

## Meathead Hippie Episode #85 with Caroline Burckle On Little “Let Go’s,” Overthinking & Mindset

**Emily:** Welcome to Meathead Hippie. We have a full episode for you today, so I knew it had to be a good one and it's my friend Caroline Burckle. Burckle with an “R”. She is a badass. I think you're gonna love her, and it is so in alignment with what we are talking about in the Don't Overthink It Challenge. Comparison, but mostly identify. Who are we without the effort that we put in, and who are we when everything else falls away and we only see this giant mountain we want to conquer but then we get to the top of the mountain, and we're like okay what's next? Come at me, (laughs) you know? And I think we all have this cycle. It sometimes paralyzes us when we see the mountain and sometimes is this feeling of I feel a little empty when we see the mountain or when we get to the top of the mountain because we're looking for things in the wrong places, and there's nobody better to speak about this than Caroline because she is an incredible athlete, a former Olympic athlete, won bronze in 2008 in Beijing. She took gold in 2007 Pan Am Games in the 800 meter freestyle, which is so long. I cannot even imagine. A two-time NCAA champ, she went to Florida State, and then she was also named 2008 NCAA swimmer of the year, so an incredible athlete who has this story of understanding who she is without her athletic achievements, and I just loved talking to her. She has great advice for anyone who is Type A or anybody that is brand new to this whole health and wellness thing. There's really not anybody that won't benefit from this podcast, because it's just real and raw and quite simply a great conversation with a friend. So I'm just so glad that you're here again. Thank you for being another listener of Meathead Hippie podcast. I am just so honored to be able to do this for my job. I feel so blessed and I hope for many more great conversations to come. I you like it, please tell me. Please share. I love when I see you guys posting it on Instagram and tagging me in your stories. I you have a favorite part or a favorite quote that really resonates with you, be sure to tag me as well as Caroline and all her info is found in the description. So just tap whatever you're listening to iTunes, Spotify or Stitcher or SoundCloud and you'll be able to directly go find Caroline and follow her journey as well. Thank you again and enjoy. I'll see you guys next week.

I'm Emily Schromm, the ultimate Meathead Hippie. Welcome to the show.  
(upbeat fun music)

**Emily:** Alright, Caroline Burckle we are live. Do you go by Caro or Caroline?

**Caroline:** Really all of them, but mainly Caroline and Caro.

**Emily:** I love that.

**Caroline:** Carol not so much.

**Emily:** Perfect. Well welcome to Meathead Hippie podcast. I feel like you are an absolute meathead hippie and also an enneagram seven and we have been trying to schedule this and of course to 7's fashion, it was last minute and here you and in the intro before we even started talking or recording, I was like I honestly, the reason I started this podcast is just to have simply good conversations and hopefully everyone listening enjoys it as well, and that's what I'm in desperate need of today. So thanks for being my conversation today.

**Caroline:** I'm so glad. I'm also in desperate need of it. I've been living in a cave for the past month so.

**Emily:** Yeah, so you just had a concussion.

**Caroline:** Yeah I did. It was honestly it was horrendous. It was probably the most eye-opening experience for the psyche that you could possibly have, and it could have been much worse. You could say that about anything, but I was giving blood, fainted and nailed my head on concrete table, sliced it open, and then hit the floor. So I was unconscious. I hit the floor and then I ricocheted back and hit it again, so I had six stitches and two staples and I was in the hospital for a day.

**Emily:** Oh my gosh.

**Caroline:** And I thought I was fine, so they probably released me too early, but it was you know, it was a long spell of just- obviously you just had a podcast about it, it was a long spell of vertigo. Horrible vertigo, like the worst I could possibly imagine, just the most wasted you've ever felt vertigo.

**Emily:** I was pretty stoked to see you listening to the podcast I just did with Ben. If you guys didn't listen to that, me and Ben the concussion expert, he was just so great. I don't know if you've heard of him before, but I was so impressed by him.

**Caroline:** Yeah, he was insane. He was great, honestly, and I needed it. It came at the perfect time because that was exactly the time I was entering that depressive state to where I would have crying spells and my nervous system, it felt like I was running a mile instead of walking up a set of stairs, and you know my mile for time, sprinting, and I just felt really discouraged and it was hard to match my emotions with my thoughts. I was like misfiring things, like I would be upset about something that I shouldn't be upset about, and then I wouldn't feel any emotion about something that was actually worth being emotional about. So it was just, I think it was more eye-opening to me especially because I run a business where it's all about mindset and psychology, and I couldn't work. Like I couldn't do anything so it allowed me to recognize that I was basing a lot of my worth on my career and my business building and my ability to show up and crush it every day and create ideas and do all these kinds of things, and I just really felt all of that come up, and it was things that I wouldn't never imagined would have happened just from what I thought was a hit in the head kind of thing.

**Emily:** That's a great observation though, and you are an incredible athlete, you know. Former Olympian. I did the full intro to you so they are well aware of your badassery and I think that's something that I am just curious about, just to jump into that, why we so easily can look for external validation. It's still obviously us, it's an extension of us, whether it's our ability to swim fast or if it's our ability to work hard, and I catch myself doing this. Our ability for output is so oh my god, it becomes everything, and I'm curious some ways that you've learned to separate that, because that's so hard. I mean it's the same as somebody trying to obviously change their body weight and feel a certain way because they were able to lose a certain amount of fat or if they did lose weight, now that becomes their identity, or if they did change their life, now that becomes their identity. And so I guess I would love to know ways that you've helped see value in yourself without your external output.

