

Ep #24: The Evolution of a Business



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With Your Host

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Hi, this is Lindsay Dotzlaf and you are listening to *Mastering Coaching Skills*, episode 24.

To really compete in the coaching industry, you have to be great at coaching. That's why every week, I will be answering your questions, sharing my stories, and offering tips and advice so you can be the best at what you do. Let's get to work.

Hello friends, I'm so excited for this podcast today. I have to say, I had a lot of fun thinking about this for you. So, two episodes ago, episode 22, I said I was going to give you kind of an overview of my business and how I've created all of the things that I have.

And then, I interviewed the amazing Maggie Reyes and lost my voice all at the same time. So, I'm sorry it wasn't immediately following, but here we go. We're going to dive in. And I'm actually glad that it took me a little bit longer to do this because I wrote it a while ago, and then it gave me an opportunity to go back and edit and add some things in.

And I kept thinking about, "Oh yeah, and this and this..." And what I want you to take away from this – this isn't just going to be me telling you about my success or about the things that I have created. I'm going to give you a breakdown of my business, tell you specifically what I had each year, what I didn't have, and then mostly I'm going to give you my biggest takeaways, the biggest things that I've learned each year of my business. Which hopefully will be super-helpful, no matter where you are in your business.

So, if you haven't listened, go back and listen to episode 22, where I talk about creating your own strategy. Although, if you haven't, it won't be a problem. You can listen to this and then go back and listen to the other if you want.

So, today I'm going to tell you what my business has looked like from day one, just open book, how much money I've made, the evolution of how I created my own strategies and my own intellectual property specifically for you guys.

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And I want to do this for a few reasons. So, first, whether you're a new coach or you've been around for a while, I think it's so easy to find someone like me, especially if you're new to me and you didn't know me before, with an established business and think maybe I just got lucky, or I just have an amazing niche. Which I do, by the way, but my niche doesn't create my results. Or that I was able to just create success overnight. And trust me when I say, none of these are true.

Second, I want you to see truly how simple your business can be, how much you don't need to rush to create your own concepts and have all of the perfect businessy things. You can be an amazing coach today no matter where you are in your business right now.

And third, and this one is more like an FYI, I don't know that all of the takeaways I'm going to share today would have come to me in that moment, like while they were happening or even at the end of each year. So, what I'm sharing, this is the learning that I see after the fact. And I really am a firm believer in there is no right way to build a business, no right way to be a coach. So, although I share what my business looked like, that doesn't mean that you're doing it wrong if yours looks differently.

Alright, let's dive in. So, a little backstory, when I was two – just kidding. But I do want to give you just a brief backstory of how I got into coaching because it does play into some of my business experiences in the beginning. So, I hired a coach in 2015, mostly just to figure out what I was doing with my life.

So, very briefly, just on the outside, everything was perfect in my life. On the inside, I felt just very lost and anxious a lot of the time. And at the time when I hired a coach, I was running two businesses. I was already an entrepreneur. One was a network marketing business and one was an Etsy shop where I sold literally thousands of dinosaur capes. It would be really fun if somebody listening has one. Mostly for kids, but I did make a few of for adults.

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So, basically I was raising my kids during the day, but I didn't really identify as a stay-at-home mom. Not that there's anything wrong with that. It seriously is the hardest job I have ever done in my entire life. And then, I was running two businesses until, you know, 2AM, 3AM, maybe 4AM if it was close to Halloween and Christmas and holidays. And then doing it all again the next day.

So, looking back now, I would say that I really was just searching for who I was. Like, what is my identity in this world? I had a bunch of different roles and none of them felt like it was me, that it was my identity. And so, I just was feeling a little lost.

About five years prior to that, I found out I was pregnant with my now 11-year-old and I had made the decision to hit pause on a clinical psychology program that I had just been accepted into because my pregnancy was high-risk.

So, fast forward to five years, now 2015, I had two kids, two business. Everything from the outside looked amazing. My marriage was great My girls were perfect. My family and friends were amazing. And yet, I just felt like I didn't know what was happening.

My anxiety, shockingly, was out of control. And despite being on a couple different medications even, I was having frequent panic attacks. And I was aware that the outside didn't match how I was feeling. And being a person who loves to internalize all of the things and usually make them my fault, like if I'm going to blame anyone for anything, I usually blame myself first. This is still something I have to work through. Coaches, just because I'm a coach, doesn't mean I'm perfect.

