

Ep #92: Controversial Topics for Coaches Explained



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Lindsay Dotzlaf

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Hi, this is Lindsey Dotzlaf and you are listening to *Mastering Coaching Skills*, episode 92.

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.

Hey, coach. So glad you're here today, we have a few things to talk about. But before I dive in, I wanted to let you know that a couple episodes ago I mentioned that you could email us and you could ask us your questions because for episode 100 I will be answering all of your questions, anything at all. But I was telling my OBM that I did this and she was like, you know, there's a much better way.

So she has created a Typeform and there is a link in the show notes. So all you have to do is go click the link and submit your question. It's much easier for you, it's much easier for us. And don't worry if you've already submitted a question, we have those, no problem. But we have created a better way.

So if you want to submit a question for episode 100, it can be about anything. It can be about me personally. It can be about my business. It can be about coaching. Anything that you want to ask me or if you even want to just submit something and say like, I really want you to talk about this on the podcast, do that too. I would love to hear it.

So today I want to just dive in and talk about a few things that I hear come up so often with so many coaches. And I've kind of had this podcast on my mind for a little bit. And I have been kind of thinking about how I wanted to talk about it and how I wanted to address it because some of these things, it's just stuff that you kind of hear floating around the coaching industry, things that are talked about.

And I just want to really have an open and honest conversation about what the truths are, for me, in each of these questions, how I know some other

Ep #92: Controversial Topics for Coaches Explained

people handle some of these things or like what their answers would be. No one specifically, but just in general. And then how it might be useful for you to think about these things.

So this isn't going to be focused so much on coaching and on your coaching technique, as much as it is just things that I hear coaches talk about. And ultimately the reason I wanted to record this is because really, these are things that I hear coaches use against themselves. Like fake measurements that they're creating in their minds, you maybe are doing this to just use against yourself. And that is not useful.

If you know me, you know I just don't stand for that. That's so silly. Let's not do that, let's not be mean to yourself. So today I want to talk about some of these things. We're going to talk about time, like how much time do I actually work? How much time do other coaches actually work? I hear this all the time. How much money do I make? Like really make?

I'm saying it like this because this is how the questions are framed to me sometimes. But like how much money do you really make? Or how much money does this other coaches really make? How much time do I spend on social media? How many employees do I have? And what are my thoughts about working? Like do I think all coaches should always be working with other coaches?

All right, what do you think? It's just like there's so much controversy here, I feel like. Maybe not, but for some of you you're probably like, oh my gosh, I can't believe she's going to talk about this. Just because I know sometimes these can be touchy, sensitive topics. And especially when they are topics that just, you know, not even as coaches, but just sometimes in the world we use to measure ourselves against and to compare ourselves against.

So I want to break down some of those walls a little bit and just show you that maybe what you're thinking or like this thing that you've built up in your mind to be like the ultimate or the goal isn't really what you think it is. Or it's not what it looks like from the outside.

Ep #92: Controversial Topics for Coaches Explained

So the first one I want to dive into is probably one of the number one questions I get asked all of the time, is how much time do I actually work? And what does it mean when coaches say they only work two days a week or they work three days a week?

Now, I want to be very clear, this question, as with all of the questions, I can only answer this from my point of view. And I can also share some things that I know that other coaches do. Don't worry, I'm not throwing anyone under the bus here, but just some things that I know, some ways that other coaches think about it or things that they do.

And if you've listened to a lot of my interviews, these are things that we talk about on occasion in some of the interviews. But I just really want to have an open conversation about this because I think it's important that you have all the information, especially if you're going to compare yourself to me or to anyone else. All right?

So how much time do I actually work? I think, just like all the other questions, this is going to vary wildly depending on who you ask. But I do know that sometimes you'll hear things or you'll see coaches posts on social media like, oh, I only work two days a week, or I only work three days a week. And then what you do is you take that and use that as a measurement against yourself. Like, well, I work five days a week, so that's bad. Or I'm working way too much or I'm doing this or doing this.