**Caroline:** That is exactly what I finally recognized. So to put it plainly, I've spent a decade running from myself, and when I retired swimming in 2008, I went through- sorry 2010, I went through two years of post-Olympic swimming that I did great and everything, but I always knew that I wanted to do more and be more and I felt like I spent a decade running from myself and blaming like abusive situations in my past or you know just really challenging situations, I blamed everything that I was going through in that decade on that, and it's not that I felt that I was out of control with it. I was just completely victimized, like I was playing the victim and I just now am realizing that. So essentially I've spent the past year trying to dissect why I was running and oh I broke my heel because I was this, and oh I did this because I was this, and I kept trying to figure out for so long why I was so broken. And like you said, I finally realized that

it was because I was looking for this external validation all along that I had always been given as well, and that is a really really challenging thing and habit to break if you're not aware of it. So the awareness has caused me to really tap into that and I think it's an ongoing process. Yeah it was about week three of this concussion that I recognized I'm not doing anything with my life right now. I'm not doing anything. I'm literally sleeping. There was a moment in time where I had literally left my apartment three times in a week, and I was like I'm sleeping all day. I am so sick. This is so horrible. I am doing nothing with my life and right now I'm okay with just being. I'm loved for being me. I'm okay with just being. I don't need to prove myself, and in that moment it was like okay, I'm okay, and I went back and forth with that over and over and over again, but there was indeed a moment where I was really grateful for just being me and for what I have accomplished and what I have learned through those lessons. Yeah I could go into that topic forever.

**Emily:** No, that's good. I mean we all relate to it, whether we're a seven or not, and especially seven's, but anybody we don't want to sit in something that's uncomfortable, right? So when we have something uncomfortable we cope by what's the next thing, and I was just talking about this actually in the Don't Overthink It program of how when somebody- we no longer have silence with ourselves, and we no longer sit in uncomfortableness because we have a thing called a cell phone, and so you notice as soon as somebody feels- maybe they get in an argument, or they feel a little bit weird, or if they're waiting in line, or they're not sure what to do with their body or their hands, instead of just being, we grab our phone and we start scrolling, and it's just this intuitive extension of ourselves that allows us to never even just know like how do I feel right now? What do I feel like? Why am I feeling uncomfortable? And understanding I think it's just a really brave comment for you to say about how you feel like you victimized yourself and I mean we all are just so guilty of it. It's like we are this way because of XYZ, and we could live that way or we could just be like no, I'm in mother-fucking-charge of my own life. I got this. So I just think that's a really good observation from you, and of course it's like always work. it was always work to be present. Do you feel- So you're a swimmer, once a swimmer always a swimmer, and I'm curious is that- is movement for you and like swimming for you, is that so much a part of your life that it doesn't even put you in the moment, or are there things that you do that are always gonna help you be present?

**Caroline:** Yeah, for sure. Swimming is so fluid. It is so present moment oriented, and especially the ocean because you really cannot be think gin about anything else, because your life is right there on the line in the middle of this gigantic ocean, and there's no you know, four walls around you. The variables are- god you could name 300 variables that could go on, but it's interesting you say that about the movement because ti does take me back to the concept of movement if life, but at what point was movement too much of a crutch for me for a long time. So you know, going back to when I retired and I focus on this so much, because I really think that the identity piece for anybody whether you're going through a transition as a athlete, or a job, or as a mother, or really a job transition like whatever it is, the more you continue to run and chase, you can view that as movement, right? You can do that as just keeping moving, but at what point does that movement become a crutch to take away from just sitting in your shit and chasing the next thing. So for example, I retired and I immediately went to fashion school, got my degree, chased that degree, immediately got a job from that, immediately worked for another company, immediately chased another degree, went home to therapy for two years cause I was super depressed and I didn't know what the hell was occurring, lived there, chased the next degree. I just kept chasing things degrees and these things that I thought that if I just kept moving, I could get somewhere and that somewhere would show me the way, and that somewhere would connect myself with my truest my self, and what I'm supposed to be doing, and that external validation of all these things will show me the way, right? Along that path, I continued to move my body in ways, right? Like I was running marathons and doing Ragnar relays and doing all of those just random classes, like you name it I did every class possible, like pole dancing for god's sake. I mean literally everything. I was just like I just need to keep doing stuff, for sure. And I

started to associate movement with avoidance of pain, so that movement in turn caused me to step into what I was avoiding and I ended up- my body ended up manifesting this pain because I was using movement as a tool to cope with pain from my past that I did not know how to sit in. And that, kind of circling back to the concussion thing, was the thing that when I'm not moving and I'm sitting on my ass in bed for however many weeks, not moving and recognizing that this is exactly what I used to think my worst nightmare would be, is sitting still, just for a split second in the grand scheme of things.

