

## Ep #86: Frustration



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Olivia Vizachero

## Ep #86: Frustration

You're listening to *The Less Stressed Lawyer* podcast, Episode 86. Today, we're talking all about frustration. 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 your week is off to a wonderful start. Maybe it's the end of your week when you're listening to this. Whenever it is, I hope that your week is going well. My week is off to a good start. I just had a bunch of friends come visit me in Charleston. I've actually had those friends on my podcast, we recorded a group call, or like a group episode, earlier this year, all about the power of group coaching.

I had the privilege of meeting these women in a group coaching program that we all joined. Since we were all in that program together... I'm still in it, but the three of them are not... we still get together a couple times a year.

Because we're all coaches, and we're all entrepreneurs, we like to get together and brainstorm and make plans for our businesses. We strategize, and we work through some of the problems that we're facing. We trade tips and different ideas and suggestions.

Actually, one of the tips that came up over the weekend, that was recommended to me, I just implemented right before I started recording this episode. It was a game changer. I have been stuck on something and just the slightest, smallest, little suggestion from someone in passing made all the difference in the world.

It's so fun to spend time with people who inspire you like that. I get the privilege of doing it in the group coaching programs that I'm a part of. And then, with the other people that I've met that are entrepreneurial, that are in the coaching industry, that think like me that have similar goals.

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To me, it's just so incredible to get to spend time with people like that. If you're listening to this, and you want to spend time with people like that, you've got to come to the next retreat that I'm hosting, The Obsessed Retreat, because those are exactly the types of people that you'll meet.

They're people who have the same goals as you. You can talk about your goals with them, you can workshop through things, and they can have suggestions and tips and tricks. You'll just have so much in common with them, and you'll form relationships just like the ones I have now, that last you outside of these programs.

You can continue on in the programs if you want to, but you're going to make friendships and you're going to build relationships, that last you far longer than whatever program you're in. It's so cool.

We meet quarterly, essentially, myself and these women, so I might do a couple episodes here and there throughout the podcast about some of our random takeaways and epiphanies from these incredible weekends we spend together.

I had a lot of takeaways, some small, some really big, and I was taking notes all weekend, thinking about how can I implement what we discussed. I know as I was taking all of that in, I was thinking, "Oh my God, this would be so helpful to the people who listen to my podcast, and to the people who follow me on my social media channels." So, I'm definitely going to share some of those tidbits with you in a separate episode. That'll be so fun.

Speaking of tidbits that I want to share with you, this is something that's come up pretty frequently on recent coaching calls. It's come up across the entirety of my coaching career, but I'm noticing a bit of a trend. Sometimes I see things more frequently. Or I'm just paying attention to something because it popped up on my radar, and I really want to start thinking about maybe recording an episode on it, or creating some social media content around it.

So, I've been paying closer attention. It's sort of like when someone tells you or asks you, "Did you see any red cars on your way driving here

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today,” and you can't think or remember any of the red cars that you saw; you can't think of them. And then when you're driving home, all you see is red cars. So, it's sort of like that.

I encounter this issue all the time when I'm coaching. But because I've been paying particular attention to it recently, it's really come up on my radar. I'm just much more cognizant every single time a client references this, so I wanted to record an episode about it.

The topic that I want to talk about specifically is the topic of frustration. So, if you've been listening to my podcast for a while, you know I teach a concept called “the model.” The model consists of five interrelated components. It's basically an equation for your life. You get to plug things into it, and then it spits out other information.

The five components are: Circumstances, Thoughts, Feelings, Actions, and Results. Circumstances, the premise of the model starts with this, circumstances are neutral.

They're simply facts that we encounter in our lives. What someone says, what someone does, without any spin on it. Without any qualifying statements, subjective statements, opinions, adjectives, descriptors; anything that makes it an opinion, not a fact. So, circumstances are strictly facts.

Then, our brain serves us up thoughts about them. And thoughts are just sentences that run through our minds. They're our opinions. They're subjective. They have those descriptive, qualifying words in them, those adjectives. And, it's our thoughts that cause our feelings.

Our feelings are one-word emotions that we experience as vibrations in our body. Then, our feelings drive and determine the action that we take. And, our action produces our results. Okay?

So, circumstances, thoughts, feelings, actions, results, those are the five components of the model. Now, we use the model in a couple of different ways. We use it to understand ourselves and others, why we're feeling the

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way that we're feeling, why we're doing the things that we're doing, or why we have the results that we have.