Here's my personal answer, this has varied so wildly over the course of my business. So in the beginning, when I very first started my business, I had two little kids at home. Or maybe one of them, I think, was in preschool and one was still home, I'm pretty sure. And so that looked a lot different than it does right now.

Now, I have two school aged kids. They're also home during the summer but they can take care of themselves pretty much and don't really care to play with me or whatever it is that we would do when they were little. So it just is a lot different.

Ep #92: Controversial Topics for Coaches Explained

But I had two young kids and I just had to carve out time in my week, I don't remember how much that was. But before I had a bunch of clients I was doing a lot of things that I could do kind of with them there, right? So I did a lot of organic marketing. I did a lot of posting on social media, and I just did that. A lot of times I did it myself, my kids would be there, I would be working, they would be playing and that's just what was happening. I was also running another business and it just kind of all blurred together.

Now, when I started signing clients, obviously I would be working, I would have chunks of time that I was working that my kids were not with me that was dedicated specifically to coaching clients. So when I was signing one on one clients I had, I don't know, I think up to 22 or 23, which by the way is a lot. Maybe a few too many, for me at that time anyway, of one on one clients And I was doing 50 to 60 minute calls.

So I was working at least 25 hours a week, and that was just on coaching. And then I was spending a lot of time working on my business outside of that. So that would have been, you know, a lot closer to 40 hours a week. Sometimes probably even more than that, right? Probably closer to 50 hours a week. I'm sure that there are weeks that I've worked closer to 60 hours a week.

Fast forward to where I am now and my business does look very different. I don't have one on one clients. I run a program and I run a mastermind. And so when I think about exactly how much time do I work a week, I can't answer that honestly because I don't track it. But here's what I will tell you, I'll just tell you a few things that I do know about my schedule.

So I kind of block off my week so that Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday are the main days that I work. My mastermind calls are on Tuesday, my Coach Lab call is on Thursday, and until very recently I actually had two masterminds running at the same time so that third call was on Wednesday. So basically, all my coaching is done for the most part, unless I'm guest coaching for someone else, all of my coaching is done Tuesday through Thursday.

Ep #92: Controversial Topics for Coaches Explained

I try to schedule Monday to be very light. So sometimes I will meet with my OBM and that's all I'll do for the day. It doesn't mean I'm not thinking about my business, which I think is where it gets a little tricky on how to measure exactly how much a coach works.

Because let's say I have a meeting with my OBM Monday morning, or late morning. I then might spend the rest of that day, even if I'm not working, even if I have other appointments or I'm going to do other things. I try to schedule a lot of like doctor's appointments or a nail appointment or anything like that, I try to schedule those usually on Mondays.

But even then, because I've had my meeting with my OBM a lot of times I'm thinking about my business throughout the day. I might be pulling out my phone and typing some stuff in notes. I might be just planning things in my mind while I'm doing other things.

And then on Fridays I try to usually also schedule Friday's off. The one exception to that is a lot of times I will record podcast episodes if I'm interviewing someone. I usually do those on Fridays. Not always. I'm actually doing one tomorrow and tomorrow is a Wednesday. But a lot of times I do them on Fridays because Friday tends to be pretty flexible for usually both parties. So it just works out really well. Besides that I also don't work a lot on Fridays.

So I could say I have a three day workweek. But I guess that doesn't feel true to me because I am doing things on Monday, I sometimes am doing things on Friday. And I think for me, the more important thing is that I am just, I don't usually have very long days.

So a lot of times the earliest I start every day is 10am, I don't usually schedule anything outside of that, earlier than that unless it's outside of my control. And then normally the latest, especially during the school year is the latest I will go is 4pm. But I prefer to end even around three because that's what time my younger daughter gets home.