But obviously, at the time, I made that mean something was really wrong. Like, I was just a broken human. I just didn't know how to do it right. So, when I heard a friend, Stephanie, shoutout to her for changing my entire life, if you are listening, Stephanie. When I heard her say she was doing a couple sessions with a life coach, I immediately jumped on that train.

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I needed to know everything. So, I spent the next year and a half working with a coach, changing everything about the way I thought about my life, everything about the way I thought about myself. and truly, nothing on the outside changed besides tweaks here and there. But everything on the inside changed.

Obviously, I fell in love with coaching. I was obsessed. It felt like the missing piece. I was so into the human brain and psychology and I had lots of education and always had a hard time figuring out what I wanted to be when I grew up. And when I found coaching, it was just like, when it really changed so much for me, I was just like, “Oh my gosh, this is what I’ve been missing.”

So, in 2016, I started my coaching business with one Facebook post the day after thanksgiving. Isn’t that the best way to announce to the world that you’re a life coach?

And if I remember correctly, I’m pretty sure it was met with crickets, really. And I know so many of you will relate to this because I’ve had lots of clients come to me with this, but I had built it up so much in my head to be this huge thing and, oh my gosh, what was everyone going to think and all of that?

But guess what the other people were doing? They were living their own lives, probably out shopping spending too much money, not really caring at all about a Facebook post that I thought was about to just blow up and change my whole life and people were either going to be obsessed and immediately hire me, or just hate me. That’s how I made it so dramatic in my mind.

This is always true, by the way. Even if it isn’t the day after Thanksgiving, no one cares nearly as much as you think they will. It’s just true. They don’t.

So, like I said, the way I want to tell you about my business is by giving you my takeaways from each year. So, although that year, 2016, my business

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was only open for a couple of months. But what I learned about starting is there is truly no right way. You just have to start. It's like ripping off a Band-Aid.

And I did actually make a few thousand dollars that first year just by sharing my journey on Facebook, sharing how coaching had changed my life, just talking about my journey and kind of waiting for people to say, "Wait, tell me more. I want to know about this"

I didn't have a website. I don't even know, looking back, if I had an official business name. I literally had nothing but my experience and social media. That is it. I think I sold maybe one group program for some insanely now price. I thought it was the best thing ever.

So, that was those couple months. Then in 2017, my first full year in business, that year I made about \$30,000. And this was mostly almost 100% with one-on-one clients. That year, 2017, it felt like a lot of hard work, but I was just in the magic of it looking back. I just remember being in the magic of it thinking, "I can't believe that changing people's lives is my job description." And I kind of stayed in that most of that year.

And I just kept going. I still had no niche, although because I was running a couple businesses at the time, just about probably 95% of my clients were entrepreneurs of some sort, I had no certification, just a few powerful tools that I use with all of my clients that I learned from my coach.

And my biggest takeaways from that year were, one, I still didn't need any of the extras. No website, so specific branding. Maybe a logo I made myself on Canva possibly to put on PayPal invoices. I do remember doing that. No podcast. None of the things.

Two, instead of all of those things, I invested all of my money in coaching and improving my own coaching. That is what most of my money went to. And then three, this is the year that I stepped into, that I really learned how to believe something before it happened.

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So, what I mean by that is I just invested so much in myself, more in myself than what I made, because I knew it would pay off. I just stayed in the belief that it was going to work.

I thought of it just like investing in stocks or maybe property, except the payoff would be way higher. And I just kept betting on myself. Spoiler alert, it was a pretty great bet.

So, that year seems pretty simple looking back. I'm sure it didn't feel simple at the time. But looking back, yeah, I had one-on-one clients. I didn't have any of the things. I made \$30,000.

Then, in 2018, again, all one-on-one clients. And what I remember about 2018 as I look back is I remember it being the hardest year of my business. And what I mean by that is I spent several months that year – and I remember this very distinctly – thinking, why isn't it working yet? Which wasn't true. It was working. Just I got to the point where it wasn't working as fast as I thought it should be. And I just was spinning in a lot of doubt and confusion.

Looking back now, I can also see that this is probably the year I had more growth in my business than any other year which of course is why it felt so hard and so uncomfortable. I made just over \$100,000 that year, and again, invested almost all of that money back into my business. And again, just like before, almost 100% of that investing was in coaching, group coaching, and retreats.

