

Ep #118: Celebrating How Coaching Changes Lives with Gabrielle Smith



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Lindsay Dotzlaf

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Hello, this is Lindsay Dotzlaf, and you are listening to *Mastering Coaching Skills* episode 118.

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, I have such a fun guest for you today. And I wanted to dive a little bit back into just celebrating the power of coaching. I've already shared one episode about that with Erin Gray. And today, I am talking to and having a conversation with one of my previous one-on-one clients from a couple of years ago. Her name is Gabrielle Smith. She is so fun.

And I just love having these conversations because this isn't just about, like, oh, Lindsay is a good coach, right? It's not just about her working with me. It is about just the power of coaching. And especially if you listened to the episode that I shared last week about thinking about your thoughts and how you feel when you hire a coach, this actually comes up in this episode.

We talk about why she decided to hire me. She tells a funny story about that, about how she made the decision and something that happened, which will be fun for you to hear. And I just think it kind of wraps it up all beautifully.

So I can't wait for you to hear all of it. And Gabrielle is a coach. This is a new development since she was my client, but she now is a coach who helps other coaches figure out their niche, figure out if coaching is right for them, like just figure out a lot of the things that you have to figure out in the beginning of your business.

So she shares a lot of those gems. If you are a brand new coach, that will just be helpful. If you're not, it's still going to be helpful, and it will be so fun to just hear her talk about all the changes, all the celebrations just from

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working on herself, right, just from hiring a coach, from showing up for the coaching.

So I know you will love this episode, and I can't wait for you to hear it. So let's get started.

Lindsay: Hello, I am so happy to have you here today. Can you introduce yourself and tell everyone who you are and what you do?

Gabrielle: Well, first of all, I have to start off by saying yes!

Lindsay: I love it.

Gabrielle: Oh my gosh. Yes, my name is Gabrielle Smith, and I help coaches get out of nice drama so they can start making money in their businesses.

Lindsay: So good. Okay, which is so fun. So I'll just set this up a little, but you used to be my client. Quite a while ago, you were my one-on-one client. I don't even know at this point how long ago. Maybe like two years?

Gabrielle: Yeah, maybe. At least, I think.

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabrielle: Yeah.

Lindsay: I know, time goes so fast. But we've kept in touch. We talk, we text. I love you. And I'm so excited to have you here today. And when you said my name like that, it's because when you text me, that's what you always start with, and I love it. It's like a lot of yelling at me.

Gabrielle: I know. And on our calls, that's how we'd start our calls when we were coaching one-on-one.

Lindsay: Yes, all caps, lots of exclamation points.

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Gabrielle: Yes.

Lindsay: And you still do it, and I just love it so much.

Gabrielle: Yes, except for then, it was probably because I had a lot of drama that I was coming to you for.

Lindsay: Sometimes, sometimes, it was a celebration.

Gabrielle: Yeah, that's true. That's true. You're right.

Lindsay: We had celebrations, we had drama, we had just, you know, typical coaching relationship.

Gabrielle: Yes, all the things.

Lindsay: So it must have actually been more than two years ago because when I still had a full calendar of one-on-one clients. And part of the reason I asked you to be here today was, you know, but I should let the listeners in on it, is because, through December, I kind of did a whole month of just celebrations, talking about why we celebrate, all the different things surrounding celebration.

And I was really thinking about how important it is to celebrate just what coaching is in general. And all of the changes that we can create through coaching. And when I thought about just some of my past clients, particularly going back to when I was coaching one-on-one, there were just a couple of people that came to mind that made lots of big changes while we were working together or around like similar times. And you are one of them. So I asked you to be here, and here we are.

Gabrielle: Yes. Yes, yes. I'm happy to be here.

Lindsay: And you do something kind of different now than you did when we were coaching, so we'll dive into that too. I feel like the listeners would probably love to talk about some niche drama, I'm sure.

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Gabrielle: Oh my gosh, yes.

Lindsay: And we didn't actually talk about that before we started recording, so we can definitely dive into that and see if you have different perspectives. It's not something I coach on a lot just because I don't necessarily consider myself a business coach. But definitely all the coaches in my world, it is something that comes up often, for sure.

Gabrielle: Yes, yes.

Lindsay: Okay. So when you hired me, you kind of hired me to coach you on your business and on your coaching, but we kind of ended up coaching on a little bit of everything.

Gabrielle: Absolutely. Yeah, I came to you because I was coaching, and I was trying to leave my full-time job. And I wanted, at the end of our time together, to be like, yes, I'm going to be out of here. I'm done. I'm going to do all the things, have my business the way I wanted, replace my salary, all the things. I was like, yes, Lindsay, can you help me with this? Let's go.

Lindsay: Yes. And I don't remember exactly where you were at the end of our time together. I think you hadn't quite left your job yet, but a lot of changes had happened. And since then, not too long after that, you did leave your job. Let's talk a little bit about that. How has that been? And how has it been different than you thought it would be? Or that you envisioned when you first were like, I'm leaving my job. I'm replacing my salary, like, whatever.

Gabrielle: Yeah, it was all of the emotions, right? It was very exhilarating, very exciting, like a very proud moment for me when I left my job to start coaching full-time. And it was very terrifying, very scary, very uncertain, I think, would probably be the biggest emotion that I experienced on the flip side.

