

Ep #89: The Answer to Almost Any Question



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Lindsay Dotzlaf

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Hi, this is Lindsay Dotzlaf and you are listening to *Mastering Coaching Skills* episode 89.

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.

Oh, hey coach, I'm so glad you're here today. We are going to talk about something today that I talk about a lot in my program, in my mastermind, kind of everywhere. And I wanted to cover it with you on the podcast. What I'm going to talk about today is a question that I get, and it's actually about 50 probably different questions, or maybe 100 different questions of some form. And the answer is always the same.

And I'm actually going to start by telling you first the answer, and then all of the questions. And I want you to stick with me because I'm going to tell you the answer and you're going to be like, what? And then I'm going to talk through the questions and expand upon the answer a lot.

So the answer is, there's no right way, are you willing to figure it out? Or let's figure it out, I'll help you. But the question, there's so many questions. And all of you listening probably have some right now and I want you to just think about this. Take a second, think about this.

What is something in your coaching that you've been trying to figure out or something, maybe if you're a newer coach, questions that you have about your coaching. Or if you've been coaching for a while, questions that you have about your coaching, or your next offer, or your next coaching container.

And I just want you to think what if the answer is there's no right way? What would you love to try? And just let that sink in for a minute. And maybe after this episode go think through that. If there really was not a way that was the correct way, the right way to do it, what would you try?

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Now, I am going to expand on this a lot and I think it will be very helpful, hopefully, for most of you. Even if you don't have an immediate answer when you ask yourself, "Well, what would I try?"

And as always, I want you to listen to this episode from the perspective of yourself as possibly my client in this moment as you're listening. And also yourself as the coach because I am positive that your clients probably come to you with questions like this as well.

Before we dive into all the questions that I get of people looking for the right way, I do want to give a little plug today. If you're listening to this the week it comes out or the day it comes out, the next round of my mastermind, Coaching Masters, is starting in two weeks on July 26th.

And this week we are having a little bonus launch. We're looking to fill a few more spots for that mastermind. And if you've been on the fence, or if you've been listening for a while and you just haven't quite taken the plunge but you know you want to, now is your time.

This is only open this week, you can find the link to the application in here in the show notes, or follow me on Instagram, you can find it there. Or make sure you're on my mailing list and I'll be having some emails come out this week that really dive into what Coaching Masters is and why you should join us.

And again, we start in two weeks. I can't wait to have you. I get so excited for first call, so the thought that that is coming up soon, just as I'm recording this, I feel so grateful and so excited. So hopefully I will see you there someday. All right, let's dive in.

So when I think about all the questions that coaches ask me, and these kind of come in two different forms. Some of them happen in the Coach Lab. A lot of times this is newer coaches, coaches just getting started and having lots of questions about just logistics, or how do I handle this certain specific situation with my clients?

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So I also get these questions in Coaching Masters that are a little more like, well, what should my process be? Do I need another certification, another training? What should my process include? What should I, like I've been doing it this way for a while, should I make changes? And so we're going to dive into some of those today.

So let's start with where the inspiration for this podcast came from, which is someone posted in the Coach Lab and said, hey, I'm a newer coach, and I'm just, these aren't her exact words. But it was, you know, hey, I'm a newer coach and I am just wondering how long should my coaching calls be? Should they be 30 minutes? Should they be 60 minutes?

What are the benefits to both of those things? Which one do you think I should do? And it was very much you know, just looking for like can someone please tell me what the right answer is here? And so of course, my coaching to her, I very much directed it back to her and said, well, this completely depends. This is so subjective, right?

Not every coach is the same. Some coaches are amazing coaches on 30 minute calls, or in 30 minute sessions, some coaches are amazing coaches in 10 minute sessions. Some coaches definitely, because of their style or because they're newer, it might take an hour. And that is totally fine, there is no right answer here.

