

## Ep #82: Caring About What Other People Think (Part 1) - What It Costs You



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

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You're listening to *The Less Stressed Lawyer* podcast, Episode 82. Today, we're talking all about how to stop caring about what other people think. 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.

Well, hello there. How are you? I hope you're as excited as I am to talk about how to stop caring about what other people think. This is one of the coaching concepts that I was introduced to pretty early on into my relationship with coaching, if that makes sense, and it was really transformational for me.

I used to care so much about what everyone thought, and it had such a negative impact on my life. I'm going to talk a decent amount about that in today's episode. I have so much to say, I've actually learned a lot about this, but I also have a lot of my own stuff to share as well.

I'm going to turn this into a two part episode because I don't want it to be obnoxiously long, and I don't want to rush through the things that I have to teach you. So, I'm going to take my time with it, and just cover it in two separate episodes.

Today's episode is really going to focus on getting intimately aware of what caring about what other people think is costing you. What being preoccupied with other people's opinions about you, and about what you're doing, what kind of impact that's having on your life. That's what I want to talk about today.

Then, in the next episode, little teaser, I'm going to go through and teach you a framework that I recently taught in a masterclass that I hosted. That teaches you what you need to do in order to stop caring about what other

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people think. So, I really want to give you the ability to free yourselves from caring about other people's opinions.

I'm going to walk you through a process. You guys know that I love a process. I tell everyone that I have a flowchart brain. That is really how my brain sees the world and approaches every single problem. I can turn it into a flowchart or a logic tree, a decision tree. That's how I see the world. It's very much like mathematical proof theory. I see everything as an if/then equation.

So, I broke down 'how to stop caring about what other people think' into a process that I'm going to give you in the next episode. But first, let's slow down a second, and talk about if you're someone who cares a lot about what other people think about you, about what you do, about what you don't do, or even about other people.

If you care about other people's opinions about other people, I think we weaponize that against ourselves as well. It's like, you notice someone else's judgment of another person. Then our fear of being judged, our fear of having someone have an opinion about us, ultimately deters our behavior or impacts our behavior in some way.

We might have wanted to do something... I'll just use a silly example. Let's say, you wanted to get a tattoo. But then you heard your grandmother talking about someone else with a tattoo, and she was judging the person with the tattoo, and then you choose to not get the tattoo because you saw your grandmother exhibit an opinion about someone else. Right?

So, it's these three different ways that we care about other people's opinions: Their opinions about us, their opinions about our actions, and then their opinions about other people and their actions. We use all three of these opinions against ourselves to really hinder the things that we do.

Take a second and start to take an inventory. I'm going to talk a little bit more about this in the next episode, and we're going to go through part of the exercise. It will just be identifying judgments that you think people have

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about you. But we can start that process now. What are you afraid that other people think about you?

The easiest way to start to identify the judgments that you're afraid people have, the opinions that you think they have, is just to finish the sentence, "People think I'm..." People think I'm what? "People think I'm..." Okay? Complete that sentence as many ways as you can think of.

If you want to get more specific, if that's a little too broad for you, that's not a problem. We can get more specific with what we mean by "people." So, what do your clients think of you? What do your colleagues think of you? What does your boss think about you? What do the associates you supervise think about you?

What does your assistant think about you? What does your partner think about you? What do your parents think about you? What do your friends think about you? What do your kids think about you? What do your neighbors think about you? Start to make lists for each of these categories of people.

You can even get so specific as to say one specific person. So, whoever the person that you might be worried about having some judgments or opinions of you, just list their name. "He/She/They, think this. Eric thinks this about me. Miranda thinks that about me." Just pick the person and start to write out the judgments or the opinions you think they have about you.

Now, think about the action that you take. So, those are going to be judgments particularly geared towards just who you are as a person, based on your personality or the actions that you've taken. But it's a judgment about someone's personality based on the actions that they've taken. Right?

For example, if you don't work weekends, you might think someone's opinion of you is that you're not a team player. Okay? Now, that would be a judgment about you, even though it's based off of the action. Versus a judgement about the action itself.

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So, what would you think that someone thinks about your actions? Would you think, that they think not working on the weekends is irresponsible? These are going to be a little redundant. But you guys know that I like a little bit of redundancy, because it pulls out some nuance in the different things that come up when we answer redundant questions.