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But I think the biggest difference from what I thought it would be, I would say, has been the amount of work that went into creating a business and creating consistent clients. I think I thought, even though I had started learning this after receiving my certification from LCS, I had started to see that just because you get certified doesn't mean that people are going to be knocking down your door, wanting to work with you. So I started to see that.

But I still thought, somewhere in my mind I still thought that that would happen. That once I quit my job, I would have all of this available time, and people would just start coming.

Lindsay: And that's not what happened, is what you're saying.

Gabrielle: No, not at all. That's not what happened. I will say, though, that I had pretty much filled my roster with clients. I was pretty much all the way booked, where I couldn't accept any more. I was coaching at night and on the weekends because I was still working full-time. And so I did that until I couldn't anymore, until it just didn't make sense.

So in that aspect, it did happen that way. But it still wasn't as easy as, like, that's going to keep happening over and over and over. Like there will never be moments when I'm not signing clients. So I wasn't ready for that part.

Lindsay: Yeah. Okay, so let's actually dive into this for a second because I'm guessing there are so many people listening right now that are like, wait, I can't wait to quit my job. I can't wait to be a full-time coach. But something you said, which I think is so important for people to understand, just because I've coached so many coaches in this position that it's almost I never see this really not be true, is that you said even when you left, like one of the biggest emotions that you experienced was uncertainty.

And I think that so many coaches who are in this position think, okay, well, here's what I'm going to do. I'm going to get to the place where there's zero

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uncertainty, and then I will quit. And I'm curious what you think about that. Or if you think it's even possible, or what would you say to someone if they said that to you?

Gabrielle: Well, I would just say that the uncertainty is still going to come up anyway, simply because of our brains. Our brains are going to tell us all the things that could go wrong. And our circumstances may not look exactly like we expect them to, right? And so we'll have thoughts about it that will create that uncertainty.

So even when I had a full roster of clients, there were still going to be thoughts that created uncertainty. The uncertainty was still there. So it was just a matter of having that awareness and being aware of it, and just, I guess, redirecting myself and just reminding myself of what was true, which was that I knew that I was going to be okay. I knew that at the end of the day, I was going to figure it out. I'm going to create clients and create the results that I want, basically money in my business.

Lindsay: So when you quit, did you just like march off into the sunset, and then you felt some uncertainty, and it's just been like rainbows and daisies ever since?

Gabrielle: Yeah, no. Nope.

Lindsay: I think that this is one of the biggest things for people coming from, especially from a world like you were in. Like a very corporate, steady job, right? Like making good money, all of that into, okay, now I'm going to be an entrepreneur. It's such a switch because there's not just the uncertainty of the money, right? Making money in your business. But all of a sudden, it's like, there's every uncertainty. It's like just nothing is the same as when you work for someone else.

Gabrielle: Yeah, absolutely, absolutely. And especially the money thing, oh my gosh, I remember we coached so much and so hard on my money drama because I had a lot of it.

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Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabrielle: Yeah, and so I think working with you helped me to view money differently and also know that I get to create that. Knowing that I can create that for myself and not give that credit to my job, my corporate job. Because that's where I was believing and depending on my job for it instead of myself. And I was giving credit to the job instead of myself and my brain and being able to create that for myself. So once I made that shift, then I started to see the results of that.

Lindsay: I just remembered one of the things that we coached on as you said that. One thing that we would coach on every once in a while when this came up is that I would kind of try to show you that even with your job, you still created that, right? And you were a little resistant to that, I think, for a while.

Gabrielle: Oh yeah.

Lindsay: But what do you think about that now? Or when you think back to that, does it feel – Because to me, I'm like, no, but that's a skill, right? Like, even if, for whatever reason, you decided today you're not going to be an entrepreneur, you could still go create that money somewhere else.

Gabrielle: Yeah, absolutely. And I think like you said, it's a skill. And I think that I truly believe that wholeheartedly, that being able to use my mind to create that or just like taking responsibility. That's what it is. It's like taking responsibility for the money that I was creating in my corporate job. I really was not giving myself credit for it at all. And so, recognizing that it is a skill that I had, I just wasn't tapping into it or giving myself credit for it.

Lindsay: When you think about coaching in general, actually, I'm going to go back for a second because I don't know if I know the answer to this. Maybe I'll remember when you say it. But how did you get into coaching? How did you just find coaching, to begin with? In your life, what happened or what created you going out and searching for a coaching certification?

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Gabrielle: So it started with me trying to find my purpose. That was one of those things. I was in my corporate job as a software engineer. And I remember one day, I mean, 20 years into my career, sitting there being like, oh, no, this ain't it. This is not it. I know that there is something more that I'm meant to do in the world. And I could not figure out what it was.

So I set out on this journey to figure it out. And through that, I ended up going through this program called. I don't even remember the name of the program. But anyway, I went through that, and that was the first time I was exposed to our thoughts create our feelings, and feeling actions, actions results. So that was the first time I had been exposed to that. And it was like a light bulb moment. And from that moment on, things just started coming to me.

