

## Ep #1: Life Is Choices



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Olivia Vizachero

## Ep #1: Life Is Choices

Welcome to *The Less Stressed Lawyer* podcast episode one. In this episode, I'm going to teach you how to set the foundation for creating a life you're obsessed with. It starts with identifying and owning the choices you've made and continue to make that are leading to your current results. You ready? Let's go.

Welcome to The Less Stressed Lawyer. The only podcast that teaches you how to manage your mind so you can live a life with less stress and far more fulfillment. If you're a lawyer who's over the overwhelm and tired of trying to hustle your way to happiness, you're in the right place. Now, here's your host, lawyer turned life coach Olivia Vizachero.

Hello, hello, hello. You guys, I am so excited to kick off episode one. This podcast has been a long time in the making, and I'm so excited to finally bring it to life. I always tell people that a podcast episode changed my life, and I know that might sound super cheesy, but it's 1000% true. I hope that the content and concepts that I will share with you over the eventual hundreds of episodes that I record change your life as well.

I'm so excited to take what you've learned, apply it, and transform your life. And I'm excited to hear about those transformations if you choose to share them with me via email or social media. It's one of my favorite parts about my job, hearing about the breakthroughs and amazing transformations people have once they start applying these coaching concepts and tools to their everyday lives.

So, long story short, I'm just excited across the board. Okay? Now, short side note, you know who isn't excited right now? My cats, Snickers and Bear. I am recording this episode in the evening from my home office, and

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you guys they have reached their limit on me being in here today, and they are letting it be known.

So, I had to close the door, so they couldn't jump on the desk and mess with my microphone. Hopefully, they won't give me too hard of a time. Still, Snickers likes to loudly meow to express her displeasure, so I'm sure one of these days, you'll hear her in the background. Hopefully not today, though, but we'll see.

Anyways, welcome; I'm so excited for this episode, not just because it's the first episode but because of what I've decided to teach you today. I've been known to be sentimental at times. In accordance with that tendency, as I was thinking about what I wanted to teach you in episode one, I decided to teach you the first coaching concept I ever learned. The concept that totally changed my life, but before we dive into that, I want to go over a few things.

First, I want to give you a little background on me. I'll spare you the war and peace version of how when I was eight, I decided I wanted to be a criminal defense attorney for the Italian Mafia. That's a story for another day. But, long story short, I followed my dream, and I eventually became an attorney. I worked in criminal defense for a while. I also worked in big law doing complex commercial litigation.

While I was in big law, I found coaching through a podcast like I mentioned earlier, and once I learned about coaching, I really fell in love with this work. I knew that I could help other people transform their own lives like I had done myself by applying those coaching concepts and tools. So, I knew I wanted to become a coach. I knew I wanted to help attorneys who are over the overwhelm, and that's how we got here. Alright, that's a little bit about me.

Now, the second thing I want to talk about. Who is this podcast for? This podcast is designed to serve three specific groups of people. Okay. You

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might identify with one specific group in particular. The first group of people that this podcast will serve are the people who are really struggling and almost at a point of paralysis with the overwhelm.

So, they are almost nonfunctioning, really indulging in a lot of avoidant behavior. They feel so anxious and so stressed that they're not able to get through anything on their to-do list. They're people-pleasing, perfectionism, and procrastination tendencies are really causing them to have terrible days on a pretty regular basis. If that's you, I've got you. We are going to get you on the right track, and I'm going to teach you how to start taking action in spite of and despite of a lot of discomforts that you're experiencing.

I'm going to teach you how to dial down that discomfort, so you feel so much better on a daily basis. So, if that's you and you're really struggling with feeling burned out and not hitting those metrics that you want to be hitting in your professional and personal life, I've got you. Okay? The second group of people that this podcast is for, the over workers who, from the outside, seemingly have it all together, but behind the scenes, they're running around like a chicken with their heads cut off. Right?