**Emily:** Were you like an anti-napper?

**Caroline:** I literally don't think I took a nap, and as a kid I took naps, but see this is the funny thing is I'm super independent and like to do- I know that's a very cliché saying. I like to do things on my own. I'm a true ambivert. I really like to be alone a lot and to do things on my own, but I can extrovert with the best of them when I need to. But yes, I used movement as the wrong kind of medicine. It was a coping mechanism and that can be a positive thing if your association is not to avoid.

**Emily:** Which it never really is I think honestly. I don't think it is. That's why spin studios are, they exist. I mean I just think that that's- we think we're accomplishing something but it's an escape. I so agree with that. I mean I experienced that with my small bout in CrossFit and competing in it and knowing that that was all this way to not have to deal with shit always.

**Caroline:** Right. And then I mean how many things- you've had what, eight concussions, how many things else? And not saying that everything has to happen for a reason, cause it doesn't. Shit happens. People go through things. I'm sure I'm gonna have a thousand more things that happen to me in my life, and I know that those things will now have a different perspective because I'm learning. For the first time I've learned what my body can do movement wise that is more geared toward what I'm stepping into and what I'm working to discover about myself versus what I'm running from, what I'm trying to avoid. I mean hell, I didn't get a period for 10 years.

**Emily:** Wow.

**Caroline:** I didn't get a period. I was so underweight. I was so sick, and I was eating. I was doing everything I thought was right, but I was so miserable. I wasn't fueling my body well at all. I was just using this movement and to keep going, going, going as a way to avoid and it was depleting my body. My body wasn't accepting anything. It wasn't accepting love. It was taking everything in its' power to keep itself healthy and that was it, the bare minimum. It was doing exactly what it needed to do to survive, and I was in fight or flight mode, like I was in survival mode. Yeah.

**Emily:** Yeah, and that was when you were- cause I wanna talk about- Let's jump into Rise, your company, working with mindset with- you're a high performer, the clients you work with, your members, your people are high performers as well. These are Olympic athletes, so they are just crushing it in certain areas of their life and I'm curious when anybody, whether they are an Olympic athlete or whether they're just that Type A personality and wants to make sure everything is right and we're doing all the right things, and no matter what we just want to push it. And I think that's so- whether that gets translated into sports or not, there's so many people like that, and I'm curious what is the missing piece, like if it is self-love how you can get somebody to understand taking care of themselves when all they see is that vision. I mean I catch myself doing this all the time. I want so badly to have XYZ XYZ and I'll take care of myself after. I'll love myself after this is accomplished, but then all of a sudden we're like shit. It's almost like preventative. What are some of the struggles you see with yourself or with your

people that you work with or understanding you can still be a high performer, but in a more caring way?

**Caroline:** That's a great question. So we have Olympians that mentor youth athletes, so it's a mutually beneficial relationship. So they get to provide themselves with significance and giving back, which is a huge confidence builder, and they, these youth athletes, get the ability to learn from these Olympic athletes and not only learn about their career, but learn about their childhood and how they got there, and we train them so it's like learning. They learn all the sports psychology tactics, tools, and tips to provide to these athletes, and what we find is a lot of them come to us knowing that they want to be more, that they want to do more, that they want to give back, and we focus a lot on them being the foundation. So they're their own foundation, right? So if you're laying the blueprint, if you have the bricks, they're the foundation. All of their limbs, all of the things that they're doing, all of the hands that they're reaching out to with their athletes, those are their extensions of themselves. And without this, they can't do this.

**Emily:** Center.

**Caroline:** Yeah, and what is it that they can hone in on within themselves that they feel like that they are using control with? And then we start there. So when I work with some of them on their personal goals or their business goals within Rise or their goals outside of Rise, a lot of it is I just want to make sure that I'm gonna be as great as I was with this or that I wanna make sure that I make a name for myself. There's always something that they wanna do, right? And so then we talk about where are you now? What's the center? What's the here? And if you get there, like if you get to this place where you do all the sudden make a difference, have a name for yourself, create a brand for yourself, have your own thriving company outside of this, or whatever it is, then what? Like what does that mean to do? And a lot of times people stop in their tracks. It's like well then I'm gonna want more, and so the answer's always you're gonna want more. You're never going to be fully satisfied, so once that's seen you can take a step back and break it down, break it down, break it down, and realize that if you're always gonna be a go-getter and you're always gonna want more and you're always gonna want to keep pushing forward, and no matter where you get you're always gonna keep wanting more, then what is it that has to be stable in that whole relationship? And it's you. It's your core. It's the ability to lay that foundation, right? Like you can't race. You can't play a game. You can't win the Olympics, win whatever, the lottery without getting a ticket, right? Like you've gotta start somewhere. You have to start with something. You have to create that foundation before you go anywhere, and so we do focus on that and the foundation of themselves as humans first before they do anything else.

**Emily:** And humans without the result, right? They're not a human that's just a really great Olympic athlete. It's like take out what happens when you strip that. Was that a really hard transition for you post-Olympics?

**Caroline:** Oh my god.

**Emily:** I know you talk about this a lot. If you could touch into, cause in some way everyone has had that kind of experience right? Like whether it was a super high- and never at that degree, but small percentage that accomplished that incredible feat, being on the Olympic platforms and it's just incredible, but I can only imagine the pendulum swinging the other way because you have this incredible moment and then it's like oh my god, fuck. I'm sure there was a lot of getting to know Caroline moments in those years.