And I still had no specific niche. Although at this point, I had started to say that I help women say yes to themselves. Now, yes, that might sound like a niche to some of you, but not really. It's very broad. What does that even mean? Really, the definition of that, I think, was just up to the interpreter, up to whoever heard it and whatever they thought it meant.

And goodness, I actually did have a website that I built myself. I learned to code. I spent hours, hours, and hours learning to code to build myself my

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own fancy website. Never again. Because guess why. I did not use it one time.

Now, I will say, writing the copy from the website taught me a lot about my business and who I thought I was as a coach. But I also think even though I didn't know it then, this was the year that I kind of got in my head about knowing if I was a great coach. It felt like the seeds were kind of planting for what I do now.

Of course, again, I did not know it then. But I knew my clients were getting results. But I just started thinking a lot about, "What does good coaching look like? How do we measure it?" And it turns out, this is what I do now. But this is the year that all those seeds just started planting.

Also in 2018. I had two huge experiences in my business that really changed so many things. They really stand out to me when I look back and think about the year.

First, I hosted – along with a few other coaches – a live event called Live Your Light. And the event was, of course, incredible and we had so much fun. But my biggest takeaway from it, just like everything else in our business, the success was not measured in how much money did we make or how many clients did we sign from it. It was measured on who I became on the other side, the panning, the execution. All of everything that event required me to be was someone that I didn't fully believe I was at that point going into it.

And this is always true, whether you're going to networking events or hosting your first webinar or your 20th webinar or whatever it is, the growth is always measured in who you become on the other side. The business results, the actual money, the business piece of it, they will always follow that. But you have to be willing to become the person first without any proof that it will work. It's kind of delusional. It takes just a teensy bit of delusion to be in this business.

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So, obviously this is my huge first takeaway from 2018. The second thing that happened this year in 2018 was I went to a retreat in Cabo, My coach was hosting it. And it was the first retreat, I'm pretty sure, that I attended that was all coaches. And not just all coaches, but all coaches that wanted to do big, big things in the world, make a lot of money, and create a huge impact.

And there, I found my forever people. I can't stress to you guys enough how important this is. When I say my forever people, I don't mean my clients. I mean other coaches that I know will be my coach best friends for life. Whether they like it or not. It's not optional at this point.

So, I already had some great friends who were coaches, but this is just on a totally different level, in a way that was like, "Whoa..." I just felt it in my soul.

So, because of that, I think this is when I really started to settle into my space in the coaching industry and really believe I could do big things. And the reason is because if I could see it in them, I could also consider that it was true about me.

I was there with these amazing women, amazing coaches. And if I could believe these things about them, I could also believe that they were true for me.

One memory that I will never ever forget about this retreat is being on a boat, or I think maybe a chartered yacht is probably a more correct term. And we were supposed to go around and talk about where we are in our business and where we saw it in the next one year, two years, three years. And I remember listening to everyone just breezily throw out numbers just like it was no big deal; \$300,000, \$500,000, a million. It was crazy, in my mind.

I remember my whole mind just being blown listening and thinking, "Why? How? How do they know that they're going to do that?" And I'm pretty sure I went last. And kind of sheepishly, I think I said something like, "In one

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year I'll make \$200,000 and the next year I'll make \$300,000 and the next year maybe \$500,000." And it all felt very, kind of, arbitrary to me.

And then I said something that I will never forget, "I just don't even know why I would ever need to make a million dollars." That's so crazy. Elizabeth Salazar, one of my coach friends for life that I mentioned, loves to remind me of this on occasion. And from where I am now, it just blows my mind.

She reminds me about this, about me saying this and about what I said, and that I said, "I just don't ever know why I would need to make a million dollars."

And it's crazy, in this moment as I'm recording this podcast, I literally just realized that this year, 2021, will be three years from that boat ride. So, the end of this year, it will be three years, the three years that I was talking about. And let's just say, things have changed just a little bit from what I said that day.

That was my second big takeaway from this year, is how important it is to have other coaches on your side. So important. This is something that I talk about a lot and I really create this in my masterminds now. I can see, looking back, that this has been really pretty important in my business and that is where it all started. At least that's the big moment that I remember where it started.