So, they are running around spinning all the plates, trying to keep anything from falling, but it's exhausting. They're very reactive. They're not proactive. What they're doing on a daily basis feels really unintentional, and you feel like the world is about to come crashing down on you. I've got you too, okay? And then the third group of people that this podcast is going to serve are the folks that are doing pretty well, but they still want to take their success their life to the next level.

So, whether you're in the paralysis group, whether you're in the running around like a chicken with your head cut off barely keeping it together group, or things look pretty good, and you feel like you've got a good handle on where you are in life. Still, you want to go even further to really

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create a life that you're obsessed with. We're going to talk about all of it. I've got you covered.

Now, third, I just gave you a brief overview of what we'll be covering throughout this podcast, okay? The one thing I want you to know is that what you're going to get from tuning in every week, you're going to get a crazy amount of awareness. And every single strategy, you need to change the parts of your life that you don't love. You'll gain a comprehensive understanding of the true cause of all of your negative feelings and any negative actions that you take, that you don't like, that don't serve you, and inaction too.

You know that spinning and not getting things done, the worry, kind of being in your own head, second-guessing yourself. You'll get awareness as to what's driving all of that. You're going to learn how to work through that discomfort and take action in spite of and despite it. And here's the other thing, we're going to talk about all things, personal and professional, because you'll hear me say this a ton over the course of this podcast, but how we do one thing is how we do everything.

You already know this, but I'll say it anyway, your personal life affects your professional life, and your professional life affects your personal life. They bleed into one another. So, we're going to cover it all. Okay. Now that we've covered all of that let's dive into today's topic. I'm calling it, Life is Choices. Okay?

I want to start by walking you through one of my favorite exercises. It's called the life wheel, and the reason I love this exercise is because of the awareness it provides, okay? You'll hear me say this a million times throughout the podcast, but awareness is absolutely everything. So, here's how we start with this exercise. I want you to go get a piece of paper and draw a big circle on it, or you can go to the show notes. You'll find a link to the page on my website for this podcast episode, and I'll give you guys a

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copy of the life wheel worksheet that you can download and use for this exercise.

If you don't want to stop what you're doing right now, just grab a piece of paper, any piece will work, and draw a big circle on it, okay? Then, divide that circle into eight different sections just like a pie, okay? One section for each of the following categories:

1. Career
2. Finances
3. Health
4. Family and Friends
5. Romance
6. Personal Growth
7. Fun and Recreation
8. Physical Environment

I'm going to repeat those just in case I was talking too fast. I have a tendency to do that. Okay, career, finances, health, family and friends, romance, personal growth, fun and recreation, and physical environment?

So, those are the eight different categories. For each category, I want you to give it a rating on a scale of 1-10. Now, we're not ranking these okay. We're rating them. So, on a scale of 1-10, 10 being the highest, I want you to rate your level of satisfaction in each of these areas of your life, okay?

For my overthinkers out there, I do not want you to spend a lot of time overthinking and second-guessing your ratings. Whatever the first number that pops into your mind is for each category, pick that. Go with that gut reaction. That's what we want to use here, okay? Now, after you've rated each category, I want you to think about what would make each category a

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ten. What would the ideal be in each of those categories? This is just a side note because sometimes people get confused about the last one.

For physical environment, I mean where you spend your time. So, that might be your home. It might be your car. It might be your office if you're not working from home and still go into the office? So, just wherever you spend your time physically, okay? Now, one thing I notice when people complete this exercise is that they're a little surprised by their numbers.

Oftentimes their ratings aren't as high as they would hope that they would be, and if that's you, that's totally okay. Through the course of this podcast, we're going to address all of the issues causing your current ratings to be what they are so we can get you closer to being tens across the board. Before we do that, I've got to let you in on a harsh truth about your current ratings. You're choosing all of your current ratings.

I don't mean you're choosing what numbers you give those categories, each of those eight categories, of course, you're making that choice, right? What I actually mean here is that you are choosing your current results. Whatever makes each category the number that you rated it, you're choosing those results. Here's the thing: every single thing that you have and everything you don't have in your life is the result of a choice you've made.