Ep #92: Controversial Topics for Coaches Explained

So it's just easier to be finished with meetings and calls and all of that while kids just aren't home. Because even if they don't need my attention, they make noise because they're just noisy, even when they're teenagers. What the heck? So that is my answer.

And I do know that this is so different for everyone. I think it's just so easy to compare yourself when you don't have all of the information, right? So I know colleagues that I have that might say I work two days a week, or I work three days a week. But then I also know sometimes that they're working, planning special trainings on the weekends, or working late into one evening or whatever.

And I think that that's just important to know, not that they're lying. They're certainly not, maybe their normal schedule is they work two days a week. But sometimes I think there's also a conscious decision on my part, on other coaches part to say, okay, for whatever reason, maybe I traveled this week or traveled for my business, or I've been on vacation and now I do have this training coming up and I'm going to just take a couple of days and knock it out.

The other thing that I do sometimes that I wouldn't figure into this kind of thing is when I do travel for work. So if I'm traveling for some sort of coaching something, usually that will be, let's say whatever that thing is lasts three days. I will usually go two or three days early, so I'll take the full week.

And maybe those first two days, not only am I getting acclimated if there's a time change or anything like that, but I'll usually spend those first two days working a lot, just by myself in a hotel room uninterrupted or wherever I am. And I think that's important to know too.

I would say that's a tool that I use and really love in my business and preparing things and just really giving myself that mental space of I'm not at home, I'm not thinking about anything else, I'm coming here, I'm going to be

Ep #92: Controversial Topics for Coaches Explained

at this hotel for a couple of days prior to the start of whatever the thing is. And I plan to stay in my hotel and work for two full days.

I know a lot of coaches do that, especially if they're creating something big, or maybe writing a workbook, or creating a new thing, or creating a program or whatever it is. I think this can be a great tool and if you've never done this, you should definitely try it, especially if you just have a lot going on at your house. Right?

It's like I know that I can work however many hours a day for the most part that I need because I could always work all day, whether I have my kids or not because they're old enough at this point. I could also work in the evening, which I don't usually because I'm just tired. But I have learned that even though I have that capacity to do that, I have the support to do it, the mental energy is just different, right?

Like when I'm at a hotel and when I'm by myself I don't have to think about what the kids are eating for dinner. I don't have to think about what time it is. What's the schedule? Who needs to get to horseback riding lessons? Do we have soccer tonight, right? Like just all of that mental energy. Did they shower today? Have they eaten breakfast? What's my husband's schedule? Just all of that. Just that mental chatter isn't there when I remove myself from the situation.

All right, the second question I get a ton from you, from other coaches, from just people in my life is, but how much money do you really make? Like when we're talking about coaching and they've heard me talk about it here on the podcast or they've seen me post. I don't talk a ton about money, I'm not a business coach. I don't teach my clients necessarily how to make money, although of course having amazing coaching skills definitely helps you make money. But I just don't talk about money a ton.

If you know me from some other communities, or maybe you've seen other coaches talk about me or celebrate my business, you have seen me talk

Ep #92: Controversial Topics for Coaches Explained

about money in those spaces, I'm sure. So often that brings the question, how much do you really make?

I also see this, I've seen this discussion in some kind of coach communities, coach groups that I'm in. Not because people necessarily want to know like how much do I make, but a lot of you that are asking this question, I think the real question you're asking is like, what is your profit, right? How much are you bringing in versus how much are you spending?

Because running a business can be sometimes expensive, right? So just like I answered the last question, I'm just going to answer for myself and tell you kind of how it's gone since I've started my business because, again, it has varied wildly. And then I'll give you some tips on how you can think about this for you.

So this year I'm well on my way to this being my first million dollar year. Now when I say million dollar year, what that means is my company is going to make a million dollars in 12 months this year. That does not mean I am paying myself a million dollars, right? A million dollars is all of the money that I'll be bringing in. And then I am taking a lot of that money and paying for people that work for me, for contractors, for my own growth, my own coaching.