So, a couple other quick takeaways is that I still didn't have a need for a website or a niche, even though I'd spent many, many hours learning to build the website and I never used it once. Seriously.

This was also the year, in 2018, that I decided that I just knew how to make money. At some point during that year, it just hit me, "Maybe I know what I'm doing." And if I was forced right now to tell you the how, of like how did I do it, how did I make money, I would say there's just one trick – two tricks; try everything, and just keep going and be good at coaching. Those were always the things that I did. I just kept trying things. I just kept going. And I constantly focused on, how can I be a better coach?

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Alright, so this brings us to 2019. In 2019, a lot of things changed in my business. So, this is the first year that I started focusing a lot more attention on truly being a great coach and spending time thinking about that.

I learned a lot about who my clients were and I decided on a niche. What? I also paid someone to build a website – what – that I actually did use. I hired my first virtual assistant and bookkeeper and eventually decided to go all in on that niche. That's the year I made \$300,000 and it was the first year that I really started paying myself regularly, like regular amounts of money each month. Ironically, it seems to be the first year that my husband really started being onboard with my business too. So, I have no idea why that would be.

When it comes to my biggest takeaways from 2019, let's just start with that one. I would say this is the year that I really truly saw that the people that love you and support you in their life, they may not fully understand what you're doing or why you're investing so much money in coaching and in your business. And that's totally fine. You do not need them to.

I knew this the whole time but it was one of those things, my husband, once I saw him be a little more onboard, it helped me see, I didn't need him to that whole time. As long as your people believe in you, which I know is where my husband was the whole time, he believed in me, he just wasn't sure about what I was doing. He just didn't understand it. He thought selling dinosaur capes was a solid business. Why in the world would I give that up?

But he believed in me. And your people, if they believe in you, that's all that matters. They don't know what you do every day. They don't experience your discomfort. They don't understand your vision.

So, maybe let them in a little bit on all of that. But it really is so powerful seeing my husband understand the reality of the business I was creating and at the same time. Knowing I didn't need him to. It felt very empowering.

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Number two, hiring people to help you is amazing. This is a huge takeaway for me from this year. But it's so much more fun when you have the money to do it and it doesn't create a "Oh my gosh, I have to make money so I can pay my people," thought and feeling.

So, for me, the very first person I hired in my business was a bookkeeper. Her name is Emily Sandberg. She is incredible. I will definitely link her info. If you are looking for a bookkeeper, she is your person. But I didn't hire her until well after I made \$100,000. And I just knew that that was the first thing I needed in my business.

I wanted help just being a responsible money steward within my business, knowing what I could afford, where my money was, how much money I had, how much to save for taxes, because now that I was making money, I also was paying a lot in taxes, and how to save for other investments I wanted to make.

I didn't want to keep thinking like, "Okay, well I'll put this..." I put a lot of stuff on credit cards in the beginning and it was always like, "Okay, how do I pay for this? How do I pay for this?" And for me, this was just the best decision for my business.

The second and third people I hired in my business that weren't coaches, of course, it wasn't until the end of 2019. Which means I had made almost \$300,000 before hiring anyone to help me in the day to day of my business. This is possible when you don't overcomplicate your business and your systems and your processes.

I'm not saying this is right for everyone. But I'm just letting you know it is possible. If you are a newer coach, if you are not making that much money in your business and you feel like you're paying all of these people, I would just really examine that.

Maybe it is the best choice for you, but you just have to really be clear about why you're doing it. So, at that point, at the end of 2019, I hired

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someone to build my website and help me create a new brand and I hired a virtual assistant, which was so fun.

And looking back, I'm so glad I did it in that order. It kept so much pressure off of me for making my money back or getting my money's worth out of it, which is not how I look at it now. But I think it is how I would have looked at it then. And it really helped me stay focused on what was important because if I was the one doing all of the things, I had to choose what's important in my own coaching. And being great at what I do always was the thing, those were always the things that kept rising to the top.

In 2019, I also signed up for coach certification through LCS. So, all of the things that I didn't have before. This was kind of the year that I was like, "Okay, now is the time." I made money. I also didn't sign up for coach certification until I'd made almost \$300,000. So, let that sink in.

I got a certification through the Life Coach School and what I thought that I already knew but became even more clear to me through certification is that you don't go to certification for the paper or to say that you're certified. Your clients do not care about that. We've talked about this before. Your clients only care that you can help them.

