

## Ep #123: The Truth About Transformation



### 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 123.

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 am so glad you're joining me today. So one thing I want to let you in on before we get started, if you're listening in real time to this podcast or within a couple of weeks of real time, I wanted to let you know that on March 15th, at 12pm Eastern Time I am hosting a masterclass called the Five Simple Ways to Improve Your Coaching with shifts that you can implement right away.

I will be hosting that for you it is free, it is live, you should definitely register. The link is in my podcast show notes, or on Instagram, or coming via email. Wherever you prefer to connect with me, that's where you will find it. But you should definitely join. There will be a replay, so if you can't make that time live, join anyway. You have to join and register to get the replay. We won't be sending it to everyone after.

So, come join us. It's going to be a lot of fun. It's going to be a masterclass where we dive into things that you can implement immediately into your coaching. Whether you've been a coach for five minutes or five years, I've got you. Come join me. Let's do it.

All right, so let's dive into today's episode. I want to talk about something that I think is very important, I keep seeing it show up over and over. And if you've noticed the last kind of few weeks, maybe the last several weeks, I've been talking about things that I notice showing up in my communities, particularly in the Coach Lab.

So we're doing kind of a big enrollment for the Coach Lab coming up. Of course, it's open all the time, but we are doing an enrollment coming up. So I'm really spending some time focusing on what are some of those things that get in the way of coaches? No matter where you are in your coaching

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practice, they kind of get in the way of you just delivering your foundational coaching skills in a way that is effective and creates results for your clients. All right?

So we're going to talk about one of those things today, and I'm going to call it transformation chasing. And I don't know if that's already a word, I literally just came up with that term right before I hit record because I thought there has to be something, a way to identify this. So I'm going to call it transformation chasing. And I'm going to tell you what that means and how you know if you're doing it and why it's a problem, okay?

So obviously transformation, transformations, any form of that word is something we talk about a lot in coaching. It's actually probably not a term that I use all the time, and you'll see why as I go through this episode. Not because there's anything wrong with it at all. Transformations are amazing, and it's part of what we help our clients with, right?

But I think we just have some misconceptions about what transformations are and we're using them in a way that isn't useful to decide if we're doing a great job in our coaching or not. I see a lot of you doing that. So I want to just kind of release you from those chains, from that prison, today because it just isn't useful and it causes so much pain for some of you.

So the way I think about it, so transformation, first I want to dive into what that is. I'll give you my definition, also some of the definitions. I looked up the definition, and it's really interesting how many definitions there are for it and how many kinds of different fields it's used in, everywhere from literal definitions in the Bible of what spiritual transformation is all the way to, of course, transformation in coaching. But then in lots of sciences and math, and just there are so many different things, right?

So in general, the general definition of transformation is a thorough or dramatic change in form or appearance. So that's just like the general definition. And then you can get into different definitions depending on which category. There's a definition in biology, and physics, and math, and logic, and pathology, and linguistics, and there's so many.

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One that, of course, caught my eye is a science definition, a biology definition, that is the metamorphosis during a life cycle of an animal, which I like that one. I think it's a little bit different than a dramatic change or thinking about it how we sometimes do in the coaching world, which is like an immediate dramatic change, right?

Metamorphosis in a life cycle takes a while, there's all different stages of it. And to me, I like to think of transformation in coaching a little more like that. But I also do believe that there can be sometimes pretty quick or immediate spontaneous transformations, okay? So we're going to dive into all of those.

My personal definition, like if you just asked me, as a coach what's your definition of transformation? So if I put myself in the position of a client, I think of it as I see something that I can't unsee. That's the most simple way I would describe it. Or I see something that I can't unsee and now I have that as an option of a lens to look through when I'm making decisions in my life or when I'm creating the experience I want to have in my life, right?

I see something I can't unsee and I get to decide if I want to act on it or not. Usually, the answer is yes. But one thing I think that is interesting about the definition of transformation in the kind of coaching or, I'm using air quotes, "self-development" world is, we think of it as it's always a positive thing. And I actually don't believe that that's true.