**Caroline:** Oh my god. Shit. Yeah, so I'm gonna first start this part by saying that if you were to ask me this six to eight years ago, I would have been like I mean yeah it was really hard. I was really depressed, but like you do what you can. So you answer these things because you are feeling like that's what you should say because there really is no way that you could be seen as

weak or you could be seen as somebody who went through a hard time because oh you went to the Olympics. You better count your blessings, like that shit's cool and there's no way you can have a hard time after that. I mean honestly, why do you think Michael Phelps- and I'm know Michael since I was a little girl, like he went through deep depression for a long time and him and the rest of- all of us went through that same situation because you're too scared to say you're actually going through it at the beginning, because you feel like you should be "grateful." You should not have this problem and that everyone else in the world would tel you that you need to suck it up.

**Emily:** And you're so lucky to have this opportunity.

**Caroline:** And you're so lucky, yeah. And that right there is a lack of self-actualization. That's a lack of self-respect. That's a very dangerous place to be in because what you're doing is you're creating a space of also being a victim to something because that's one of the first signs, right? Woe is me, like that passive aggressive, but I should be really grateful, right? So that's how I'm gonna start, by saying that I would have said that, and then I started to slowly get into the place of like, you know, it's okay. And that was when I went to grad school, sports psychology, and I started to really understand my journey and connect with other Olympic athletes that were going through the same thing that I was going through. I mean that's why we started Rise to be honest. It was this feeling of we want to make an impact. We want to bring these people to this place where you two these 15, 15, 17-year-olds know who they are and know that they're damn amazing before they get to the highest level possible, so that they know that they're more than just that. And it's not to say they're not getting that already, but we're gonna do an extra deal here because you can never have too much support, and there' different pillars to that support. You've got coach, athlete, parent, mentor, trainer, whatever it is. So anyways, tangents cause I like tangents. Back to to feeling that I had, I retired. I went through a 6-month phase of going to Vegas every weekend. I was a mess, but I didn't admit it. And then in January I moved from the University of Florida, cause that's where I went to college, and I was broken. I mean my heart was broken, my world was broken, I was just like what just happened. Like I've literally had my head buried since I was 10. I had a blast, don't get wrong. I went to college and like we won in Super Lays and all these kinds of things and it was fantastic, but I was just like whoa. Who am I outside of this? So I moved out to California and that was a really hard time for me because that was when it was like I need to prove myself, like I have to go back to that and will I ever stand on top of podium in front of the world again? How can anything match that? And I felt guilty and I felt like the mindset of there's people struggling on this planet and I don't have it that bad and how can I possibly be depressed, and I remember sitting in my car and I was living in San Diego and I called my mom. For anybody that knows my mom, she does not answer the phone. My mother never answers the phone. She's just like Jill in her own world, whatever. And she answered the phone, and I was like, "Mom," and I just started bawling, and I was like, "I'm literally not leaving my room. Like I come home and I turn off the lights and I lay in the dark. I don't even want to be here anymore." Like it was the darkest things and I couldn't believe that I was saying it and I was letting it all out, and she was like, "What do you want to do? I'll fly out there. You can come home." And I was like, "I'm gonna come home." I'm gonna go to this therapist that we know and I loved and I just had this feeling I would trust her. I had never even used her before. And so I moved home, got my own place, cause I refused to live at home (laughs) and then went into therapy and it was gnarly. I'm talking like on the floor rolling around crying for like the first three months of therapy, like bringing my parents in, like we're like boom, like everything is exploding and my previous relationships that were not healthy and just everything was just like exploding in front of me and I'm this 21-year-old, 22-year-old girl and I was like I don't know what's occurring. Like I'm literally like losing my mind, and that took two years, but it was tumultuous and it was this feeling of I'm never going to be at the top of the world again and I don't know why I'm guilty. I feel like I should have this all figured out. I feel like I have a fantastic life. Why the hell am I bitching? And also, I'm hurting, like I am hurting hard. I don't know what a healthy relationship is. I don't know how to love my body. I don't

know what my body is supposed to do now. You know, and it goes into these deep places, but I just- it was gnarly and it's a really long-winded way of saying it was dark.

**Emily:** And tumultuous but the way- it's so interesting how parallel some of our story lines are. Clearly I did not make it to the Olympics, but there was something that happened when I was on reality TV that was when I was 20, the same thing. It was forced therapy. I would have never gone to therapy and I think we just tend to- it makes sense. You're an athlete so you have this sense of pride that you always will walk with in a beautiful way but it is the identity, like I even see it as- I seen it with any athlete but especially former- like this is what I think CrossFit really fucked up, is like that it is attracting those people that didn't get the fulfillment out of the sports that they played in high school or college. Maybe they didn't get that quite full moment of glory that they were looking for, so then they bring it into another alternative, which is fine, but it's just another thing. So it's understandable- I mean it's incredible that you were able to do that at that age, and strip it bare, because you had to start from scratch because I think if you are that dedicated to your sport it is probably ridiculously hard to have a normal childhood, so you had to start from scratch.

