of the work that I needed to do. I had to start brainstorming about how I was going to solve this problem even though I was going to for sure stay home. I've made that decision but how was I going to solve this problem? What I decided is that I would lie in bed and I would grab my iPad mini and I would open up all of my little shopping apps and I would shop online. I really don't do this unless it's Amazon. I have to admit, big Amazon Prime girl. Apart from that I'm not doing it. This time I decided that I would order a bunch of clothes online and that I would order different sizes and all of that. I would have it all shipped to me here. I would try everything on and that whatever didn't work I would send it back.

That was how I decided that I would solve the problem and still do what was most loving for myself. This is what I wanted to share with you my lovely Lift off listener, when you are wondering how do I know what's really true and there's a lot of noise going in your head. You're back and forth about whether or not you should actually take a step or do something. Just ask yourself, what's the most loving thing I can do for myself right now? When you do that it will cut straight through all that noise in your head and you will know exactly the next step that you need to take. That's it for Tales from the Coaching Front. Now, onto our next segment.

Announcer: Got a question? She's got your answer. It's time for Ask Coach Pamela.

Pamela: In today's Ask Coach Pamela, we are going to talk about a book that I like to recommend. I one day got a Twitter question that asked me about what books I was reading. I thought that was such a great question because I often times read books for clients because clients will ask me to give recommendations for particular things that they might be struggling with. I make it a point to always take a look at what's going on, what the latest books are, what's happening. I often do have a whole reserve of books that I recommend for clients for particular challenges. For this Ask Coach Pamela I



decided to recommend a book to you guys that I often recommend to my clients for the particular challenge of how to change your thoughts.

Now, here's the thing. Many times we talk about the need to shift what we're saying inside ourselves to bring about a change that we want to make in our lives. What happens is that a client will start to recognize that they want to have a particular result: maybe it's losing weight, maybe it's finding a new job. Their internal conversation doesn't match the result that they want to achieve in their lives. Now, have you found that happens to you? I'm sure you have. As we all have, myself included. Here's a thing, it's really critical that our internal conversation matches what goals we set for ourselves. When there's a disconnect between those two then it becomes very, very difficult to make progress.

The conversation in our head is really critical because our thoughts create our feelings. Oftentimes we think it's the other way around that our feelings are just there and we don't really know why. We just know we're feeling a particular way until we're talking along with those feelings. In fact, if you drill down you'll realize that oftentimes we've been having particular thoughts and that those thoughts result in a feeling. If we're thinking, "I just can't get this done. I just can't make it happen," that creates one particular emotional state, when we think, "I can get it done, I'm not sure how but I can get it done."

That creates a different emotional state. You want to be very mindful of the emotional state that you're creating by the conversation that you're having in your head. What I want to also add to that is that joking does count. This is a big argument that I oftentimes have with my husband because he'll just say, "I'm just joking." Which when you say that to a coach we coaches are like, "No, there's never really any joking when it comes to what we want to create." Our words do matter. There are ways to have humor about what you're saying. It's not to say that, "We can never poke fun at ourselves in a healthy way." It's just how do we say that. Let me give you an example.

I am a person that I have to admit I just get all consumed to what I'm doing and I am not the best person when it comes to what particular day or date of the month it is. I lose track. I'm very focused on work and everything and before I know it oh my gosh it's the 17th and where did the time go? This is a big thing that I like to joke about with my husband but instead of saying, "I'm such a loser" if I miss something in particular I'll just say, "Gosh, you know I am not to be trusted with dates." Now, the latter, I am not to be trusted with dates is a statement of fact. That is true but saying, "I'm such a loser,"

if I miss something is a statement of being. All of a sudden I've hung something around my neck that begins to create a particular emotional state. This is why it's really, really critical to make sure that your words are consistent and congruent with a more positive



emotional state as opposed to pulling yourself down. The book that I always recommend to clients for this is a great book called *What to Say When You Talk to Yourself?* It's by Shad Helmstetter, Ph.D. It's an old book. It's a little book, it's like from 1982 but it is just a really great outline and a really great step by step plan for how to reprogram those mental conversations that we're having with ourselves.

He breaks it down for you. He starts at level one which is the level of negative acceptance saying, "I can't do things." Then all of a sudden it moves up to level two of self-talk where you say to yourself, "I ought to," or, "I should." Then he moves it into level three and level four which are "I no longer" which is shifting and "I am" which creates a new and better you all the way up to the universal it is. He breaks down all of these different internal levels of conversation that we can have with ourselves. Then he gives a very tactical, practical plan for reprogramming your thinking. I've actually used this, I mean, I've used this before I became a coach and when I became a coach I found it to be a very effective, very understandable way to begin making that internal change. I highly recommend checking out this book.

Just as a first step I would also recommend that you notice what you say and begin writing it down. This will be the first little step before you even take a look at the book. Just start paying attention to what you're saying internally to yourself or the conversation that you're having with yourself about the particular situations in your life, the particular challenges you're facing. Just notice, just start writing them down and then you'll have written examples when you start to look at this book and you can begin crafting a very effective plan that works for you. The thought that I want to leave you with is something to really just think about when you start changing your internal conversation with yourself.

When you start noticing what you're saying to yourself, ask yourself this question: "Is this what I want to create in my life?" If it is, start saying more of it. If it's not, it's time to change what you say when you talk to yourself.

That's it for this segment of the Lift Your Life Project. Be sure to visit our website liftyourlifeproject.com/podcast where you can download a transcript of today's episode. If you have a question for Ask Coach Pamela go to liftyourlifeproject.com/question and you can leave me a voicemail there. Yes you can. Hey, if I answered that question during an upcoming episode I will send you a free deck of reinvention cards. Yes, go down over there. Leave me a question.

Also, you can connect with me on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram @TheCoachPamela. If you enjoyed this episode, please leave a review for us on iTunes. Your feedback does make a difference. Today's Lift Off inspiration comes from one of my favorite authors, and what he says is "what we speak becomes the house we



live in.” Definitely words to take away given our topic today. Thank you for listening. Remember, why settle for good when great is waiting? Take one small step this week to lift your life. Bye for now.

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