Start to make lists. What are all of the judgments that you think people have about you and the things that you do? Or the things that you want to do that you're afraid to do, because you're afraid to be judged for doing them?

For instance, maybe you're a vegetarian and you're questioning that. And you want to start eating meat again, but a lot of your friends are also vegetarian. So, what judgements would they have about you eating meat? Maybe you're not making the switch back to eating meat because you're afraid of being judged. That's just an example.

But I want you to compile your lists. What are these judgments? List them all out. Then I want you to start to think about this, what is it costing you to care about these opinions, about these judgments? What aren't you doing because you're afraid someone is thinking this thought, or would think this thought if you did something different than what you're doing?

What aren't you pursuing in your life because you're afraid that someone else is going to judge you or have an opinion about what you would pursue, or how you would pursue it? What parts of yourself are you hiding? Are you playing small in some way? Or are you being more agreeable? Are you shrinking yourself and your personality to avoid someone else's opinion of you? What are you missing out on?

I really love this next question. A friend of mine reached out to me recently, and he made this point about how you're really always just choosing your regret, which regret will you have? The regret of doing something, or the regret of not doing it?

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So, the last question I have for you, when we're thinking about what is it costing us to care about other people's opinions, is: What regrets are you accumulating by caring about what other people think? How you're altering the things that you do, and the things that you don't do, in response, or even in anticipation, of someone else's judgment?

You can pause this episode and take a minute or two to really think about this. What is it costing you to be preoccupied with what people think of you? It almost makes me start to get emotional when I really think about how limiting it is to care about what other people think.

How we limit our experiences. How we don't live authentically. How we don't pursue the lives that we would prefer to be living, because we're afraid of someone else's opinion of us.

Now, if you're having a hard time articulating what caring about other people's opinions is costing you, another question that gets at this is just to ask and answer: Where in your life would you choose a different option than what you're currently choosing, if no one had an opinion about it?

It's like, "Oh if no one had opinion, I definitely wouldn't go home for Christmas. If no one had an opinion, I'd never work weekends. If no one had an opinion, I would never show up to work before 10am. If no one had an opinion, I would only check my email once a day."

Think about it. How would you be showing up differently if you didn't care about what another person thinks? If no one had an opinion about what it is that you do or don't do?

I wanted to talk about some of the ways that this has shown up in my life. Once I learned... We're going to talk about this in the next episode. The operative word here is really the word "opinion." Right? So, we have to come to terms with the fact that other people's opinions of us aren't true.

Because opinions are not facts. Opinions are just that, opinions. Just thoughts someone else thinks about us. They get to have their own

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judgments, or their own subjective stance on something, but that doesn't mean their stance is true. Facts are true. Stances, opinions, are just subjective beliefs. Okay?

Their thoughts... and you've heard me talk at length about the difference between circumstances and thoughts. So, another person's opinion is just their thought. It's not true. It's not a fact about us.

Once I learned that other people's opinions about us weren't true, and also, that we can't control what another person thinks about us... Again, that's a very in depth topic, so I'm going to go into detail about that in the next episode.

But I learned these two things: That opinions about us aren't true. And that we don't control another person's opinion about us. When I learned those two things, it really was permission for me to start living the life that I wanted to be living. I started to live life on my own terms.

When I realized that I didn't have control over what another person thought about me, I really decided to spend a lot less time caring about what other people think. If we believe we can control another person's opinion, then we think that we need to twist ourselves into a pretzel in order to control their opinion of us.

But if you realize that that is something that is outside of your control, and also that their negative thoughts about you, their negative opinion of you, their judgement of you isn't true, so that means they get to have it. And you don't have to concern yourself with it.

That was really my permission slip to start living life the way that I wanted to. To start living a life that felt authentic to me, and in alignment for me. A life on my own terms.

So, when I learned this concept, I started making different decisions in my life. One of the decisions that I made really, really early on, I wanted to have an elective surgery done. People in my family had strong opinions



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about it. And for a really long time, I hindered myself, and I didn't pursue something that I knew deep down I wanted to do for my own health and happiness. I didn't do it because I was afraid of being judged for doing it.

Sometimes people don't tell us what we think, and we're just making an assumption about what they think. Other times people tell us what they're thinking. This was an instance where people were telling me what they were thinking.

When I realized that their opinions weren't true, and also that I couldn't control their opinions, I couldn't change their mind, I decided to stop concerning myself with what they were thinking. I made the decision that made me happy. I elected to go forward with the procedure.