So I remember running across an ad for Brooke Castillo from The Life Coach School. And it was about the perfect career. And when she talked about that in the video, like her story at Hewlett Packard was essentially my story at my corporate job. And I was like, oh, my gosh, this is it. This is it. And so I knew right then that that was what I was supposed to be doing. And I immediately signed up for coach training after some money drama.

Lindsay: Of course.

Gabrielle: Yes, I immediately signed up for certification. And yeah, I haven't looked back since.

Lindsay: I love it. So you just went all in. You'd never worked with a coach or hired your own coach at that point. You just were like, yeah, I'm probably going to be a coach. Here we go.

Gabrielle: Yeah. Yep, that was it.

Lindsay: I love it.

Gabrielle: That was it.

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Lindsay: So you did that, and then, so let's talk about just all the, maybe not all because we could probably talk about it for hours. But what are some of the bigger changes that you've made in your life because of coaching?

Gabrielle: So I would say that the biggest one is, I think, just the way that I view the world and view other people. So I think that a lot of it is relationships. I've always been a people person. I've always loved people. And I think that this work, coaching, has allowed me to embrace that more because I think I used to hold myself back and worry about being judged for the way I would shut up – shut up – show up. You know, like thinking I'm too loud or whatever the case may be. So yeah, I think that's probably one of the biggest changes that I've made.

And then, obviously, coaching -

Lindsay: Okay, hold on. Can we just talk about the irony of that being your fear, right? Like that, I'm going to show up and be too loud, like too much, whatever you just said, versus one of my favorite things about you is that every interaction we have is loud and has lots of capital letters and exclamation points. It's so good.

Gabrielle: Yeah, it's true. It is true. Yeah. Yeah, but I used to have thoughts about that. I used to think like, I shouldn't be so loud, or I shouldn't like everybody, or you know, all of that stuff.

Lindsay: It's so interesting now because if you didn't show up like that, I would think like, oh no, something's wrong. Is she okay? I better check it out. Like, what's happening?

Gabrielle: Yeah.

Lindsay: She's not being big and loud.

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Gabrielle: I would probably feel that way now, too. Like, okay, girl, what's going on? Are you feeling okay? I think I would have to check in with myself on that.

Lindsay: I really love that that's the one that you started with because I expected you to say like, oh, I left my job or whatever, which is also a huge change, right? But I think my experience of coaching also has been that the biggest takeaway, the biggest like, whoa, this part of my life looks so different, isn't that I'm a coach or that I own a coaching business or whatever.

It's much more, maybe relationship-based or just the relationship with myself is so different than it used to be. And I think that focusing on those things sometimes is what can help you get to where you are right now.

Gabrielle: Yes, absolutely. And just like the different judgments of myself, like being a certain way and being called nerdy and just all kinds of things, and learning to be okay with that. Like accepting, and beyond accepting, like loving that about myself. No apologies for it.

Lindsay: I love nerdy. Nerdy is amazing.

Gabrielle: I think so too. I think so too. I think so too.

Lindsay: That must be why we were a good fit.

Gabrielle: I think so. Other than the Sagittarius. We got the Sagittarius thing in common, too.

Lindsay: That's right. I was actually thinking about that when we hopped on. You just had a birthday, or you're about to.

Gabrielle: Yeah, no, I just had one on the 28th.

Lindsay: Happy birthday.

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Gabrielle: Thank you. Happy birthday to you, too.

Lindsay: Thank you. Yeah, when we're recording this, my birthday is tomorrow, actually. So fun.

Gabrielle: What?

Lindsay: I know.

Gabrielle: Nice.

Lindsay: So fun. Okay. So yes, Sagittarius. Okay, so let's continue. I interrupted you. I'm sorry. But I just had to stop you and talk about how incredible that was. So, the first one is relationships and just how you show up in the world. What were you going to say after that, before I got in there and interrupted you?

Gabrielle: Yeah, it's okay. Yeah, and then I was going to go into the coaching part, obviously, of just living my dream, walking in my purpose, and doing what I love to do, doing what fulfills me every single day. That has been the biggest change, obviously. Well, one of the biggest ones.

It's so interesting. I used to imagine what my life would look like when I became an entrepreneur, which I never, ever considered before becoming certified and being in that community. It was never a thought. Not that I thought about it and was like, yeah, that's not for me. It just was never a thing, which was very interesting.

But once it did occur to me that, oh, this is possible for me, I started allowing myself to go there, to dream about it, visualize it. In some ways, it's what I visualized in terms of what my days would look like and the freedom and flexibility, working with my dream clients, and all of that. But then, in some ways, it's like I could have never imagined.

And that part looks like the type of connections that I've created on this journey. The places I've been able to go to and visit for pleasure and

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business. Things like that that I just didn't think about as I was setting myself up or preparing myself for this life. There are just some things I could not have prepared myself for. So that's been great.

Lindsay: When you were my client, I remember one thing that we talked about, and I don't remember exactly what the coaching was. I just remember always being so amazed by you that you got up at what, like 4 am or 5 am? I don't know, something very early every day because you were still working full-time.

Gabrielle: Oh yeah.

Lindsay: And so you'd be like, okay, I have this whole – Like you had a whole routine. You would always work out.