**Caroline:** Yeah, and my parents were so cool. Like they never made us do anything and that's the other thing. There was never any sense of- like there was never a lack of safety in this, like there wasn't a threat to "if you don't swim." There was never that. My brother was an Olympic swimmer. He went in 2012, and my littlest brother is amazing. He plays rugby. He's the one that's being different, and we've had a great and beautiful life. My parents obviously had a really challenging upbringing and life, and I think that they really gave us perspective on struggles and what that is, and what I've learned from this whole process is that I've identified- and you know, for so long I identified myself as a swimmer, an athlete, somebody that performs, can be you know haps, go lucky, artistic, fluid, like I believed in- I was very intuitive. I didn't know logic and time and I was just- I was in the moment for so long that I almost lost myself in that moment, you know? I almost lost myself completely, and if it weren't for therapy to be honest, I don't think- and let me back up. I think it was the choice of going to therapy because that empowered me to begin with. Like that was something that I needed to do and not feel shame about, but I think that there's this feeling of accomplishment and you know, you see people do these insane feats like the freaking Free Solo movie or whatever the hell it is. It's like god, it's unbelievable. Unbelievable and one of the most mentally tough-

**Emily:** El Capitan.

**Caroline:** Yeah, and that definition of being mentally tough can vary and change, but according to somebody's life and what they believe in, but I also think that you really- and I hate to say this because I don't want everyone to think that's it's all negative or anything like that, but I do believe that you have a fixed mindset for quite some time, and until you can really understand that growth mindset of I can perform on a different level, I can be on a different level, and that level is now my definition whatever I want to make it. Like I don't have to do something according to a standard that's only been there forever. Like I can change that standard now. I can create that. It's not gonna be given to me, right? And maybe it will be. Maybe you do choose a path that it is, but for an entrepreneur, it's not. Like you've gotta create your own standard and that's the scariest part about it is I always knew exactly where I needed to be, what I needed to be doing, how I needed to do it, and that did box me in a little. So when you don't have that, it's like the world is infinite. You can do anything you want and that's scary as shit.

**Emily:** It really is. It's so- the world is your oyster, right? There's too many possibilities.

**Caroline:** Yeah.

**Emily:** Yeah, that makes sense, a lot of sense, cause even when I have athletes come to Platform Strength. It's like I'm craving a program. It's all I know. I used to have it. I need it again, you know? It's just that's what you're used to.

**Caroline:** Well and it's nice, right, to have that structure so it's nice to have that foundation and then be able to have extensions of that like we were saying. It's like whether it's a person or an institution or really anything, if you have your structure there and then you can get creative within it, and create it to be your own even if it's a group class and the same exact movements for everybody, you can create your own meaning within that exact thing. And I think that's what I'm always speaking about and wanting to make clear to not only my athletes but my friends and my family and my colleagues and everything like that. You can create your own meaning within a structure. It doesn't have to be a specific thing that you have to do, right? Like you take that leadership and you take that feedback and you understand that structure, but you can create your personal meaning and give meaning to that in a way that's different than Sally Jane next to you or whatever if that makes sense.

**Emily:** Yeah, which is the most profound. The most profound type of leadership in something that somebody might not have seen before because that's what sets you always apart and I think that's awesome with. Really fast, when you were thinking of okay I'm going from a box, a box of an athlete to open circle as an entrepreneur, what are some ways- so we just started the Don't Overthink It program so that's kind of the theme of everything I want to help people with especially this year I am, you know, we love boxes. We love structure, because it feels safe. It feels like if I have the exact meal plan, like please god damnit just tell me what to do Emily. I want to know exactly what to do and I'll do it, and I love that, but I also know how unsustainable that can be and how depending on the type of personality or tendency how that can backfire, so I would be curious to know for you, what are ways that you help yourself when you get in your own head that you stop overthinking things and you can, you know, and obviously that's a day to day answer depending on what the problem is, but I get stuck in this too, where I'm like oh my gosh I need to do this, I need to do this, I need to do this, I need to do this. I want to do everything. What are ways that you have helped kind of quite the noise whether it was on a conscious or subconscious level?

**Caroline:** This brings me back to this conversation we had texting and it was our first ever conversation and it goes back to like we are taught to get rid of that. Get rid of it. So whether it's you're thinking this, okay get rid of it. Get rid of it. That's great, you can get rid of thoughts all you want, but it doesn't happen all macro right away. Like it's smaller let go's, like you think something and then for me, personally, I'm very imaginative, so I'll think one thing and then I'm like oh my god and then, and then, and then, and then. And it's like before I know it, it's this Mount Everest of all these overthinking thoughts that I've created. I'm like what the shit is this? I don't even know what that means. I have no idea, not a clue. Like I don't even know what I'm talking about anymore. I've just spent 15 minutes creating this mountain out of a molehill and I have no idea. And so I think it's just chipping away slowly at letting go, so a lot I actually do draw that. I'll draw a little mountain of like okay I thought this, and then I thought this, like a flow chart.