I'm so, so happy that I did. I absolutely believe it was the right choice for me. I'm so proud of myself for making that decision. It was the decision that was most aligned with what I wanted for myself, and it was only available to me on the other side of caring about what other people think.

Now, if I'm thinking temporally, one of the decisions that came shortly after this time was my decision to leave my big law job. A lot of people I know had a lot of really strong opinions about that decision. I might have mentioned that on the podcast before. I talk about it pretty openly.

But my friends and family were really opinionated about my decision to leave big law. They thought it was irresponsible. They thought I was being foolish. They thought it was stupid for me to walk away from that type of prestige and that kind of salary.

I had to trust myself to know what was right for me. I had to let them judge me, and I had to not care about what they thought. I actually worked with a woman, and she was amazing. She did the Attorney Development in the firm that I worked at. I was having my annual meeting with her, and before we were going to dive in and talk about some of the things that I was struggling with; I was really struggling with time management and procrastination at the time.



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Before we dove into really workshopping a strategy to improve, she sat me down and she said, "I have to be honest with you. I think you're really unhappy. I think you're tragically unhappy in this job." I just started crying. As soon as she said it, I broke down. Because she was right, I was tragically unhappy in that job.

I admitted to her that I was so, so unhappy, and that it wasn't what I wanted to be doing. I didn't feel like I was doing a good job there. It's just not what I wanted for myself. I just felt like it was not the right fit. She simply asked me such a powerful question; such a simple question, but a powerful one. She asked me, "What's keeping you here? You don't have to keep coming to a job you don't like."

I realized that there were two main things that were keeping me there. Actually, three main things. My parents' opinion about me working there, that was one. And then the other two were about my perceived opinions, judgments, that my colleagues would make. So, I figured that people would think that I failed, and that I couldn't hack it as an attorney.

Now, those judgments are kind of similar. But those were really the two statements that came up in my head at the time, so I'm just rehashing both of them for you. Those were the judgments that I was afraid that other people were going to have of me.

I kept choosing to stay in a job that I didn't enjoy, because I was trying to prevent someone from having that opinion about me. Okay? Now, that is not a great reason to stay in a job, because you're afraid about what other people will think if you leave it.

Great reasons to stay in a job are that you love it, you feel fulfilled by doing the type of work that you're doing, you have fun, you find it stimulating and rewarding, you enjoy the people that you work with. That wasn't me. I was just trying to avoid other people's judgment by continuing to stay in a job that I didn't like.

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When I recognized that those were my reasons, I realized that I didn't want to keep making that decision for those reasons. I wanted to choose differently. I wanted to let people have whatever judgments they were going to have. My parents had judgments. I'm sure people who I worked with had judgments when I left; about me, about my performance, about who I was, and the type of lawyer I was.

I just had to let them have their opinions. I had to take care of myself and do what was right for me. I also did this when I started my own business, when I quit practicing law, which was not too long after I left big law, but a little while later. A lot of people had judgments about me starting a coaching business.

I've talked about this a decent amount, especially every time I talk about business development. I really struggled with putting myself out there on social media, because I was so afraid of my former colleagues seeing my social media content and judging me.

I thought that they were going to think that I was stupid, and that coaching was stupid, and that I was pathetic for starting a coaching business, and that I couldn't hack it as an attorney, and that I had failed as a lawyer and that's why I was doing something else.

Now, that's not true. I could have had a long, successful career as a criminal defense attorney. That was work that I was passionate about. But I really wanted to become a coach, because I believe this is how I can truly best help people in the world. I believe in what I teach so strongly. I always tell people, "I feel like I went to law school in order to help people. And I finally feel like I actually do that now, in the work that I'm doing now."

But in the beginning, when I was getting my business off of the ground, I was hesitant to put myself out there. I really had to force myself to feel exposed, to feel embarrassed in front of other people, and feel judged. Because I believed that they had opinions about me, and about what I was going to be doing online.

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I recognized that there were two options for me. I could keep caring about what they think. And if I cared about what they think, and I let myself hold myself back from marketing, I was never going to be successful. I wasn't going to make anything of my business. I wasn't going to get it off the ground. I wasn't going to start making money.

I could care enough to hinder myself and my future success, the success that was ultimately available to me. Or I could deal with their judgment, deal with their opinions, stop caring about what other people think or thought at the time, long enough to start putting myself out there.