Gabrielle: Yeah.

Lindsay: Very fit. You would do self-coaching. You had a whole process.

Gabrielle: Yeah, yeah.

Lindsay: Do you still do that?

Gabrielle: My prayer and meditation and self-coaching. Yeah, I still do that. But I will say I don't start as early anymore.

Lindsay: Listen, it is okay if you do. I was just curious because I know some people really just love waking up and being up very early. And I don't. And so I was just curious if that shifted once you didn't have to get up and get it all in before you went to work.

Gabrielle: Yes. No, that absolutely shifted. That was probably one of the first things that shifted. Yeah. And it was fine; I had created that habit for myself of getting up, and it was no big thing at the time. But I just felt like once I didn't have to, no, I was like, this is part of the benefit of creating my

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own. I don't have to do it. If I want to, yeah. But I don't have to, and I'm choosing not to.

At least in this season, I am not getting up early like that. Now, I have to get up to take my daughter to school anyway. So it still happens pretty early, at like eight o'clock, but not 4 or 5 am.

Lindsay: Yeah, I know. I was talking to someone the other day, and I said, well, I still wake up at like six because I have kids, and my daughter gets up at like 6:15 to get ready for school. And they were like, wait, what? Like I thought you loved – And I'm like, no, no, no, I start my day later. But I still have to wake up early. Someday I won't need to do that, and it'll be interesting to see what happens.

Gabrielle: Oh, I'm not ready.

Lindsay: Your daughter is older than my kids, I think, right?

Gabrielle: Yeah, she's 15. She's 15. She's in 10th grade, so we have about two more years around here.

Lindsay: Like a whole real adult.

Gabrielle: A whole adult, yes.

Lindsay: Sassy one, I bet.

Gabrielle: Oh, yes. Yes. Yes, and boyfriend?

Lindsay: Oh boy.

Gabrielle: That's been a thing.

Lindsay: I'm not ready for that.

Gabrielle: Yeah, and my husband isn't either.

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Lindsay: I bet.

Gabrielle: My husband isn't either. He's having a hard time with it. But I think that was one. You talk about how coaching, the power of coaching, I love who I am able to be for my daughter as she goes through these teenage years and as she, you know, discovers herself and who she is and what she likes and all of that. I think that's been very powerful. And I can't even imagine who I would be if I didn't have these tools and not had coaching. I just can't even imagine what kind of mom I would be.

And I think, I mean, I wouldn't say I'm a horrible mom, but I think what it has done is improved our communication. I think it allows her to feel comfortable coming to me and talking to me because I'm not reactive and judgmental and all things. I'm able to kind of manage that within myself and just allow her to be able to express herself and come to me and be comfortable with it.

Lindsay: I really love hearing you say that. I think when I think about that, recently, I've just been thinking about coaching in my life in general, like what would my life look like if I had never, ever hired a coach, right, like how different it would be. It feels like every part would be just different. And I think that parenting is probably one of the biggest areas that I think I can't even imagine.

I mean, not that I'm like, oh, I'd be a terrible parent without coaching. I just know that I definitely respond to my kids so differently than I would without coaching.

Gabrielle: Absolutely. 100%. 100%. And I have to acknowledge myself for that. I'm like, girl, you're killing it. Like you're letting her be who she is, because that was one of the earlier lessons that I learned during coaching, was that she's not a miniature me, right? And I was like, what? Like she wasn't into –

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Lindsay: I remember that we coached on this quite a bit, right? I'd be like, okay, let's talk about your business. And you were like, no, no, listen.

Gabrielle: No, we need to talk about this little girl over here and why she's not interested in school or making good grades.

Lindsay: Yes.

Gabrielle: Because I'm just like, what? Why are you not interested in getting good grades and doing well in school? Like, I was so confused by that. And I remember being that mom. And I remember you helping me to see that she's not a miniature Gabrielle. She's a whole human with her own personality and set of likes and interests and all the things that do not have to look like mine. And they don't. And I'm okay with that.

Lindsay: Listen, I'll be coming soon for, like, the table's turned. It's way easier when it's outside of you, right?

Gabrielle: Yes. Yeah, for sure.

Lindsay: Okay, so tell me, I'll circle back to you leaving your job and being a full-time entrepreneur. What is your favorite thing about working for yourself?

Gabrielle: Oh, I would say it's got to be the freedom and the flexibility. I think the Sag in me needs that freedom. I think I need that spaciousness, that freedom to do what I enjoy and to give myself permission to do that. Because that was hard at first, that was a transition, for sure, coming out of corporate and not having all the shoulds, and feeling guilty, or feeling a certain way. You can't afford to not be working 12 hours a day, you know, that kind of thing.

So yeah, I think that is the thing that I appreciate most about working for myself.

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Lindsay: It's interesting when I see coaches who come off of a full-time job where maybe they overworked there, and then maybe they were also coaching at the same time. So it's like they were working so many hours, right, like way more than a normal work day. And then when they do transition into being a full-time coach, there's always this, like I remember with a lot of my one-on-one clients having to remind them you didn't do this to just recreate that, right?

Like you're not here being a coach, having freedom, managing your own schedule, just so that you're back in this schedule that you're just used to. Like, let's reexamine that.