We can also use the model to solve problems. So, if we don't like how we feel, we can figure out what thought are we thinking, and how do we need to change it in order to feel differently? How do we want to feel? What would we need to think instead to feel that way? If we want to change what we're doing, what would we need to think and how would we need to feel in order to show up differently?

If we wanted to produce a different result, you'd address all three of those things: What do we need to do differently? In order to do that, how would we need to feel? In order to feel that way, what would we need to think?

So, we can use it to gain awareness or solve problems. Now, I always tell my clients, one of the biggest components of coaching, one of the things that we do the most, one of the most important things that we do, is start to learn how to distinguish between circumstances and our thoughts about them.

Most of us don't know the difference between a circumstance and a thought. Therefore, we go through our lives believing that our thoughts are circumstances. We believe that our thoughts are facts, even though they're not. And when we do this, we make it seem like our emotional experience is outside of our control. That we're living at the effect of our circumstances.

We're not, we're living at the effect of our thought. But when we conflate a circumstance with a thought, and we think that a thought is really a fact, what happens is that we make ourselves feel like we don't have any control over our emotional state, over our feelings.

So, when I'm working with my clients, a big chunk of the work that we do together in our coaching sessions is just figuring out and distinguishing between circumstances and thoughts. Figuring out what's the circumstance, what is the thought. What is the fact and what is the thought.

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Now, when you're new to coaching, you're not going to be good at this. This is why we work with coaches because coaches have the ability to point this out to you, and show it to you in a way that you start to become aware of your blind spots and you start to change your perspective.

You stop seeing your thinking as true. You stop seeing your thoughts as facts, as circumstances, and you start seeing them for what they are, simply your thoughts. But it really takes the support of a coach to help you do that. Because these sentences, when they run through your head, they feel true because it's what you believe. But just because you believe something doesn't make it true. Okay?

So, when you're working with a coach, they know what questions to ask you to help you see how it's a thought, not a fact; how it's a thought, not a circumstance.

They're going to be able to show you, through the questions that they ask and the journey that they take you on in a coaching session, they're going to help you see how it's simply your opinion, how it's not a fact, how other people might be able to look at it differently, how you're looking at it, and what words you're using that change it from a fact to a subjective statement.

The power of that is that once you know the sentence isn't true, once you know it's an opinion, it becomes optional, and you give yourself power to change it. So, one of the most common thoughts that my clients mistake as a circumstance is the thought, "It's frustrating."

I'll digress just for a second here. I really want you to be thinking about those five components of the model: Circumstances, Thoughts, Feelings, Actions, Results.

There are only two places in the model that frustration would go, okay? Now, the first would be in the T-line of the model, the thought line. That would be the thought, "It's frustrating."

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Or you could use a specific noun that you're talking about. "What that person did is frustrating. What that person said is frustrating. What happened is frustrating. What didn't happen is frustrating." Whatever the noun is, you're thinking the thought, "It's frustrating." So, frustration would go in the T-line of the model in that way. You'll think something is frustrating.

The other place frustration can go is in the F-line of the model, in the feelings line, because you'd be feeling frustrated. Guess where frustration doesn't go in the model? It doesn't go in the C-line, which is what most of my clients end up doing. It's a thought error they have, they think it is true that something is frustrating. That is never true.

I'm going to say that one more time because I really want you to hear me: It is never true that something is frustrating. What your colleague did is not inherently frustrating. What your mom said to you is not inherently frustrating. That someone turned something in late to you is not inherently frustrating.

That someone emailed you on the weekend is not inherently frustrating. That someone cut you off while you're driving is not inherently frustrating. That a store won't let you return something that you purchased is not inherently frustrating. That your spouse keeps buying you presents that you don't like, that is not inherently frustrating either.

You can put anything that you encounter, any fact that you encounter, in the blank there, okay? It, in and of itself, is not frustrating. It is not true that the things that you think are frustrating are actually frustrating. It is simply your opinion that something is frustrating.

Now, imagine this. When you think something is frustrating, you will feel frustrated 100% of the time. That's just how this works. It's very linear. If you think something's frustrating, you'll feel frustrated.

Now, you might think some other thought. Your thought might not be, "It's frustrating... They're frustrating me. When they said that it was frustrating." You might think, "They shouldn't have done that," and you'll feel frustrated.