You do it because you want to be an expert in whatever specific tool they are teaching in that school, in that certification place. So, at the Life Coach School, they specifically teach a tool called the model. They teach you how to use it in your own self-coaching and with coaching your clients. And let's be very clear, I loved the Life Coach School. I'm so glad I got certified, but I also want it to be clear that I do think I would be at the same place in my business without the certification.

So, just think about that. When you're thinking about your business, the certification, no matter where you get it, it doesn't make you money. It is never the thing that makes you money.

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You know, I really think it's important to say that just because I don't want you to put off making money until you have a piece of paper. Do it now. It's totally possible for you.

And then get the piece of paper, if you want to, when you want it. Not when you think you need it. Now, that being said, you do have to know how to coach to be a coach. So, you have to learn the tools somewhere. For me, I had a coach for a long time. She taught me a few tools that she used. And if you don't have those basic skills, then for sure a certification program, if you want to go straight into that, that's just a different path than what I did. And there's nothing wrong with it. A certification program will teach you how to coach.

And the next thing that I learned from 2019 is how fun and freaking terrifying it was to kind of let my niche pick me. Literally, I resisted it for a while. Now, for some of you, you became a coach because you know exactly who you want to help. It's the reason you became a coach. You've heard this with some of my guests that I've had on the podcast. That's so amazing. I used to be super-jealous of people like that.

But if this isn't you, I want to give you full permission right now to just keep going and coaching all of the people using the powerful tools that you already have until possibly your niche funds you, or you have a better understanding at least of who your people are.

Looking back, I would say this is exactly the same method I used with college and with what I wanted to be when I grew up. And I applied the same thing to picking a niche. I wasn't in a hurry and I kept believing I could create success without it.

So really, throughout 2019, as my business grew, I started working with more coaches on their mindset about coaching and their businesses. And I didn't have any business strategy. I was very clear about, like, I'm going to coach your mind, I'm a mindset coach, I'm not going to tell you what to do

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in your business. I'll help you make decisions. But I'm not saying that I can teach you to make money. But your thoughts can.

It felt like a natural progression for me because I had been coaching entrepreneurs the whole time. So, money was something I was very used to coaching on. It also happens that this was the year I became a mentor in my coach's program, which meant I was spending more and more time around coaches, which was perfect because thinking about coaching and the craft of coaching, literally the magic of coaching is all I wanted to think about anyway.

It also became very clear to me and felt scary at the same time that although I loved working with coaches, I didn't want to coach them on their money specifically and on, you know, how to sign a first client or specifically focus on building a business. And in my brain at the time, that was so scary because I thought, "Well, if I'm going to coach coaches, that's the only option."

So, I did coach my clients on this. I just knew, as my business grew, it wasn't the thing that I wanted to focus on. So, I really had to work through that fear of, "Well, who will want it if you're not helping coaches make money?" Silly brains, right?

I love coaching. I love thinking about coaching. I love thinking about the impact that coaching has on the world and how important really quality coaching is to me. So, obviously, again, this became more seeds sprinkled in for exactly what I do now, as I kept going. And I still that year just worked with one-on-one clients.

Something else started happening, which I've talked about in previous podcasts. I spent a lot of time thinking about my clients and I noticed that's so many of them had very similar patterns of thinking. And not shockingly, of course, they were similar to mine.

So, just like I mentioned in episode 22, this is the point where I started spending lots of time, just like I tell you to do, thinking about my clients and

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what do they need that is different from the tools I was already using with them?

I didn't do anything about it immediately. I just started noticing. And my clients at the time, what I know, they loved to be good at things. They put lots of pressure on themselves to be the best. Most of them are your typical over-achiever, perfectionist, be the best, like all of those tendencies. And a lot of them actually love to use coaching against themselves.

And even when they were making money as coaches, they would consistently think they weren't doing it right or that their clients weren't getting results. Which sometimes was true, but usually wasn't.

So, leaning into the clients I loved working with, most of them already certified way before me, which I thought was always funny, most of them scared to grow their business until they knew they were the best at what they do, this is the idea from which my mastermind was born; just really spending time thinking about my clients, thinking about, what do they need?

So, coaching masters, which is still the mastermind I have now, was created from this idea. It was created from what I would have wanted when I was struggling to know that I was an amazing coach. Mixed with what my clients were consistently bringing to our sessions.