**Emily:** Yeah.

**Caroline:** And then it's like how can you slice those, right? How can you take off one by one instead of like I just need to stop thinking this whole thing. As a kid growing up, that was what I heard all the time. Just stop thinking about it. Well, god dammit, yeah. I get it. That's hard to do. You can't just stop thinking about it all the time. Like in the heat of moment, right before a race, if you're standing behind the blocks at the Olympics or the biggest speaking event of your life, and you need to let something go, the whole damn thing, let it go. But don't let it go forever. Like come back to it, then chip away at it, and I think that that's what has helped me because you can

run from that thought if you just let it go macro right away, because it will come back until you really start to just have the slow release of letting go. So it's like sitting with it, understanding what mountain you just made of these thoughts or these beliefs, and then one by one letting it go, releasing it out into the universe and it's not yours anymore. And if it comes back, think about it again, right? Like what is it that- why is that coming back for me? Why is that showing up for me? And then feeling it and letting it go one by one. That's really helped me and it's like that slow burn. So I like burning sage. I like watching it like- it's like seeing a little bit go at a time. It's not like stamping it out.

**Emily:** I absolutely love it. I love it so much. I'm gonna call it Caroline's little let go's. That should be a little mantra book you make, because it's true. We were texting back and forth, it's like I expect so much from my clients to see micro, because macro is unsustainable. Macro goals, micro goals. You can't just all of sudden lose the weight. You can't just all of a sudden be the fittest person in the room, and it's so funny how we assume anything in life is different - really business, personality, spirituality, and even physicality, you own human body. It all is the same, so thinking of it as a workout program in the same sense. You don't just show up to the gym and you're exactly where you want to be. And so that was really awesome when we were texting it. I was like yeah that does make sense, like why are we so hard on ourself? That's ultimately what it is. We just always want to get to the final product, and I don't know if that's just a product- if that's just human, if it's extra extra the way because of our culture, or if it's just we kind of- cause some of us are more like that than others. We're a little bit more ready for that final step. We're not quite as like naturally I'll just casually get to that goal. It's like no, I'm gonna fucking do it. I'm gonna get that goal. So yeah, I think that was a really great analogy and visual for people because I know so many people overthink things.

**Caroline:** Yeah, and I mean it can be done physically too. One thing I really like is progressive muscle relaxation. So sometimes I'll lay on my floor and just do the whole scan head to toe, and tighten your eyes and your nose and your mouth and your ears and your shoulders and just all the way down. It's tighten and release, tighten and release. And that's again small let go's. Or writing down all the things on a piece of paper and this is what we do with our athletes, you know, they're teenagers, but it helps for us too. Sometimes thinking childlike is the most simplest thing, but just tearing it up and with each tear of that paper of all the things you can to let go, you literally say that or like think of the thing that you're letting go of because kinesthetically when you are doing something with your body, especially as athletes, you really relate to that feeling of letting go, and that feeling physically can manifest itself mentally, and obviously vice versa, right? Like feeling mentally can manifest themselves physically, both positively and negatively. So that's something that I try to do a lot of, especially when I'm feeling really out of control, really I'm just like lay on the floor. Lay on the floor for five freaking minutes. I'm the first to admit when I'm just overthinking the shit out of everything. I do it all the time. I'm the most imperfect human on the planet, so I think that that is that's a really helpful tool.

**Emily:** I love that. I think that's great. I'm gonna try that, the lay on the floor.

**Caroline:** It helps you fall asleep at night if you need it.

**Emily:** Oh that's good, yeah.

**Caroline:** It's like guided meditation but for your body and not just your mind.

**Emily:** Which is I think so connected that it could be helpful for somebody that struggles with meditation, right? To feel like I'm not just laying here thinking about not thinking. (laughs)

**Caroline:** Right, and you know and thinking about the food thing that you were saying about the nutrition program, like obviously you have a nutrition degree. You think about these things all the time, probably way more than I do, but if somebody's like I'm gonna get fit, I'm gonna take out all junk food. It's like okay for sure, but maybe a slow release is better. Like maybe cutting it down, right at the beginning of a drastic change you're gonna have lasting change if that progression is a little bit more deliberate and you're practicing that versus trying to just get to that top of the mountain, because when you get to the top of the mountain, no matter what it is, you're always going to look back. You're always gonna look back and I would hope you would be able to look back at whatever you're looking back at, and understand the process there, and understand the small steps that you did to get to that peak instead of like oh I just really, I don't even know, I just liked wanted to crush everything. That's great for sure, but I also think it's really cool to think about the process and the things that you did, the small wins, like the small things that you did to get there.

**Emily:** That's really what I'm focusing on that I have just loved. I think it was a part of end of the year, birthday, turning 30, there was just like- the gym opening, there was a lot of things that happened in the last four months where I was like if you don't slow the fuck down and turn around a celebrate this, you will just fall apart because there's no longer anything holding you together. You're just doing. You're just a machine. You are no longer a human, which is what I started to feel like. So that was something so cool for me and I also think you will appreciate this. So I have my AyurvedicAyurvedic astrology read about 6 years ago, which is cool, which happened to be when I started my business and I was in Saturn. And my moon rising was in Saturn and January 18th it's gonna go into Venus, which is apparently this huge pivotal shift that my lady from Tibet Imports told me January 18th, so I'm like what is gonna happen on January 18th, and Bradford- anytime I'm really calm and like you know, it's okay I can shut my laptop. I feel really proud today. And he's like is it January 18th yet? What is this? So I'm curious sometimes if it is, you know, it can be so- yes, it's sometimes intentional, and yes, it's sometimes who we are and we can work on it, but I do think there's so much to our personality that we are out of control in and that's what helps is if you understand it a little bit more. That's why that hippie stuff is so fun to dig into because you can answer questions that you, like you said in the beginning, you almost victimize yourself. Well I just say I am this way because I'm a Sagittarius Capricorn. Or is it just because it is what it is, you can recognize it and then you can do something about it from a place of curiosity versus it is what it is. I don't know if that makes sense at all, but-