I would say a good number when you are at this point, when you're bringing in I would say, do not quote me on this, but this is very rough, right? When you're making a couple hundred thousand dollars or more, when you're bringing that in in your business, I would say a really good goal to have is to have at least 50% profit. Because there are ways, there are things that you can spend your money on that could cost a lot, right?

So if you're paying tons of money in ads, tons of money maybe in Facebook ads or in Google ads or whatever it is and that's how you're getting all your customers. But then you're not having much profit, you can have a million dollar business all day, but if you can't pay yourself it's going to feel not great.

Ep #92: Controversial Topics for Coaches Explained

I've seen coaches do it and I've seen them just get in this space where they just feel buried all of the time because they're like, okay, I know I'm bringing in all of this money, but I don't have the money to pay myself. That is not what you want to do. I say that, but in the very beginning of my business that was very different.

So in the beginning I spent, basically all the money I was making I invested that in my own coaching, in my own learning, in my own trainings. And I didn't have any employees, I wasn't really paying anyone at the time, it was almost all going towards coaching.

Now, I'm not saying that this is the right way to do it, this is just the way that I did it. And I also will add a little caveat here, which is I had lots of privilege to be able to do that, right? So I am married, my husband also works and he brought in enough money, although he would have argued with this, but he was bringing in enough money that we could live off of.

Now, I was not using his money to fund my business, I had another business so I did have my own money that I was using. But then I also was using credit. So I had business credit, like a business credit card, and I would use that and then my own money. But I do know that that is not the case for everyone.

And I think this is where we can, you know, I don't think that there should be any assumptions made that okay, well, within the first year of your business you have to rack up a lot of credit, or you have to spend all of your money back into coaching. Because sometimes, probably for some of you, that's just not possible.

Some of you might need money to live on from your coaching business. If that's true, you just want to take that into account and don't try to compare yourself to someone like me, who I did have money that I, you know, I had other money coming in. So basically I had a second job while I was coaching. Now, it was running another business that had already been

Ep #92: Controversial Topics for Coaches Explained

previously successful. Not as successful as this coaching business, but I had enough money coming in that I could pay for things in this business.

So that's kind of how it was in the beginning. And then as time went on that profit margin, like what you want to hopefully happen is that profit margin will just grow and grow. And then if you look at it, so I have a bookkeeper now, which is amazing, she's incredible. And I can pull up reports and I can see, oh, sometimes my profit will dip, sometimes it will be much higher. And it just kind of depends on what I'm investing in at the time, or what's the next thing that I'm spending money on.

So I just hired someone full-time, my amazing OBM. Her name is Aqeelah, she is incredible and I just brought her on full-time, right? So that's going to make my profit, just for right this moment because I wasn't spending that money before, my profit will get a little lower.

So I'm never really looking at it from month to month because also the way my business is set up some months I'm not selling a ton. If I don't have a mastermind launch or if I'm not doing a Coach Lab promotion I might not have a ton of money coming in that month. So I may even have negative profit.

So when I look at profit, I look at it big picture. Like the last 12 months, the last six months, and I use that to project going forward. And sometimes it dips below that 50%, sometimes it's above, sometimes I'm investing in a lot of coaching, or I always invest in a business coach, and then I'm always investing in my learning and my coach development.

So if there are times, you know, one time in the last couple years I enrolled in two programs at the same time. I became a master certified coach and then I also enrolled in a DEI coach certification. And so when I did that and I was paying for my business coach, right, like that's always the number one place that I spend money in my business, is my own coaching and my own development. And so when I did that, of course, my profit went down a little bit, and now it's bumping back up, right?

Ep #92: Controversial Topics for Coaches Explained

So there's never like a, this is the exact profit that I always have, because my spending will vary. And then sometimes there will be times when maybe I'm not working with coaches, I'm not hiring extra people, I'm not doing training programs, and then my profit percentage will be higher.