So, I want you to think about these eight categories and the number you've rated each one. I want to explain to you how you've got to have those results. How you got where you are right now, okay? You made a choice, intentional or unintentional, that created your current results. Choices that created the status quo, and here's the bigger kicker you keep choosing status quo. Every single day that you don't choose to make a change, you're choosing your current life and current results.

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So often, people fall victim to the belief that their life is happening to them. Maybe that's you. Maybe you think your life is happening to you. You're just at the effect of your circumstances that everything is outside your control. It's just all happening to you, but it isn't you guys. You're choosing all of it. You're choosing to maintain the status quo. You're choosing not to change it.

What's the problem with thinking your life is happening to you? Well, there are a couple. First, you feel completely helpless and out of control, which candidly feels awful, okay? You disempower yourself and keep tolerating a life you don't love because you're under this faulty assumption that your life is happening to you and don't have a say. You think it just is what it is, and I know people hate that phrase, but if you think that everything is just happening to you, that's really the mental framework and the state that you're in, okay?

And chances are, if that is where your head is at right now, you're also in a state of blame, thinking that your life is happening to you. You are blaming other people. You're blaming the world. You're blaming other circumstances for your life rather than taking ownership and really accepting your agency and autonomy here for having what you have and not having what you don't have.

When you're in that state of blame, you stay stuck unnecessarily. You create a barrier to change. I remember when I first learned this concept that life is choices, that we're choosing all of our current results, and man was this concept news to me. My brain practically exploded when I learned about it. Let me give you some backstory and if there's one thing you're going to learn about me through the course of this podcast is that I love a good backstory.

So, the first time that I learned everything we have in our lives is the result of a choice we've made and continued to make was a few months into my

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stint in big law. There I was hating my job, really confused honestly about how I wound up there. So, I had always wanted to be a criminal defense attorney ever since I was a kid. I find myself in big law doing complex commercial litigation, definitely not what I was interested in, what I was passionate about, and what I thought I was going to do. I was in such a state of victimhood and blame.

Aside from the money and the prestige of the job, there was really nothing that I liked about that role, but I ended up there. And I found myself really confused as to how that happened. The story I was telling myself was that I had been forced to take that job. I very much felt like that happened to me. That I wasn't choosing it. That I didn't choose it. That I was forced and pushed to take that job. That I sort of fell into it. That was the narrative that I had at the time, and I hear that from some of my clients all of the time now.

They're like, I don't know how I ended up here. It feels like their life is just happening to them, like I mentioned earlier, and that was definitely me in this moment of my life. I felt like life was happening to me that I just stumbled into this position, and I felt like I had been pushed by people in my life who had really strong opinions about me taking this job. It was a ton of money and many quote-on-quote financial security and stability. It looked good on paper, and people had strong opinions about my decision to say yes or no to that role.

I very much felt like I didn't have a say in the matter that my friends and family, specifically my parents, really didn't understand what I was passionate about and what my dreams and desires were for my legal career. I felt like they had forced me to take that job. So, as I was in this state of despair, I got this brilliant idea to start my own business because I didn't want to give up the money that I was making in big law. Still, I wanted

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to go back and practice criminal defense, and at the time, I just didn't think I could make that amount of money doing criminal defense work.

I now have totally changed my thesis on that. I definitely think it's possible to make just as much, but at the time, I didn't. So, I embarked on this entrepreneurial venture to come up with a business, build the business, and really like bankroll my big law salary so I could leave and go do whatever it is that I wanted to do. Little did I know that was going to lead me to coaching, which is amazing. It's ultimately how I wound up here. Still, at the time, I wasn't quite sure what I wanted to do, and I just started bingeing entrepreneurial content.

As I did through going down a rabbit hole, I stumbled upon a podcast, Brooke Castillo's The Life Coach School podcast. I always tell the people the message that you need to hear has a way of finding you if you choose to listen to it and keep your ears open for it. And the first episode of hers that I ever listened to was about this concept life is choices. She basically smacked you on the forehead and alerted you to the fact that everything you have or don't have in your life is the result of the choice that you're making.