Gabrielle: Yeah, it was almost like a comfort thing, which was not comfortable at all. But I think it was easier than just sitting with the discomfort of the uncertainty.

Lindsay: You're just like, what do I do with my time?

Gabrielle: Yeah.

Lindsay: Do I just like to read a book? What?

Gabrielle: I can do that. What?

Lindsay: Yeah, so good. Okay, what's your least favorite thing about working for yourself?

Gabrielle: Hmm.

Lindsay: Nothing. All amazing.

Gabrielle: Right. I think my least favorite thing is. I want to say like the, I don't know if this is the right word, but like the discipline of it.

Lindsay: That's definitely the word.

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Gabrielle: Yes. It's like the discipline of it where it's all on me, and I'm the only one that I have to answer to. And I've always been like a self-motivating person anyway, but I think, I don't know, this added a different layer to it where I don't know, it was almost like it's all on me. I don't have anybody else to blame, I guess, is what it boiled down to. I don't have anybody else to blame, and so I don't have to do this for anybody else. I have to learn and figure out and do this for myself.

Lindsay: Yes. Yeah, I would agree. I was going to say my answer. I was thinking about it when you were trying to decide what yours was. I thought maybe, for me, it would be the loneliness of it, just being alone so often. Although, I found so many ways to not have that, right? Especially now because I'm not one-on-one coaching.

So my schedule isn't full of just interactions with other people. A lot of the work I'm doing is kind of behind the scenes, like by myself planning, creating, and all of that. And I love interactions with other people. So I think sometimes I get to that point where I'm like, okay, like I just notice it and then like, yeah, and I just need to call a friend, or talk to someone or, you know, go force my kids to entertain me or whatever it is.

Gabrielle: Yeah, yeah, that's true. I think I don't have that as much because, like you said, I create opportunities to interact with people. But I do remember that being a concern of mine when I was considering or working towards becoming full-time. And I think that might have played a part in some subconscious way, you know, it taking as long as it did. I think I would have gotten there faster had I worked through that obstacle in my brain.

Lindsay: Interesting.

Gabrielle: Yeah. I think I was afraid of just not having the interactions that I was used to in being on a team at work. Yeah, when I left, I was managing

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a team of engineers. And so I was interacting with tons of people all day, every day. Even way more than I wanted to, at times.

Lindsay: Yeah, I remember that.

Gabrielle: Yeah. So like, going from that to this is quite different. But you learn to create those opportunities for yourself.

Lindsay: Definitely. I think that's one reason, especially now that I mostly just run groups and, again, don't have calls all day. I think it's one of the main reasons I love just participating in a mastermind, even sometimes if it's just for the community, of like being surrounded by other humans that I could reach out to at any point and say, hey, I'm going down this rabbit hole, someone help.

Gabrielle Yes, no, absolutely. I 100% agree.

Lindsay: Okay, so let's dive into niches.

Gabrielle: Let's.

Lindsay: I love it. Okay, so this didn't use to be your niche, but I would say it's probably kind of similar. Do you think it is?

Gabrielle: I do think it is. My niche was about purpose. That has always been my thing because that was my struggle. And so it's always been near and dear to my heart. And it's the foundation. It's the core of everything that I teach.

And so with niching, it's still about being aligned with who you truly are and what you want. And so, I think that the key to finding the perfect fit niche for you is aligning with who you are and what you believe.

Lindsay: Yes. How do you talk about niches? Like do you think every coach needs a specific niche? Do you think that coaches can be general life

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coaches? What's just your opinion on that? Because you can definitely find a different opinion on that no matter who you talk to.

Gabrielle: Yeah, absolutely. Well, I don't think that you need a niche to make money, for sure. I think it can be helpful to have one, especially when you are growing or when you're trying to scale. I believe that it helps with targeting and speaking to your specific person. It gives you a focus on who you're talking to it.

So I think it helps you, number one, with your messaging so that you're clear about who you're talking to. And then, number two, your people know exactly that you're talking to them, right? It goes both ways. And so I think that that can be helpful.

I don't believe that you have to have one to make money, but I do believe that it is very helpful. It can be very helpful to have one.

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabrielle: And it doesn't have to be a very specific narrow niche either.

Lindsay: Yeah, I always say, like I coach like, what did I use to say? I used to say it all the time. Like, I coach soccer moms who have two and a half kids who live in Massachusetts, right? It's like sometimes. I think people think that that's what a niche is.

Gabrielle: Yeah.

Lindsay: Like narrowing down the person to be so specific. What are your thoughts about that?

Gabrielle: No, I don't think you need to do all of that. I don't think all of that is necessary at all. I think it just boils down to who you are talking to. Like, that really is what it is. Like, who are you talking to, and who do you help? And that could be anything. You could help women. You could help corporate women with anything, right? I think that is a niche. I help

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corporate women, I don't know, feel better, right? Or it could be something that is more specific. I help corporate women leave their jobs.

Lindsay: Find their purpose.

Gabrielle: Find their purpose. That was the niche. At least the perfect one for me at the time. But yeah, I don't think that it has to be anything specific at all. I just think that it helps you to know who you're talking to so that is clear your messaging and your marketing.