**Caroline:** Oh it totally does. I follow you entirely, and the whole time that you were just talking I was thinking you two as obviously I'm watching, I'm looking at you and I see your excitement and your animation of your body and how excited you get and that's a big thing because you're accepting, you're open. And I think that obviously no one can see that that's listening, but there's a big difference right? Like you can tell the difference in feeling open to something with your body and feeling closed and noticing that too, obviously astrology does tap into the mind body and it taps into both so maybe that's something to pay attention to as January 18th rolls closer. Like what is the body open for?

**Emily:** I'm so excited.

**Caroline:** Especially Venus.

**Emily:** I know. What's about to happen? I don't even know.

**Caroline:** Like I mean as if womanism isn't already crushing life right now. We're gonna get even bigger. I love it.

**Emily:** Well, yeah. I agree completely. So celebrating the small things and really seeing the process and writing that process in some way for many people they don't get interviewed. They just keep going. And I think that's been really cool is when you get interviewed or when other people are curious and you ask questions, you understand, you find out more about yourself by any other means. I think if you haven't been interviewed if you're listening, I challenge you to find somebody to just be genuinely curious about your life and give yourself a platform even if it's one person to explain it, because it's so cool. It really helps open you up in a way of wow, I really have come really far in some way, whether it was physically or whether it was just emotionally. I think that's been really cool. Interviews are just my absolutely favorite.

**Caroline:** I'm really glad you said that just now because I think that's a positive thing to circle around to is your life is your message, and a lot of times, our culture- I just had this conversation with my friend Melanie. Our culture is very caught up in what's my message, what do I need to deliver, what's the contents I need to deliver, what's the specific thing I need to put out there? And again, the foundation, the center, the core is you. Like you are here on this planet. That's enough of a message at first, so accepting that and being open to that and knowing that your life is worth it before you feel that you need to deliver a specific message. And I think there's nothing better than being interviewed. Every podcast I've done, I've learned so much about myself just cause I'm learning myself and speaking about my life is my message, and that is something that's beautiful for other people to listen to if they want to and not if they don't. I think that's more of a realization for myself than it is for anything, so I agree with you.

**Emily:** And even listening, they're thinking poorly about themselves because like well I wouldn't have anything exciting to talk about. There is always something. You know, that's always just in our own head about the comparison and feeling good about ourselves. The only reason we don't feel good about ourselves is because we have ego involved and if it wasn't involved, we would all be confident human beings. And so realizing you can get that ego to silence and you can express yourself more and more, it's just a work. It's just such a work. Do you have things that somebody whether it was a stage of like I'm having a hard time getting motivated advice for somebody that's like okay I have motivation right now, but what if that motivation goes out, I don't trust myself to stick with something.

**Caroline:** My first thing that I would want to ask them is when's a time that you had- like what's a time in your life that you've been motivated and done something and been really pleased about it? And so starting with that really helps you recognize okay, well maybe it was I had a baby and I wanted to work on gaining strength and showing my child that movement is life and being able to really hone in on that. So maybe the reason was to show my child that movement is life and sustain my body and to go through those you know progressions and that transition, and if you're an athlete, I wanted to transition from sport and I felt really good when I got this job, and it was great, and I got to be a leader, and I led a team, and we led hikes all over Spain or whatever it is. What is something that you did and chose to do and stuck with? And nine times out of ten, it's because you had a community. And so I think that that's what I always want to stress or say to my friends or to anyone is who are the people that you can trust that can hold you accountable but also share their experiences with you and you can share with them? Because I think that -I firmly believe that's a beautiful thing to do even if it's your teddy bear or your mom or your dog, like it doesn't matter. Who can you share that with? I think far too often we think we can do everything without sharing and it's a beautiful thing to accomplish things, so I would start with asking them what has worked and how did you get there. And it's hard sometimes to think about things that have worked. Maybe sometimes you can. You're like I can't think of anything that's worked, and the act of actually having to dig into that is half the battle because then you do realize that something has at some point, so there is hope.

**Emily:** I love that cause it helps people understand what their purpose really is if they have values, if they can start to put that roadmap of who I am, who that center is, like you talked

about. That really ties into it. Ah, that's good. The last thing I have a question for is trying to for anybody that is okay we're on a mission, we're motivated, we're ready to go, I think anything that helps you in day to day life, whether it's for business or not, do you have any final, you're a former fucking Olympic athlete, you know, you're driven, you're going, you're building your own business, you're going- For anybody else that's listening that's having that same I'm here, I'm motivated, I'm ready, here we go, you know? The kind of opposite pendulum as far as enjoying the process, enjoying the journey a little bit more, and not looking so much at the mountain.