That's what I ultimately did. And honestly, not caring about what other people thought, or at least not caring enough to let it hold me back, it was a game changer. I now get to live a life that I love, because I got over caring about what other people think enough to pursue what was important to me.

Even recently, I'm renting furnished condos, and I was raised by a dad who strenuously believes that renting is a waste of your money. That was an opinion that I was allowing myself to be hindered by. I knew that he would think that. I knew that a lot of people would probably think that I was being impractical or irresponsible with spending money, when I own a perfectly fine house in Michigan that I could just continue to live in.

But the truth is, I don't want to. I want to live in different places across the country and across the world. I want to live in beautiful places that I don't have to decorate. And to me, that's worth it. Even if other people don't think it's worth it. That's okay for them to have that opinion. I don't have to hinder myself or alter my behavior because of it. I can simply not care about their judgment, and I can do what makes me happy.

These are just a few different examples of ways that once I learned that I can't control what other people think, and that other people's opinions of me aren't true, I started to give myself permission to choose what was important to me. To choose what I wanted, and to care less about what they thought of what I was doing. Okay?

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It would be so tragic to me to envision a life where I never got over caring about what other people think. I would probably be still working in a job that I strenuously disliked. I wouldn't have pursued running my own business. I would have held myself back from that.

I would have played it safe and played small. I would have never started showing up on social media. I wouldn't have made changes in my life that make me happy, even if they don't seem "practical" or responsible. I'd be living as less of myself. I'd be living less of the life that I want to be living.

Now, I'm not wanting to really hold myself back, personality wise. Some people might think I'm over the top, and I'm okay with that. But I know a lot of people who hold themselves back and water themselves down, because they're afraid of being judged by other people.

So, if that's something that you're doing, think about that. Who would you be? How would you get to show up? What would you be doing instead, if you stopped caring so much about what other people think? What is it costing you? Is it costing you the life that you want to be living? Is it costing you beautiful experiences that you would get to have, if you didn't care so much about other people's opinions of you and the things that you do?

Would you have fewer regrets in life if you got over caring about other people's opinions? Would you miss out on fewer things, if you stopped caring so much about what other people think? What goals would you set? What activities would you try? What adventures would you embark on?

My guess is, if you're someone who feels crippled by the weight of other people's opinions of you, your life would be so much fuller, so much more rewarding, so much more enjoyable, if you finally stopped caring about what people think. I really want the pain here to be as high as possible. Because I really want to incentivize you to adopt the framework that I'm going to teach you in the next episode.

I see people fight what I teach on this because it's quite foreign to how we were raised. We were raised to care about what other people think. We

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were raised that other people's opinions matter. So, this seems foreign to people. We were also raised to believe that we can control what other people think of us.

So, when I offer you that other people's opinions aren't true, other people's thoughts about you aren't true, and that they're not within your control, it goes against so much of our upbringing. People really fight me on this.

I have a lot of my clients ask me, "Did you struggle with thought work, and learning the model, and coming to believe that circumstances are neutral and that it's our thoughts that cause our feelings? And that we have the power to change our own thoughts, but not someone else's thoughts?"

People ask me all the time, "Did you struggle with adopting that?" And very candidly, I didn't. I didn't. I was experiencing so much suffering from living a life I didn't love, to making choices I didn't love, because I was caring so much about what other people thought, that when someone introduced me to a different way of thinking, I just adopted it.

I really felt like, "You know what? You've got a better framework than I do for how to navigate life. I'm all ears. I'm all in." I didn't fight it at all. So, I really want you to be clear: What is caring about what other people think costing you?

I want you to become intimately familiar with the pain and suffering that caring about other people's opinions is creating in your life. Because when I introduce you to a framework to stop caring about what other people think, rather than being apprehensive or skeptical and resisting it and saying, "No, that can't be right. That goes against what I was taught growing up," I want you to adopt it.

I want you to just dive headfirst, be all in, and really see how it can be right for you. How it can be true for you. Okay? I promise you, the life that you get to live when you get over caring about other people's opinions, it's delicious.

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You get to that delicious life a lot faster if you don't resist the things that I'm going to teach you, when I teach you the specific process for how to care less about what other people think. All right, I will give that to you in the next episode.

In the meantime, I hope you have a beautiful week, and I will talk to you in the next episode.

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