Lindsay: What do you think, like what's the number one or some of the bigger things that your clients come to you with, like when they hire you to help them? Do you coach them one-on-one or in a group?

Gabrielle: Yes, one-on-one. Yep.

Lindsay: Okay. And what do they say when they come to you, the thing that they want help with? Is it just like picking the niche? Or is it broader than that? It's usually they have an idea of the niche, but it's too vague. That's their thought. Their thought is it's too vague. That's too general. That's too broad. And I just help them look at it differently. So tell me, what is it that you want to accomplish? Like who is it that you want to help, and what do you want to help them with?

And again, it could be anything. Like some people may say, I help moms. They want to help moms. Okay, what do you want to help them with? Well, I help them with momming, right? Like all the things, all the mom things. And that's okay. I think a lot of times, we're just looking for permission. We're looking for somebody to agree with us and say that, yeah, that's the perfect niche.

Lindsay: I just love the thought of you being like the niche fairy godmother.

Gabrielle: I like that.

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Lindsay: People just come to you, and you just give them a little like spell, and you're like, permission granted.

Gabrielle: Yes, it's like, stop it with the drama. Stop it with the drama. Like, I think a lot of it is, right, I think it's about permission. And I think it's also about just thinking that there is the right one out there, right? And so what people are doing is they're going and looking at what niches other coaches have, Googling what niches make the most money, you know?

Lindsay: Oh, right, and then everyone's a business coach, for sure.

Gabrielle: Right, everybody's a business coach. And then what happens is then you find one that sounds good. Business coaches make a lot of money. That's what you see on there. So you're like, I'm going to be a business coach. And then you get out there, and you're not feeling it. Like it's not aligned with who you are.

And so it comes across that way. You're not consistent with it. You're all over the place with your message. You are not showing up. And so then people don't believe you, and then you don't sign clients.

Lindsay: Well, I think you can get stuck. Like what I see happen to a lot of coaches that think like, oh, in order to make money, which, by the way, I do not believe this. I think it is definitely not true. But I know a lot of coaches think, oh, in order to make money, I have to be this type of coach, right? I have to be a business coach.

But then what I see happen by the time, at some point, maybe they come to work with me, they're in so much drama about their own business. And then they're trying to coach their clients and trying to convince themselves that it's fine, right, that they're not connected. And I'm like, no, no, no, it's 100% connected. Of course, you're having so much of your own drama that your clients are coming to you with the same things, and you're probably just believing them because you're like, yeah, me too.

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Gabrielle: Yeah, exactly. Or you're just feeling out of integrity with it. I think some people just feel like if they haven't gone through it, then they can't coach other people on it. And especially with business coaches, if you haven't created such and such in your business, then I can't help other people do it, and just all the drama that goes along with that.

Lindsay: Yeah, the way I kind of talk about it, or the way that I teach it, is not that you have to have a specific niche, right, or that you have to, like, narrow it down to something very similar. I think I kind of describe it very similar to what you did, which are you just have to be able to be clear in your own mind, right? Like it doesn't even matter. It doesn't matter what it is. It can be very general as long as you are clear about who it is, what you're doing, and how you help them.

And I think that that's, to me, like that's part of the confusion that I see out in the industry of people thinking I have to niche down to something very specific.

Gabrielle: Yeah, no, I agree 100%. I think it's exactly what you said. I think if you're not clear on it, then you're not going to show up clear, either. And you're not going to feel confident about helping people. And then you're not going to feel confident telling people you can help them because you don't believe you can help them, right?

And so I think that that's where the alignment comes in with, like, I kind of use alignment and purpose kind of interchangeably, but I think that that's where that comes in. When you are in something, or you're in an area that you feel comfortable about because that is who you are or it is something that you have maybe overcome, so you have a little bit of experience in the area, I think that that helps when you're putting yourself out there. And people feel that.

Lindsay: Yeah, definitely. I think that one of the things I see, what I'm guessing probably shows up with a lot of your clients, is when, and it's so

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funny because we're coaches, and we know this isn't how it works. And yet sometimes coaches get to the place where they think, but I have to see the results before I can believe that this will work, right? You're laughing. I feel like that's probably something that comes up for a lot of your clients, is my guess?

Gabrielle: Yes, yes.

Lindsay: Because I think that's so much of what niche drama is, right? Like anytime a coach is thinking – like there's a difference between just, oh, I would like to narrow a little bit. Let me think about it. Let me like decide what I want. Versus niche drama, which, the way I see it a lot, is exactly that, right? Like, but I don't think it's working because no one's buying it. I'm like, no, you don't get the result until you believe that it's possible, that you can do it, that you want to do it.

Gabrielle: Exactly, exactly. And I think, again, to your point, like not being clear on it is why you're not believing in it. And then when you're not believing in it, then, of course, you're putting yourself out there in disbelief, and so nobody is buying. You're just creating that result over and over again.

Lindsay: I see it break down very specifically sometimes in my mastermind because one thing we do in the mastermind is I have everyone create their process, right? So some of the coaches already have a process, and they're kind of redoing it or just clarifying. And then some of the coaches have never really thought about it this way, and I'm like, we're creating a process.