And she very specifically called me out through the podcast episode to say, hey, that job that you have that you hate, news flash, you chose it. I was like, what? Excuse me, no, I didn't. I was forced into this. I got pushed into it by people in my life, right who didn't understand me, my hopes, my dreams, desires. I got pushed into being here, and she is like, with love, I want to offer you that's not true. I want to offer you that you chose to be exactly where you are. Again, the big kicker here is that you keep choosing it every single day. I said this a few minutes ago, you guys, my brain exploded, and it's like being in the Matrix.

I think where you see everything that's actually going on, I started to look back and rewind the tape at all of the choices I had made to end up in that

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position in that moment, right? None of it was unintentional. None of it was happening against my will or without me exercising my agency. Right? I had chosen all of it. I chose to go out for on-campus interviews. I chose to attend my call-back interview. I chose to accept the offer for a summer associate position. I chose to complete my summer there.

When they gave me an offer for a full-time position, I chose to accept it. I chose to take the Barr exam and then to start thereafter. I took the Barr, right? All of those decisions I made, alright? Then, the kicker, I continued to choose it every single day. No one was putting a gun to my head in the morning when I chose to go and show up at the office every day. I was making like 25 decisions on a daily basis, choosing that job, choosing the status quo every single day, even though I didn't like it, even though it wasn't what I quote on quote wanted to be doing, or at least that was the story I was telling myself.

Here's the thing that's so important about recognizing that you're choosing your current results and choosing your status quo that you're not pleased with. When you accept and acknowledge that you have made the choices that have created your current results, you get access to the question of why. When you're in a state of blame, very much believing that your life is happening to you against your will, you don't get access to the question of why.

Everything feels outside of your control. You think that it just is what is that you're living at the effect of your circumstances that you don't have any control right? This isn't actually the case. You are making a choice, but when you're in that state of blame, you can't ever get access to your reasoning if you think it's happening against your will, that you're not choosing it. When you own that you've made a choice and continue to make choices to create your current results, you get access to your reasoning for making those choices, from making those decisions.

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When I woke up to the truth that I had chosen this job and that I was continuing to choose it every single day, I got access to my reasoning. And I want to separate this into two separate buckets. Why did I originally choose that job, and why did I continue to choose to show up there every single day. They have similar reasons, but they're not identical, so we're going to take each one in turn.

Here's the ugly answer that I had to come to terms with. As you think about your own choices and the decisions you've made and continue to make to create your current status quo, your current results, I want you to be radically candid with yourself. No one else has to know your reasons other than you. Still, when you recognize that you have made choices to create your current results, you just want to be as brutally honest as possible. We're going to operate from curiosity here, not from judgment.

For me, my radically candid answer was that I cared way more about what other people thought of my decisions and life choices than I cared about pursuing what I was passionate about with following my dream. I cared more about other people's approval of doing the quote-on-quote responsible thing than I did trusting my gut and listening to my own instincts, okay? That's why I ended up taking the job that looked good on paper. That was prestigious and quote-on-quote financially secure, right? I cared way more about having my parents' approval and having the approval of close friends and other family members. That's what I cared about more. And I didn't want them to feel disappointed in my decision.

So, I cared more about their emotional experience regarding my decisions than I did my own emotional experience. So, that's the first bucket. Then, there's the reasoning of why I continued to choose that job every single day when I didn't care for it, right? Again, my preoccupation or concern with what people would think of me walking away from the money and prestige,

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so that was part of it. I also had a hang-up about thinking that other people, colleges of mine, would think that I couldn't hack it.

So, I didn't want to feel embarrassed or judged by them. So, these were the reasons that I made the choice in the first place and continued to make it. When you really sit back and examine that, you get access to what your reasons are, and you get to decide whether or not you will like your reasons, right? For me, I didn't like those reasons, and also you start to recognize this is going to be really problematic throughout the course of your life if you keep making decisions based on what other people are going to think about your choices rather than you following your true desires and what you want to do.