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You might think, “I can't believe they did that,” and feel frustrated. You might think, “It should have happened differently than it did,” whatever situation it is that you're encountering.

When you think that way you might feel frustrated, but the facts themselves would be ‘what present your spouse got you.’ It would be the statement that your mom said, or whatever your colleague said or did. Or the fact that someone got you something at a particular time when they said they'd get it to you at a different time.

Any of the examples that I just gave you... that the store said no to you returning something... all of those things are facts. That's what happened. Okay? And, they aren't frustrating, or not frustrating.

Here's how I think of this. If you think about frustration on a spectrum, it's not even on the spectrum yet until you have a thought about it. So, there's no charge, good, bad, or otherwise, to the fact that you're encountering, to the situation that you're dealing with, to the circumstance at hand. It's just neutral; it's blank.

Then you think a thought about it, and you decide whether or not you think it's frustrating. Depending on what you think about it, it's going to determine how you feel about it. It's going to determine whether or not you feel frustrated.

Now, one of the tricks that I teach my clients... Because when I call them on this, when I point out to them, “Hey, it's not actually true, that that thing that you just said is frustrating is actually frustrating. That's just your thought. That's just your opinion. Even though you just told me that it's frustrating, and you said that to me in a manner where it seems like it's true, like you're just reporting the news to me, it actually isn't true. That's just your opinion. That's just your belief.”

When I tell them that, they struggle to see it. So, one of the ways that I help them see that it's not actually true, is we start to find other ways to describe it. We work on identifying other thoughts to think about it. I was coaching a client on this earlier today, and the conversation that we had around the



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situation that she was dealing with, she said to me, like it was true even though it's not, she said, "This person's not getting back to me, and it's beyond frustrating."

Do you see how it sounds like she's reporting the news? When you think that thought you're going to feel very frustrated or very angry. And listen, you get to pick those feelings and that emotional experience on purpose, if you want to.

But when I teach people that it's not true that something is inherently frustrating, that that is just their opinion, I'm also teaching them what is happening is that they're causing their own frustration.

Another person isn't causing your frustration. What they do is neutral, what they say is neutral, what they don't do is neutral, what they don't say is neutral, and the situation, or the fact that you're encountering, is also neutral. It's not causing you to feel frustrated; none of it is.

What causes you to feel frustrated is your thought about the fact. Which means you cause your own frustration because you have control over your thoughts. Now, this begs the question, do you want to make yourself feel frustrated?

Most people don't think like that, they don't talk like that, they blame other people for their feelings of frustration. But that's not what's actually going on. You're causing your own frustration by thinking things are frustrating. Now, if you want to feel frustrated, you get to; you get to choose that emotional experience for yourself.

So, if you want to feel frustrated, keep your thoughts, don't change them, you get to continue to think that the thing is frustrating. Now, when I ask most people, "Do you want to feel frustrated," they tell me no. Which means you have to change your thought about the circumstance. You cannot keep the thought, "It's frustrating," and not feel frustrated, the two simply go together. If you keep thinking something is frustrating, you're going to feel frustrated. That's just how this works.

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In order to not feel frustrated... Which, who wants to feel frustrated? Like 99.9% of the time, I don't want to feel frustrated. Every once in a blue moon, I'll choose to feel frustrated because I will not want to think anything else about a particular situation. But that's very, very rare.

I want that to be the 1% rule for you as well, rather than the 99% rule or even the 70/30 rule. I want it to be rare that you think something is frustrating.

So, think about a situation that you currently find "frustrating." What are the facts? What actually happened? Get very clear on what those facts are. Then ask yourself: What am I thinking about those facts? You might be thinking the simple thought, "It's frustrating. This is frustrating," and that will make you feel frustrated.

But you also might be thinking something else, so dig a little bit deeper and see if there are other thoughts that are making you feel frustrated too. See what those thoughts are.

From there, once you've identified those thoughts, ask yourself: Can I think something else, instead? You can start with identifying the feeling. How do you want to feel about this situation, instead? About this circumstance, instead?

Do you want to feel accepting? Do you want to feel understanding? Do you want to feel in control or at peace or grounded? How do you want to feel? Pick the emotional experience that you want to have for yourself.

From there, work it backwards. Ask yourself: What would I need to think in order to feel that feeling?