And sometimes they really get in their head, and they're like, no, I'm a general life coach. I don't have a process. I'm like, no, no, you do have a process. Whatever you're doing right now is a process. That's your current process. Maybe you're going to decide you want to keep it, or maybe you want to redo it.

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But I see sometimes that's where they get into like that's the niche drama I experience in my space mostly, and especially my mastermind is that, like, but wait a minute, do I need to have a more specific niche so that I can have a more specific process? I'm like, no, this is backward. What's happening?

Gabrielle: Yes, yes, no, I see that a lot, too, with the whole process thing. And they start getting in their heads. And the thing about, you talked about the difference in having niche drama versus I want to narrow it down a little bit. I think niche drama is, in a way, like the niche drama is blocking you from signing clients and making money, from moving forward. Because you're just stuck in your head about this not working, I'm not seeing the results, instead of going out there and telling everybody that you can help them and how.

Lindsay: Yeah. Okay, what else? What have we not covered about niches or about anything else that you are like, okay, we have to talk about this before we go?

Gabrielle: I think we talked about all the niche drama. Listen, we have to tell the story about how we started working together and the drama.

Lindsay: I love it. I forgot about that. It's so funny. Okay, this like takes me back because this was when I was doing consults. I was doing one-on-one coaching.

Gabrielle: Yes.

Lindsay: You're going to have to tell it. I'm sure I can jump in with like some details. But I think you probably remember it better than I do because it was mostly your experience, your story.

Gabrielle: Yeah, yeah. And it's so funny being on the other side of it now, right? Like it's so interesting. I just remember reaching out to you and signing up for a consult. We got on the consult, and everything was great.

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It's so funny because you know what? I did a post recently on my Instagram about this, just about paying for coaching as being one of the number one things I hear from coaches on consults. Just not being able to pay for coaching or not wanting to pay for coaching.

Lindsay: It's probably so fun for you now to see that and know, like, I don't know if fun is the right word, but just to know the possibility of when you work through this, what's on the other side. Because you had to do that, you did so much work.

Gabrielle: Oh my gosh, yes. And yeah, I included all of that, like it's priceless. So priceless. But I remember going into the consult, knowing that this is what I'm doing. I'm working with Lindsay, like done deal. And then you told me your price. And I was not ready. I was not ready.

And so I was like, in the moment, I was like, you know what? I'm going to figure this out. I'm going to figure this out. So I told you, yes, it's happening, sign me up, tell me the next steps. And then we got off the call. And then I remember –

Lindsay: I think we did a little, maybe coaching on it or talking about it, right?

Gabrielle: Yeah.

Lindsay: It's like I didn't have a strict like you must answer on this call. It was like, oh, let's talk about this. What are you thinking? And I remember you'd be like, yeah, I think, I think I'm in. Like kind of hesitant, but like, yeah.

Gabrielle: Yeah, yeah. And I remember just like, I was shocked by the price, but at the same time knew that this was what I needed to do. Like, this was my next step. Like you were my first coach that I hired. And it was just scary. And I can relate to potential clients when they experience this.

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But so you told me, we got off, and I remember a couple of days, like it may have been on a Friday, and then over the weekend, I remember just like stewing over it. I'm like, oh my gosh.

So I remember texting you and telling you that I wasn't going to be able to do it. It was a lot of money. My husband, something about my husband, all that. And then, I don't know, and then I think it was, and, you know, we had some communications back and forth, you responded. And then we just let it be. And then, a couple of days later, Stacey Boehman's podcast episode came out. I don't remember what it was. It was like false positives or something.

Lindsay: Oh yes.

Gabrielle: One of those episodes. And oh my gosh, I listened to that episode, and I was like, she's talking about me.

Lindsay: Okay, so let me tell everyone what that means because I don't want people to think that I just went and like talked about you.

Gabrielle: Yeah, yeah, yeah. No, no, no.

Lindsay: So I remember very clearly having that consult with you, getting off the consult, and just thinking like she is my perfect client. I'm so excited. I had just, at that point, like I had just been a general coach mostly. And I think that it was a little newer at that point that I was working with coaches. And I wanted to work with coaches that I loved and thought were going to be amazing coaches. And looking back, it's funny because good coaching has always been so important to me.

And I just think I remember thinking like you are going to be a great coach. I just had so many amazing thoughts about you. And so I told Stacey because she was my coach at the time. And I just told her I didn't tell her your name or anything, and she didn't know who you were then anyway.

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And I think a couple of days later, she messaged me, and she was like – I think I had a few new clients starting or something. And I was like, well, yeah, but remember the client that I was so excited about? She actually decided no. And she was like, wait, what? And I was like, I know, I don't know what happened.

And then, yeah, she recorded, I think she was going to record that podcast anyway, but it was just one of those, like, here's a good story. It was basically like you said yes, I got excited and didn't question it, right? I was just like, okay, she's a yes. I didn't give you the opportunity to say, like, maybe here's what I'm worried about it, or here's something that's coming up for me. I was just like, okay, great. See ya.

Gabrielle: Yeah. Yeah, well, to be honest, I probably wouldn't have given you anything anyway. I probably would have just been like, no, I'm going to figure this out because that's just who I am. I'm like, no, I'm going to figure this out.