And, of course, when the idea for my mastermind was born was also the time that my vision for how much money I wanted to make in the next three years drastically changed. That thought of, "Why would I ever need to make a million dollars?"

The truth is, I don't need to make a million dollars. I don't. I am perfect right where I am. That could carry on forever. But when you really deeply care about what you do, you change the way you think about it. Because for me, when I think about it now, I think about the impact first. It's always what I think about; the impact I want to have on the world.

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And then the coaches that need this. the coaches that need this thing that I offer that they might not be able to get anywhere else. And then the full world of people that deserve great coaching. That's where my mind goes now and I think, "I'm going to make all of the millions." But it's not about that. It's kind of a weird thing. It's like, when you think it's about the money, it sometimes can feel icky and weird. At least for me.

But when I realized it's not about the money at all and it's about all of these other things, all of a sudden, it's like the money becomes the measurement for all the other things. So then, I sold my first round of Coaching Masters at the end of 2019, my first launch was in December of that year.

So then, the next year was 2020. 2020 did not go quite as planned. I'm guessing you can feel me on this. And when I say that, I don't mean my business didn't do well or I didn't crush my goals, because I did. More like my takeaways are not what I expected them to be. But of course, they're exactly what I needed.

So, I had a couple just huge mind-blowing takeaways from 2020. And these feel a lot more clear, obviously, because at the point that I'm recording this, this was just last year. So, first I'll give you an overview. In 2020, I now had a clear niche. I had a website I was using. I started this podcast at the very end of the year. I began working on my very first workbook from all of that work that I was doing thinking about my clients. That was also at the end of last year, created specifically for my mastermind. And I made about \$400,000.

I still had no ads, no additional contractors, except a podcast producer. Shoutout to amazing Pavel and Angela and their team. I am sure, hopefully they will be sure – I can't even take credit for it. They do it. They're going to link their own linkup in the show notes in case you need it. But that's how they roll. They're incredible. If you're looking for someone to do your podcast, they're probably your people.

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So, in 2020, I did something different than I ever had. I set my money goal to just repeat what I had done the year before. Now, you already heard me say I made almost \$400,000, which was a little more. The previous year I made \$300,000. But it was kind of unintentional. Isn't that crazy? Like an accidental \$100,000.

But I set it to be the same because I planned to entirely change the structure of my business, going from working only with one-on-one clients to only group coaching in my mastermind. And then, I had a lot of backend things that I just really wanted to work on in my business, like learning how to have a team, work with these new contractors that I'd hired, creating lots of intellectual property, AKA my own strategies and tools.

So, here's a sidenote, just for any of you that listened to episode 22 about creating your strategies and thought, "Oh my gosh, I need my own tools, materials, intellectual property immediately..." just notice at this point in my story, the beginning of last year, I had built a \$300,000 a year business without reinventing the wheel.

And more importantly, freely giving all of the credit to all of the people that I learned tools and strategies from. I just didn't even think twice about it. Of course I gave all the people credit. This is so important to know. This reminded me, I definitely should do a full episode on this in the future. Pause and write it down if you need to.

Unless you see a need, unless there is a space where you're like, "Wow, my clients really need a tool for this and I don't have one," for sure, if that's the case, create it.

But if it's not, don't think you have to take something you've learned and turn it into something just to say you created it. Because then it's just going to be like a weird copy of someone else.

So, in 2020, my plan was to only have my mastermind. I was all in. I create a live event. I planned it all out, paid all of the money for all of the spaces to host it in. I sold a mastermind with my live event. I was so thrilled. My

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offering, niche were so clear. I did hit my goal for that first launch. I hit my first \$100,000 launch. My mind was blown. I couldn't believe it. All the things.

My new mastermind began in February and guess where I'm going with this. About a month after we started, everything, the whole world exploded. That's very dramatic. But that is what it felt like at the time to a lot of us, I know.

So, of course, I ended up having to cancel many of the things. I had to cancel the in-person event. I chose to move my office into my bedroom because it was the only room in our small house that had a door and now my two kids were home, and my husband was working from home.

I had to learn an entirely new normal of a day to day, just like many of you. I had to figure out how to homeschool the kids, a new schedule with my husband, just all of the things, just like so many of you. Which means my biggest takeaways, biggest, hands-down, could pound on the table and say this over and over, coaching is the most important piece of your business always. Always.