**Caroline:** Million dollar question, right? I would honestly say to start every single moment that you have, every single day, every single event, every single celebration, to start every single one with minimal expectations. And by that I mean, you're always gonna have them. You're gonna want stuff. You're gonna want to be great. You're going to want to win this and I wanted to go to the Olympics since I was 10. It was there, but the most that I expected they should, the more I set myself up for not being present in that moment, and that's not to say that visualization isn't helpful. The visualization happens in the present. It's something you're doing in the present moment about what you want, and I think that I so often set myself up for it has to go this way and if it doesn't go this way then blank. And then you create that story, and then that story creates the next mountain, and then the story creates the next mountain. So I think if you can go into something knowing that I'm going to be right here right now, do the best with the skills that ti've already built up to this point, knowing what the end goal is, but knowing that I don't know the result of this exact thing yet. I need to motivated off of what I know I'm capable of doing, and now just the result that I think should happen. That's my biggest piece of advice. I think that can be taken by people as- actually, if that's taken by anybody as oh well if you don't want something to happen, then how are you gonna get it? Then I think that person really needs to dive into a couple of other things about themselves as far as what they actually want. What's the reason your'e doing it? Is it to win? is it make a million dollars? And that's great, but break it down, break it down, break it down. What's the real reason you're doing it? What inside of you is driving you to do that? Because the expectation, you always want to be great, but the more that you place this pressure on the should's and the have to's and the must's, it just becomes you do it for a different reason.

**Emily:** That's beautiful. I can relate to this so strongly. It's so true. When you are like- For example, when I launched the Kickstarter, I as like yeah of course I want it and I'm gonna be shocked if I get it, but then you hit the number that's you're supposed to get so then it's funded, and then it's like alright I should have done that. I would have been disappointed had that not happened, because in my head before I even hit let's go, it was like I have such expectations of this having to happen that it was hard. It was like one really beautiful moment of celebration and that was it for the rest of the 30 days. It was like how can I get more? How can I make sure this gets to more people? How can I be even more successful? And that was eye-opening for me because ti was the first time outside of fitness that I saw that everything is the same when you expect that and you work hard for it and you get it, it feels just as empty as when you started, and you have that kind of expectation set aside and you're just saying ah let's see what happens. I think that's so- it's of course the little let go's, but that's such a little thing for me to really understand is like nope, it's gonna be cool. It will play out exactly how it should and if I don't have that mentality it's so true. You don't even remember what you feel like in that moment cause you're not in the moment.

**Caroline:** Right, and it's again that meaning. if you can really understand what the meaning and the why and how you can attach your own meaning to that situation, like we talked about earlier, and if that meaning gets out of control, and it doesn't make sense and it's too pressured and it's about the wrong things, then you slowly let go of what those are, because that's when the overthinking happens is when you make it about the wrong thing and you start to spiral into story about the wrong thing. So it does kind of go in circles and back and forth and all over the place if you let it.

**Emily:** This has been so good. Thank you, Caroline. I really- I guess my final question, even though I said I had a final question, and I know you're some sort of ocean animal, but what is your spirit animal?

**Caroline:** Oh my gosh, this is so good. You know I always say a monkey.

**Emily:** You're a land animal? Oh my god, I wouldn't have guessed that.

**Caroline:** I know. Or just a mermaid. It can technically be an animal because it's mammal and fish.

**Emily:** That is very true. I don't have mermaid in my book, but I will screenshot monkey.

**Caroline:** Just the little monkey. Like the emoji one with the tale.

**Emily:** Yeah, the hands over eyes is my favorite.

**Caroline:** Yeah, it's so true. I'm a shy person. I'm actually a shy persons, so that one does fit.

**Emily:** Really?

**Caroline:** I am. I'm shy in a good way. I'm shy at first to things that are meaningful to me because I know that it's like I feel really freaking hard and it takes a lot for me to understand that that feeling doesn't have to be exactly what I'm gonna be thinking or doing. So I feel really hard and because I feel really hard I get shy, and so during that shy moment is when I do the little let go's cause I'm like okay what is occurring in my head right now? So yeah that little monkey is perfect.

**Emily:** Okay, I'll screenshot the monkey animal and text it to you. So I know people can find you on Instagram @caroburckle but I do- where else would you like people to go and see more about what you do?

**Caroline:** Yeah, so I'm simple. I just do Instagram. I'm not as active on Facebook, but I do have a page and a personal account @carolinesilverBurckle for both and Rise-Athletes.com sour website for Rise and Instagram is @RiseAthletes and then I also dabble in design and product development stuff, which is @CaroCoCo and I just do art for shits and giggles because it's therapy for me, but I have a little Caro Sketches account, because I don't know.

**Emily:** Because you're creative. I love it.

**Caroline:** So that's all. Simple. I don't do Twitter. Sorry guys, it's just not my jam, but-

**Emily:** It's okay. Twitter, it's depends. I do it for like live events. I should be doing it right now for Donald Trump's speech, but-

**Caroline:** Oh my god, yeah you better go do it.

**Emily:** Thank you so much again. Loved having you on the podcast. I know everyone else will as well. And everyone, thank you for listening . I will see you next week.

**Caroline:** Thank you. It was a blast.