So, when you own that you are making these decisions and you get access to the question of why and you identify your reasons no matter how uncomfortable they are, no matter how ugly your reasons might be, you get to then decide, do I like my reasons? And when I went through this process, my answer was a resounding no. Of course, I don't like these being my reasons for choosing this job, right?

Great reasons to choose a job and continue to choose a job are I'm so passionate about the work that I do. I love the environment that I get to work in. I love the people that I work with. I feel like I make a meaningful impact on the world. Those are great reasons to choose a job. My reasons weren't anything like that, right? My reasons were I care more about other people's opinions than I do following my dream. I was doing it because it was the responsible thing to do or the thing that looked good to other people.

I didn't like those reasons, so once I identified what my reasons were, I got to decide if I liked them and if I wanted to keep making the same choices based on that reasoning. So, in that moment, I essentially had two options, I could continue to make the same choice for the same reasons, the

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reasons I didn't like, or I could make a different choice. In that moment, I decided what was right for me. I decided to make a different choice, an empowered choice.

That's what I want you to do today. I want you to identify your reasons for choosing all of your current results, and I want you to decide whether you like them or not. If you don't like them, make a really empowered decision about what you're going to do moving forward if you don't. Life is choices. Everything you have in your life and everything you don't have in your life, you're choosing it. Everything you don't have and wish you did, you're choosing that too. Everything that you have that you don't like, you're choosing that too. Is this an uncomfortable truth? Yeah, probably, at least at first, but when you own that you've created your current results through the choices that you've made, here's what happens.

First and foremost, you stop feeling helpless because you take ownership of your life, of your results, over the part that you've played in creating them, and feeling in control feels better. When you own that you've made a choice and you keep making a choice, you get access to the question of why. Why did you make the choice you did. Why do you keep making the same choice? Why is this what you're choosing? And when you ask yourself the question of why you get access to your reasons.

Once you know your reasons, you get to decide if you like them and if you don't, you can choose differently moving forward. So, I want you to go through all eight of these categories on the life wheel, okay? You rated them the number that you did. If you struggled to figure out what would make each category a ten, part of the exercise that I walked you through initially. I'm going to talk about this in the next episode.

I actually find that a lot of my clients struggle with identifying and figuring out what it is that they want, what that best-case scenario looks like, if that's you, don't fret. I'm going to walk you through specifically how to do that.

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Still, for now, I just want you to go through, you rated them the number that you did, and I want you in each category to identify the choices that you've made that have created your current results.

If doing this for all eight of the categories on the life wheel feels overwhelming to you, just pick one to start with. Just pick one category, go through it, identify your choices, own them, and ask yourself why. Why did I choose what I did? Why do I keep choosing the way that I'm choosing, right? Identify those choices, identify your reasons, and then decide do you like them. If you don't, I want to invite you to make a different choice moving forward.

Decide to choose differently. Life is choices, you guys. Own your choices, love your reasons for making them, and if you don't decide to choose differently, starting right now. Alright, that is what I've got for you for episode one. I will see you guys in the next episode.

Oh, one more thing, if you enjoyed today's show and don't want to worry about missing an episode, be sure to follow the show wherever you listen to podcasts. If you haven't already, I'd really appreciate it if you'd leave a rating and review to let me know what you think about The Less Stressed Lawyer podcast.

It doesn't have to be a five-star review. Although, I really hope you love the show. I really want your honest feedback, so I can create an amazing podcast that provides you with a ton of value. Visit [thelessstressedlawyer.com/podcastlaunch](https://thelessstressedlawyer.com/podcastlaunch) for step-by-step instructions on how to follow, rate, and review the podcast. I'll talk to you guys soon.

Thanks for listening to The Less Stressed Lawyer podcast. If you want more info about Olivia Vizachero or the show's notes or resources from today's episode, visit [thelessstressedlawyer.com](https://thelessstressedlawyer.com).

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