Yes, it was a hard year, but I have never felt so compelled to double-down on what I do, ever. It just really solidified my belief in coaching is the most important asset and skill that you have in your business.

I do wish it hadn't taken a pandemic for that to happen, and it would have happened eventually over time, but it just really solidified for me everything else can change. You can cancel your live events. You can cancel retreats. You can cancel everything. You can be in your bedroom 24 hours a day sleeping and then waking up and working while homeschooling. Coaching is always the most important skill and asset you have.

If you take one thing away from today's podcast, please let it be this. Remind yourself of this every time your brain thinks that there is something else more important. Everything else is negotiable, changeable, malleable, your strategy, your marketing, your ads, your funnels, your sales, your

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website, literally all of it. None of it matters as much as your coaching skills. Because that is how your clients get results. Without them, you literally don't have a business.

Now, of course, the other things are important and you're going to want to learn how to sell your skills. You're going to want to learn how to market your skills. But your coaching skills are the most important. I'm just going to let that be there for a second.

The second huge takeaway I had from 2020 – so, because of COVID and more importantly because of so much social division that was created in 2020 in the United States – not that it was all created last year, but it all kind of came bubbling to the surface – I spent a lot of time creating and thinking through the top values of my business.

I've realized, as I was just personally affected by some of the things happening in the country, that I had thought about this of course on a personal level, but I hadn't done it in a structured way for my business. Which meant, when it came time to decide what I wanted my business to be known for and stand for and how I was going to make that all happen, I didn't have any kind of filter to use to make those decisions.

And again, I knew personally what I believed. But I didn't understand how much of that I wanted to share or how to do it. And I still don't think that there's a right way I think you have to figure it out for yourself. But I had to create something for me that helped me answer those questions.

So, now, not only do I have, on the other side of this, clear values defined that I run every decision through which helps with literally every decision in my business, but it's also something I now do in my mastermind with my clients so that every decision they make about their business feels just clear and simple. Not necessarily easy. It's not always easy to implement what we decide. But at the very least, it can feel clear and you can be super-clear about why you've made the decision, which just makes it more simple.

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My last takeaway from 2020, I love having a simple business. I resisted for a little while, thinking, “I can’t just have one offer. I can’t just sell one thing.” But I am. And I love it. Looking back over last year, allowing myself to have that time to focus on one offer, to have one mastermind makes it so fun and focused and allows me to give that one thing all of my best ideas, all of my best self.

And I’m sure sometime fairly soon, I will add a second offer, but it won’t be because I’m trying to make up for what I’m not making with this one offer. It will be because I see a need for it, which is a very different place to make those decisions from.

So, to wrap it up, so far 2021 has been pretty amazing. This is where we are now as I’m recording this. It is April of 2021. So far, it’s been pretty great. Same business plan as last year. All I’m doing is launching my mastermind, launching it four times, once a quarter. And I plan to at least double what I made last year, which is crazy, right? Crazy to be the woman three years ago who was like, “I don’t know, maybe I’ll make a couple hundred thousand dollars...”

That was kind of the energy I said it in when I said it at the time. And to be on the other side of that where it’s like, “Yeah, I’ll probably make close to a million this year.” But in my mind, it’s not the million that matters. It is all of you, all of the people that I’m affecting, all of the people in the world who get to have quality coaching because someone has worked with me.

So, to wrap this up, for 2021, we will see where the year ends. But right now, I am focused on the impact in the coaching world that I am making. That is my number one goal. All of you, every coach that I help, all of their clients, those are the things I think about.

So, I’m so glad you’re here learning from me, whether it’s through this podcast or in my mastermind, I appreciate all of you. At the time I’m recording this, if you’re listening to it in real time, my mastermind is currently enrolling. I just opened applications. You can find them on my

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website or there's a link on my Instagram. Thank you so much for being here and being a part of this amazing journey.

Seriously, if you've heard nothing else here today, just know I feel so grateful for you. I'm so grateful this is the work I get to do in whatever capacity you have found me. So, see you next week.

Thanks for listening to this episode of *Mastering Coaching Skills*. If you want to learn more about my work, come visit me at lindsaydotzlafcoaching.com. That's Lindsay with an A, D-O-T-Z-L-A-F.com. See you next week.