Lindsay: Yeah, I believe it.

Gabrielle: Yeah, and to be clear, she gave several other examples during that episode. It wasn't just my example.

Lindsay: Yes. It was just a brief mention.

Gabrielle: Yes. Yes, so when she gave it, I was like, oh, she's talking about me. But it was the best thing because, in that moment, I knew that I needed the coaching. That was such a breakthrough moment. And I remember pulling into my garage just like bawling. I was like, oh my gosh, I've got to start. So I texted you immediately through my tears and everything. And I was like, okay, I'm going to figure this out if you'll still have me. Please, like, let me in.

Because I think this might have been you were getting ready to start groups. And so I think I may have been one of your last one-on-one clients.

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Lindsay: Yeah, towards the end, I think. I don't remember exactly, but definitely toward the end.

Gabrielle: Yeah.

Lindsay: So that was, yeah, I'll never forget, I was standing in line at Target. I think I was like paying when you texted me, or you maybe even called me or something. But I just remember you being like, I'm in. And I was very excited.

Gabrielle: Yeah, I was like, what do I need to do? When can we start? Can we start yesterday?

Lindsay: And what did you learn from working through that? Like what did you learn from your experience now that you help your clients with?

Gabrielle: I think it allowed me to, first, understand where clients are when they are in that with their thoughts and feelings around investing in themselves and all of that. And me working through that with myself, allowed me to help them and just get curious about what's really going on for them, and helping them to allow or tap into what it is that they really want and be okay with it.

Because I think for me it was irresponsible to spend that kind of money on myself and all of that. Those were the thoughts that were going through my head at the time. And so that helps me to, you know, me working through that and then being on the other side of it now and seeing the power of investing in myself and what becomes possible and available to me after doing that work, I'd have done it ten times over,

Lindsay: And then showing up hardcore for the work, which you 100% did.

Gabrielle: Oh yeah. Oh yeah. Yeah, exactly. I think that that is a difference in the kind of clients we attract. Those that are willing to invest in

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themselves, whether it's hesitantly at first or 1,000% all in in the beginning, I think that those are the people who will show up for us.

Lindsay: Yeah, I think one thing that always allowed me in those situations to be comfortable on a consult or with a new client when they were sitting in discomfort, one thing that allowed me to just stay like, I'm fine, and I know how to help them, is that I experienced that, right? I remember hiring a coach and being like, what? I'm sorry, what number did you just say? I must have misunderstood you. Can you repeat that, right?

And like not making it mean anything about myself because someone on a consult was like, what? Oh my gosh, that's a lot of money or whatever, right? There's just a difference there when you've been on kind of both sides of it like this is not going to make or break anything. Like you can make whatever decision you want. And it's okay for you to experience discomfort right now.

Gabrielle: Exactly, exactly. It's all okay. I think that's what I didn't know at the time. And that kind of helped me to see, and I learned to lean into that.

Lindsay: It's funny thinking back to this because now I have so many clear memories about it. But I think my experience of you going through that was like we had a consult, you had this moment of like, I don't know if bravery is the right word, but almost like a clear vision of what you wanted and the future you wanted and the things you wanted to create for yourself. And you were brave in that moment that we were on the call.

And then over, I think it was a weekend when you had time to process it all, all of that just kind of came, like all the normal thoughts, right? This is irresponsible. I've never spent this much money on something like this just for myself. All of it.

Gabrielle: Yeah, yeah. And it was so interesting to watch. I was like, how am I going to be spending that kind of money? And then have no problem

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paying you to do so, right? Paying you to coach me. It was just crazy. My brain was like, what?

Lindsay: It was like we have a stove to buy, or like closets to redo or something. I think weren't you like redoing your house at the time?

Gabrielle: Yes, I think we were doing the master bath at the time. So yes.

Lindsay: I remember that.

Gabrielle: Yes, oh my gosh. Yeah, I'm thankful that you went to your coach with it, and then your coach used that as one of the examples on that episode. And I heard it. It was like, listen, stop playing.

Lindsay: That was a very interesting sequence of events that happened the way that it did.

Gabrielle: Yes, and that's why it hit me so hard. I was just like, yeah, this is that alignment, purpose stuff that I so deeply believe in. So I went that route. I trusted and went that route, and it's the best thing. It was the best thing, and I've just accomplished so much after us working together. So thank you.

Lindsay: I know you have, which is why I couldn't wait to talk to you today because I just think about you all the time. I love you so much. And I'm so grateful that you were on today.

Gabrielle: Yes, I love you, and thank you so much for having me. This was so good. Such a good time.

Lindsay: So fun, and it's going to be so useful. I can't wait for everyone to hear it. So, tell everyone if they are like, what? I need to know where to find you. I needed to know all the things, where can they find you? What do you have going on? Where would you love to send them?

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Gabrielle: Yes, they can find me on Instagram at The Thought Trainer. That is my handle on Instagram. And then my website, thethoughttrainer.com, and find all the information there.

Lindsay: I love it. And we will link all of that in the show notes. Thank you so much for being here today.

Gabrielle: Thank you so much. This was fun.

Lindsay: Bye.

Gabrielle: 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.