First, transformation can be negative, right? So like in biology, one of the definitions is when a cell goes from a normal to malignant state. So that would be like a not positive transformation, right? That's not a transformation that you want to happen.

I know that it's not normally used that way in coaching, and I don't even think that that's a useful way to use it. But I do think that there is a neutral option in coaching if you think about my definition, which is, I now just have a different lens to use when and if I choose to.

So we're going to put a pin in that for a second and we'll come back to it, because I want to talk about why I feel like this is important and where it

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gets in the way of coaches showing up just as the best coach for their clients, right?

So I think a lot of you, a lot of people that come to me with these types of issues are thinking of transformation as it's always spontaneous. Or maybe spontaneous isn't the right word, but it's quick, it's dramatic, and it's something that happens immediately in a coaching session.

Sometimes that can be true, right? Your coach can point out something, a way that you're thinking about something, or they might just ask you a question and it literally, I don't know if this is your experience, but my experience is it literally feels like there is a lock in my brain that just is like, clink, like unlocks. And the lock can't go back on, right? Like this is just where we are now. Oh my gosh, it's like a totally different world over here. And that can happen in a moment.

But even in that case, to me, the bigger transformation happens when I go out into the world with this new space unlocked in my brain, right? When I make decisions from that place, when I interact with other humans from that place, when I just notice how different my thinking is or how different I see something when that's unlocked.

So I do think that that can happen and I'm going to give some examples. But I do think that that can happen quickly. But I actually think there's a lot more of the time, and this can be true for any type of coaching. I know that some coaching is, I think there's even something called rapid transformation something, right? I forget what the term is. Maybe that's a therapy term, I don't know. I'm getting them confused in my mind right now.

But I know that there are forms of coaching or forms of self-development or whatever you want to call it that do say it's like a rapid thing that happens. And so sometimes I think that can happen and it is available. But to me, in order for that to happen, you have to be available to it. There can't be so many things in the way.

It can't be all the way, like if you think about your brain kind of like a forest, that lock that we are unlocking to create the transformation can't be hidden

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under years and years of overgrowth, right? Pr like of forests that no one has walked through in forever because it'll be very hard to find, it's not as available.

And I'm sure we can come up with exceptions to all of this. So if that's happening for you right now, just listen to what I'm saying. Don't try to argue with it because I think the overall, hopefully, the overall gist of what I'm trying to get across will be helpful for you, even if you're like, no, no, but there are these things where we can unlock them, okay?

So yes, it can happen quickly in my experience working with clients sometimes, and being a client, right? Sometimes I'm like, oh my gosh, okay, I'm never going to think about that the same way again. But sometimes when we're working with clients or when we're getting coached, there can be something that happens where we take in the coaching, we see like maybe there's some awareness there, right?

A new awareness, which, to me, is another way you could describe transformation, is just creating a new awareness. And sometimes it can start to fade away, right? Like we're getting closer to the lock, but there are reasons that you have those thoughts. There are reasons that you feel the way you do in this situation. There are reasons that are deeper than just one change of one thing, a thought or whatever, that just is going to flip you into this new state of being, right?

And in that case, I think the transformation, and I like to call it sticky, right? I like to say it just feels a little sticky around this because maybe there's a reason that your client wants to hold on to it a little bit, right? Maybe they can start to see that awareness, but like, oh no, this is actually a little scary or it feels very uncomfortable. Like, I see what you're saying and it feels so uncomfortable because I'm so used to thinking about it this way.

Or maybe they even have something that you would say like, oh my gosh, they had so much awareness on this call, I created so much awareness. And then they come back on the next call or the next session and it's like, wait, what happened? How did we go backwards?

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And to me that's just kind of the same thing, it's totally normal and it just is their experience of like there's a reason that they have those thoughts, or they have those beliefs. Whatever it is that you're working through, there's a reason that they react to things the way they do. And sometimes there's a little more stickiness, than like let's just flip this lock and it's going to be like, ta-da, you're transformed.