Now, one more tip that I have for you. People will try and do this, and they'll find one replacement thought, and the replacement thought won't land with them. It won't resonate. So, they give up really quickly and they just go back to the original thought. Instead of approaching this like trying on clothes. Okay?

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You might not settle on the first article of clothing that you try on, especially if you're shopping for something for a special occasion, right? You're going to try on lots of things probably, until you find something that fits, something that looks good on you, or something you feel comfortable in. You keep trying until you find the ideal fit.

That's what I want you to do here when it comes to finding new thoughts to think. I want you to keep going until you find a replacement thought that feels like it clicks into place. Where you're like, "Ah, I could believe that. I could choose to think that. That makes me feel differently. That makes me feel a little bit better."

It's going to make you feel better because you actually believe it. If you don't believe it, it's not going to change the way that you feel. So, you're going to still feel frustrated because the thought, the primary thought that you're continuing to think, is the original thought that made you feel frustrated in the first place. You can't get rid of the feeling of frustration until you get rid of the thought causing it. So, you want to replace that thought with something else.

Another way that you can break up the thought, dismantle the thought making you feel frustrated, is simply by making the argument: How is that thought not true? Now, I know you're going to feel like it is very true; that the situation that you're encountering is frustrating.

But I want you to put your thinking cap on and really go to work here. How is it not true? How might someone else look at the situation? How might the business that is telling you you can't return something, how might they look at it? How might your mom look at the situation? Specifically, what she said, how might she look at that? Will she think it's frustrating or will she have a different thought about it?

Will your spouse think it's frustrating that they bought you the present that they bought you? Will someone else think it's frustrating your colleague said what they said, or they did what they did? Or the person that turned

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something in late to you, will they think it's frustrating? What might they think, instead?

Even just going there helps you get perspective on how other people can look at the exact same fact through a different lens, from a different vantage point. When you start to see those different lenses and those different vantage points, you get access to different thoughts to think about the facts that you encounter. And when you get access to those thoughts, you also get access to different feelings.

So, if you're someone who frequently feels frustrated... Which a lot of the people I work with they frequently feel frustrated. They feel frustrated about traffic, that there shouldn't be traffic. Or that it's frustrating to be in traffic... what else could you think about that?

I promise you, there's one person, at least, probably many more people than one, but there's one person on the planet that has a different thought about traffic. What do you think they think? How do you think they feel about it?

Try that on. What would someone else, who got the present that you received, think about it? What might another person think about it? Maybe not what *would* they, but what *might* they think about it? Just to give you access to different thoughts to think, instead of the thoughts you might be thinking.

Try doing this. Find the things that you feel frustrated about, and figure out what you're thinking that's making you feel frustrated. Because I promise you, you are frustrating yourself. No one else is doing it to you. And then, make up your mind: Do I want to feel frustrated? I highly recommend you don't choose frustrated most of the time. And in that case, what can you choose to think instead?

Think of how you want to feel instead of feeling frustrated, and let that be your common experience, feeling those feelings instead of feeling frustration, it's way better. I hope this helps you dial down the frustration

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that you feel day in and day out, so you can feel less stressed and more fulfilled. That's what we do here on *The Less Stressed Lawyer* podcast.

All right, my friends, that's what I have for you this week. I hope you have a beautiful week, and I will talk to you in the next episode. Oh, one more thing. I talked about this last week, but I'm going to mention it again here.

Remember, I am doing another rating and review giveaway. So, if you rate and review the podcast before the end of the year, before December 31, 2023, you will be entered to win a \$50 gift card to Amazon.

I just gave out five of these gift cards, which was so fun for me to do. It's not like there's only one bite at the apple, you have a lot of chances to win. There's also no limit on how many times you can leave a rating and review.

So, go in there, leave me a rating and a review, and then either email me at [Olivia@thelessstressedlawyer.com](mailto:Olivia@thelessstressedlawyer.com) letting me know that you did it, include a screenshot so I can see that you did, and then I'll have your email address.

Or you can DM me on LinkedIn or Instagram with a screenshot and your email address, that way I can enter you to win. And if you win, I can easily send over that Amazon gift card to you.

It's so much fun giving away a little extra holiday cheer. I really appreciate you taking the time to go help me get this podcast in the ears of more listeners, that's what happens when you leave me a rating and review. I greatly, greatly appreciate it.

All right, my friends, that's it. I will talk to you next week.

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).