The other thing I will say about money is that profit is also not what I pay myself. So I am on payroll and my business is an S Corp. And because I'm on payroll I just get paid just like I'm an employee of my business. And I decide, of course I decide what I get paid. So I get paid that every month. And then I also take quarterly owner draws or quarterly bonuses for myself.

In the beginning of my business it was not that cut and dry. It was a lot more blurry, right? It was a lot more like, okay, I'm not really paying myself, I'm investing in this, I'm taking money from over here and paying it over here, all of that. And so that has been an evolution since I started my business.

One thing I would recommend if you are a new coach, I think this is something I did pretty early on that was really helpful for me. If you're a newer coach and even if you don't have much money coming in, I would decide, I would get used to paying yourself. And I would decide how much you pay yourself.

Even if it's such a small amount, even if it's like I pay myself \$100 a week. Because it's not about the amount, it's about really leaning into that idea of I am a coach, I make regular money, this is just what I do. Now, if you don't have any clients I'm not suggesting that you take credit and pay yourself with that. But I am suggesting that once you have money coming in, that you just decide how much you pay yourself.

It also helps with any drama of like, well, I don't really know if I have enough money or I don't know if I should be investing in this or should be investing in this. If you just know this is always how much I pay myself, this is just it, this is the amount, it's very helpful in your brain to just know this is

Ep #92: Controversial Topics for Coaches Explained

just what we do. Here's what's left over, what can I use that for? What do I need to use that for? And then adjust it as you go.

I have done that probably since, I don't know, maybe six to 12 months into my business I made that decision. And I don't even remember at this point what the amount was. But I just remember deciding this is just what I pay myself. It's non-negotiable, this is what's coming in.

And then I could look at what was left and say like, okay, do I have enough to invest in this thing that I want to invest in? Or do I have enough to hire someone to do my website? It just takes so much of the drama out of it. This suggestion might not be for all of you. But if it is for you, I hope you find it really, really helpful.

The third thing that I want to talk about today is how much time I spend on social media. Now, just like the first two, this varies wildly from the beginning, from when I very first started my business. So right now I don't spend nearly as much time on social media as I used to. And the time that I do spend on there is different than it used to be.

So in the beginning of my business I was only doing organic marketing. I was doing networking events, meeting tons of people, and then posting about coaching on Facebook. Over time that has evolved into Instagram, mostly Instagram, and I have my podcast, which I would say is another way to kind of get your stuff out there organically.

One could argue it's not totally organic because podcasting is not 100% free, I don't think. I think you have to at least pay for a hosting platform. But when I say organic, to me that just means I'm not paying for any ads or paying to bring people to me.

So in the beginning when I was a newer coach I was sharing so much of my story. I was posting on Facebook all the time. I was talking about coaching. I was talking about how coaching has affected my life. I was just really getting the word out there, talking to people, going to networking

Ep #92: Controversial Topics for Coaches Explained

events all the time, just talking about what I do, talking about what a coach is.

And part of this, I think there's two huge benefits to doing that. One is that obviously, you're telling people, hey, this is what I do, I can help you. But the other part is you're telling yourself. It's kind of like the paying yourself the minimum every month. You're telling yourself this is what I do, this is just who I am. I am a coach, I can help people.

And the more you talk about it, the more you say it out loud, the more you are going to believe it, right? The more other people are going to believe it, but definitely the more you are going to believe it. And that, of course, is going to help other people in your life believe it too, other people that are watching.

So in the beginning, I was spending quite a bit more time on social media. Now, and you know this if you follow me on Instagram or wherever, I am not on there a ton. And actually, if you go to my Instagram, if you look at my Instagram feed, a lot of my feed is content that is created by my OBM.

So I write all of the content and I write the emails. So usually most of my content comes from my email, so I write the email, I write the content, but then I send it to her, she makes it look beautiful, she polishes it up, and she posts it. You can probably tell very clearly, if you go there, which things I've done on my own and which thing she has posted for me.