And also, and I feel like this is probably one of the bigger things that I want to get across today because I have seen this happen over and over for some of my clients and did myself, where sometimes you might create a new awareness around something. But the real transformation happens when you're out in the world and you see that you make a decision from that new place and things change.

So like you get a result and then the transformation sinks in in a totally different way because it becomes kind of like a, oh my gosh, this is true, right? Or, oh, now I see.

Now, the reason I think that these things are so important to see is because so many of my clients come to me and they say things like, right, like the words they say to me are something similar to I don't even know if I gave them a transformation on the call. Or I don't know if, like it seemed like they logically kind of understood, but they didn't have a deep understanding of what we were talking about. Or I think it's a problem because my client keeps coming back with coaching on the same thing, right? Or some form of something like these things.

And I think part of that is caused by what I'm talking about right now, right? Like somewhere you have learned that a transformation should always be immediate and easily available. And we shouldn't have to explore why it keeps coming up. We shouldn't have to explore any of the other things that feel a little trickier. I just want to show my clients their thoughts and how they can have new thoughts or their feelings and how could they have new feelings, or give them a new strategy and just like ta-da, have it be like a magic trick.

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And unfortunately, I don't think that's how it usually works, especially if you're coaching clients who have never been coached before. Now, that can actually go either way.

Sometimes I think clients that have never been coached before can be the most fun to coach because you can ask them one question or a couple questions that just unlock some things and it just blows their mind because literally they've never considered even that their thoughts are optional, right? Or that they can adjust things to have a different outcome, right.

And so I think that piece can be really fun. But I also think that sometimes you might have clients that are not as easily adjustable and the transformation doesn't happen as quickly. And that's totally okay.

That is what I want to get across in this episode, is that not only is it okay, but then it's okay to keep exploring it and to explore all around it. Because usually what I see happen is when that happens with a coach, right, when they're like, oh no, my client didn't get a transformation on this call, they usually beat themselves up as a coach, or just kind of brush it under the rug and just don't think about it.

And I know you've heard me say this before, but I'm going to say it again, the magic of coaching, of being an amazing coach, is being able to just face it and say, like, oh, what's coming up for you now? Why do you think that this isn't sinking in for you? What feels sticky around it for you, right? Like just being willing to explore it from all angles when you can see that it isn't just immediately sinking in.

And then one thing I want to say before I start giving you some examples is I think kind of one of our fatal flaws is how I would maybe say it, as humans, is to see, like once we see something and we're like, oh, we like this, or this works, then we immediately go to like how do we get more of it? How do we make it bigger, faster, stronger, quicker, right? Like all of that.

And I can see that happening sometimes in coaching and with coaches. So if you really zoom out for a second and you think about what transformations are and what that looks like for your clients, it's really kind



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of a little weird to assume that they're going to have a big transformation on every call. That's a lot, right? And especially ones that like blow their mind every single time.

I will tell you, just from coaching so many clients over long periods of time, that isn't normal. Now, maybe it happens for short periods of time, where you're really working deeply on something and their mind is just blown a lot. But that isn't going to be on every single call, right? That's like taking a good thing and saying like, oh, now how do I make this bigger, faster, whatever, right?

It's like discovering sweetness or sugar and then just like, how do I condense it down and condense it down and condense it down until we have the most potent version of sugar that ever was? And I love sugar, don't get me wrong, but I just think it's interesting to think about it like that, right?

Sometimes I think that we go to that space of if I'm not providing this huge transformation every single call that's very obvious and very, like, we all know what's happening in the moment, then I'm not doing a good job as a coach. And I just want to offer you that that is not true.

So I'm actually going to give you some examples of what I would consider different kind of types of transformation or different ways, not types, but different ways that transformation has shown up for me when I have been coached, so that you can kind of see what I'm talking about.

So not too long ago, so when I was creating the Coach Lab, which, if you have been a listener you know that's my lifetime access program, right? And it is where I can have lots of clients in one space. And there's no cap to how many people are there. And it's lifetime access, so people can come and go as they want, take what they need, come to the live calls, log into the vault, listen to the private podcast. Like there's so many options of coming and going and coming and getting what you need just when you need it.