And so I just asked her, which is one of my favorite questions, what do you want to do and why? If you take into consideration your coaching style, and the way you work with clients, and what your clients are looking to get from you and all of that, what do you want to do? Let's start there. And are you willing to try? Are you willing to just go try, like make a decision and then just go implement it and try it and see how it goes?

And this is permission for all of you listening, any decision you make today about your coaching container, the way you coach, your process, your offer any of it, you can change it at any time. I think sometimes we forget that.

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Now, maybe not if you're coaching for other people, but if you are an entrepreneur, if you work for yourself, I don't care what coaches you're working with, who's teaching you to do what, you always have complete autonomy over what's happening in your own business.

So if you decide today I'm having 30 minute coaching calls, and then a few weeks later you realize, you know, this is really not going great, I need more time, my style is a little more drawn out. I feel like I'm not having time to really dive in and get in there with my clients, you could make a decision that you want your sessions to be longer and implement it that week, if you want to.

Now, I am not saying to go make a bunch of decisions, change everything and just start implementing left and right depending on your whim of the day. That is not maybe necessarily the best way to do it. But just remember, when something isn't working and you evaluate, which is something very specific I teach within my containers, both of them, is how to evaluate, then you know should I make a change or should I not? Do I want to make a change?

I'm going to give you some more examples of questions that I get a lot. So that was one, right? Like how long should my coaching last? How long should my sessions be? What should I include in each session? How long should my package be? Should it be three months? Should it be 12 months? Should it be six months? Nine months? 72 months? It could be any amount of time.

Should I have a payment plan? How do I handle XYZ specific situation? My client showed up, this happened, or my client didn't show up, how should I handle that? How much should I charge? I can't remember if I already said that one. But that's when I get a lot, right? Like what's the right price?

Any question that you have like this, anything that comes to mind as I'm kind of going through this, anything that comes up for you, I just want you to answer it with there's no right answer, what do I want to do? I'm also

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going to give you some more questions at the end of this, but just start there. What do I want to do? If no one else was in charge, if I was the only person that knew the answer, what would I do right now?

Now, when I think about some questions I get in Coaching Masters, in my mastermind, so we do a lot of work on values and on coming up with your specific coaching process and really diving into being able to coach any client on anything. So I get a lot of process questions. Like how detailed should my process be? How many steps should it have? How long should my program be if it's a program, if it's a group coaching container?

Kind of all the things I talked about on the podcast last week, all those different options. Within those options, a lot of times my clients have so many questions and the answer is always the same, there's no right answer.

Now, when you think about coaching your clients and all the questions that they bring you, you can use this too, right? You can use this thought there's no right answer and you can bring it back around to them, what do you want? But here's how I love to approach coaching something like this.

So depending on what the client is asking, so if we use the example of what is a good call length, right? Should it be 30 minutes? Should it be 60 minutes? My answer was there's no right answer, just like I told you a minute ago, right? And I asked her what would you like to do?

But I always think that there can be two parts to coaching. That was the first part, that's directing it back to her. What do you want to do? Let's use your brain to figure it out. And then there can be this other side that is here's my opinion. And this is total opinion, you can take what you want from it and go with it or not, right? And you can do this in your own coaching.

So my opinion to her was, a lot of times as a newer coach it's probably going to take you a little bit longer to really dig in there, to ask questions that you want to ask, to get to the meat of it. And so I find that a lot of times

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with newer coaches it's good to go with a longer time. You can always shorten them in the future, but just start a little bit longer to give yourself a little grace, to give yourself the space to explore, to ask a bunch of questions, and to really find your footing in your coaching.

It doesn't mean that that's what she has to do, right? But that is my total opinion. I'm sure we could find someone else who's like, no, no, you never have to do more than a 20 minute coaching session, those are always perfect. Here's the formula, you just do it this exact way.

But because what I teach is a little more like we find your way, I don't know the right answer. And I don't ever tell my clients the right answer. But I do sometimes give them opinions. And I want you to hear me say that because I want you to know that is also available for you.