So between that I'm not a person who's just on social media sharing a lot of my life behind the scenes life. One exception to that is I do occasionally, especially if I'm traveling, I will do Instagram stories. I think they're pretty fun and I am possibly learning reels. Don't get too excited, you know who you are.

But my rule about social media, at least now, like in the beginning I looked at it as a little more necessary. And now I still think it's necessary in the way that I like to build my business. But I do have people that help me and the way I look at it now is kind of it's more like I do it if it's fun, right?

Ep #92: Controversial Topics for Coaches Explained

So sometimes I travel and I am like fully immersed in my experience and my friends will text me and say, hey, I thought you were in wherever, I thought you were traveling, why don't I see any pictures? I'm like, well, because I'm having fun, leave me alone. So that is my take a little more on social media now.

But what I will say about that, if you're someone who's like, oh, I don't like to spend time on social media either, so how do I get to where you are where I don't have to do it or I don't have to do it on my own? And one thing I would say is you do want to have, or at least this is my thought, you do want to have at least one place where you are sharing the things.

So for me, it's mostly here on the podcast. I pour my heart out on this podcast, I'm pretty open, I'm pretty vulnerable. It's not that I don't love to be an open book and don't love to show you the behind the scenes and show you all the things. I just don't love being on social media. So when I want to be, I am, and when I don't want to be I'm not. I think of it more as like that is for my business.

And I do think this is for my business too, obviously, it's all about my business. But it feels, there's something about it for me that's way more fun, it feels more personal, you can hear me actually talking, there's no edited pretty photos, right? It's just me talking, you hearing me talk and you can take away from it what you want or what you don't. I also happen to love, love, love podcasts. And I'm just like meh on social media.

So I do like to go to social media and kind of, like if I'm going to scroll, I just like to watch funny videos. That's pretty much all I do on there. And then I spend a little bit of time seeing what my friends are doing. But for the most part I am spending time, I'm more likely to be spending time listening to podcasts than scrolling social media, which is why I prefer to use it for my business.

So for you, just think about that. Like where do you love to spend your time and put it there. And sometimes you have to like put your energy there.

Ep #92: Controversial Topics for Coaches Explained

And sometimes you'll want to think about like, okay, I do need a way, right? So if you're like, well, I don't have a podcast, I don't even know what it would be about, I don't like social media. If you're going to be an entrepreneur, you're going to have to figure it out somehow.

I'm not saying you have to do any of those things, but you do have to find a way because you can be the most brilliant, genius entrepreneur coach that you are, but you can't just sit at home and tell no one, because then no one will know and no one will hire you.

All right, so we're at half an hour so I think I'm just going to leave that here for today. And then I'm going to come back next week and talk about a few more things. I wasn't quite sure how long each of these would take me. And I want you to kind of sit with some of these and let them, just let them simmer, right? Like let them digest however they need to for you.

And, again, the number one thing I want you to take away from this, hopefully, is that you just don't need to compare yourself to what anyone else is doing. As you have heard, everything I've talked about today, you have to figure out your way. You can't compare yourself to what someone else is doing, especially when you don't have all of the information.

So I just kind of gave you the behind the scenes on how I do things. But I am positive I could go find 10 more coaches and we could have a panel here and we would all have different answers for all the things I just said. So let this be comforting for you. Let this be like, okay, I was wrong about this or maybe I misunderstood this, right? Just allow that to be okay.

Instead, ask yourself how much money do I want to make? How much money do I want to pay myself? How many days a week do I want to work? What does that look like for me? Do I want to work on weekends? Do I not want to work on weekends? Do I want to work evenings? How much time do I want to spend on social media? Do I love it? Do I want it to be part of my workday? Am I going to build it in? Or is it more of like an afterthought?

Ep #92: Controversial Topics for Coaches Explained

That is all my friends. I will be back next week with a few more topics just like these to share kind of how I do things and how I think about things. All right, see you then. Bye.

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