So let's say you are a marriage coach or a relationship coach, and you're coaching your client on this conversation that they just had with their partner. And they're asking you like, oh, how do I handle this? What should I do?

So you can coach them, right? You can coach them on their thoughts. You can ask them, what do you want to do? Let's explore it, right? What do you really want to do? What's coming up for you when you think about doing this? And go down that road. And then if it still is a little, like they're still a little unsure, you can offer suggestions or opinions. That is allowed to be part of your coaching.

You might have a strategy for here's exactly what I would do, right? But you could also say, "Well, okay, here's my opinion." Now, if you ask them what they want to do and they come back with an answer and you spend a bunch of time exploring it, and then your opinion is something totally opposite, that might not be the good time to say, "And here's my opinion."

But I love to offer my opinion when, one, it's maybe something new that someone hasn't done before. So that's a lot of times the case in the Coach Lab where sometimes I'm coaching newer coaches and they have

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questions. And I can tell the question is like, I've never done this before and I just want to explore all my options.

That's very different than if someone in Coaching Masters asked the same question. I would rely more heavily on their experience, right? Like what do your clients, how long do they like their sessions to be? Do you ever get to the point where there's just awkward silences at the end of calls because the coaching is kind of complete and now you're not sure how to fill the time? I might ask questions like that. That's very different than just a brand new coach and I'm saying like, well, here's what I might try and here's why.

Okay, so now I want to give you some questions that you can ask that might be more helpful for you than what is the right way, or some form of what is the right way. So here are some questions, one, what do I want to do? I already said this one, but it's very important. What do I want to do?

Number two, what am I willing to try? Or what do I want to try first? Sometimes I think this gives my brain a little bit of permission, right? When I'm reminding myself that I get to try it, that also means that I get to change it later. Or what do I want to try first means there also could be a second or third or fourth option. So I think that that's always a good one. What am I willing to try? What do I want to try? What do I want to try first?

Number three, what makes the most sense for me and my situation? I think it's always important to remember that asking what is the right answer, what's the right way, the reason it's never a useful question in most cases, is because every situation is different. Every human is different. Every coach is different. So what might be right for me today, might not be right for you today.

Number four, what makes the most sense for my clients? Also a very useful question, right? Your clients aren't going to be the same as my clients. And what makes sense for your clients might not always make sense for my clients. So for me to just give you the answer, when coaches ask me

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questions for me to just say that here's the right answer might not make sense. Their clients are going to be very different than mine.

Especially if you want to dive into little self-coaching around whatever topic you're trying to make a decision about, what am I afraid of happening? That's always a good question. Sometimes there can be a lot of stuff hiding under there, right? Like, what am I afraid of happening? Am I afraid of making the wrong choice? Why?

And then very related to that last question, you could ask yourself what do I think is going to happen if I pick the right choice? If I do it right, if I make the right decision, what do I think is going to happen? Kind of the opposite of what am I afraid of? What am I hoping to gain from making the right decision or choosing the right way?

And then the last thing to consider is that anytime you're thinking about something like this, what's the right way to do it? What's the wrong way to do it? A lot of times you're just trying to make a decision and you don't know how to make it. So you can ask yourself what are all the reasons I would choose this option? What are all the reasons I would choose this other option? Maybe what are all the reasons I would choose this third or fourth option?

I actually have a whole podcast about this, or maybe even more than one about making decisions back in the very beginning of my podcasting, where I talk through my decision making process and how you can make decisions. So when you're thinking through some of this for yourself, or with a client, you might realize, oh, I'm just trying to decide and I'm really thinking there's going to be a right or wrong choice.

If that's the case, the decision making process can be very, very helpful. I'm so glad you were here today. I hope that this was helpful and I will see you, talk to you, whatever you want to call it next week. Bye.

Thanks for listening to this episode of *Mastering Coaching Skills*. If you want to learn more about my work, come visit me at

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