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One of the thoughts while I was creating it, before I got coached on this, one of the thoughts I was having that I didn't even really notice was there was that I kind of started to think like, oh, this is going to be a lot of work and very overwhelming. And that's just going to be my new normal, right? Because it's lifetime access and there's going to be lots of clients and it's just going to be this constant big thing.

And so I was trying to solve or plan for, okay, if that's true, right, that was just happening in my brain. Like, that's just the truth of the universe, there's no options outside of that. So how do I solve that, right? Am I going to need to hire people to help me? I was trying to put things in place because that was obviously true.

So I was getting coached by my business coach, and all she said to me was something along the lines of, why are you thinking that it's going to be so much all the time, right? And I paused and I was like, wait, what? What are you talking about? And that was like, immediate, right? I saw it right away.

When she said that I was like, oh, my gosh, I was. I was just believing that that was just the truth of how it was all going to happen, and now I just need to figure out how to deal with it, right? Like how to handle it. And I had sold myself so hard on it's going to be so amazing for me and for my clients that I'm willing to have this thing that's always tons of work and overwhelming and whatever.

I had sold myself so hard on the other side of it, that I had made that kind of okay, but I was still looking at it through the lens of this is the truth. So that was a moment of literally just that space in my brain just like okay unlocked. And now we just move on and make totally new decisions and we don't plan for it being way too much and overwhelming all the time.

Which, of course, was very helpful because some of the things I was putting in place, of course we know, right, as coaches that sometimes when you're responding to something like that and planning for something like that, what ends up happening is you make it. So what I was doing is like I

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was making it more complicated. I was making it more work. It was going to be more of everything, right? And it probably would have been a little overwhelming.

So I'm so glad that she showed me. That was a moment of like immediate, oh, okay. And we had a laugh and then I went into the world and implemented through that new belief, that new lens.

Another example that I'll give you that's more in the middle, right, where it wasn't an immediate transformation. I remember like towards the beginning of my coaching business where I loved coaching, I was obsessed with coaching. I loved it so much. All I ever wanted to do was coach my clients and I never ever took time off. So if I was sick, I still showed up. If I was on vacation, I, a lot of times still did calls.

It's so funny seeing that now, because I coach my clients on this so often because I'm on the other side now, in complete awareness of why that was bad. But I got coached on it a few times. And what happened from the way I would describe the experience I had is I would get coached on it. And I would see, if you use the example of like switching to the new lens was like, I could see that there was another lens available. And I could also see like here's the one I'm looking through.

But I didn't feel like just changing the lens was going to, like I thought it was going to create other problems, right? So it's almost like I had it, I purchased the new lens, it was there and ready to be used. But for, let's say, I don't know, a few more months, I don't know, I don't actually remember how long it was, I didn't put it in the microscope, right? And I just kept using the same one.

But I kept getting coached on it. And so what happened was, even though I wasn't yet using the new lens, I was very aware of as I'm looking through this lens that I'm using currently that I'm refusing to give up, as I'm looking through this here are all the little problems I'm creating. Here is how I'm creating these things that I don't like in my business. Why do I keep getting sick? Why do I always feel so tired, right? Like, oh, okay, I see that.

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And then it was like once I'd gathered enough proof and had enough coaching, I was ready to just kind of switch lenses, right? So that was one that kind of took a little bit longer.

And if you have clients that are like this, right, what a lot of coaches do, I think, is just give up because they're like, oh, this is bad, I'm not supposed to be coaching on the same thing. But instead of giving up, if you use the kind of that analogy that I just used, you could consider that your clients do have this new lens, they're just for some reason scared to use it. Or they don't think it's going to work or whatever, it's not going to create the results that they want.

And the more you explore it with them, the more you will be able to show them that it is maybe a good decision, right? And you can also create awareness for them around, okay, that's okay that you're not doing anything differently yet, or you don't have new beliefs yet. But when you keep believing XYZ, whatever this thing is, let's look at the results it's creating. Are those the results you want to keep creating? Is this the experience you want to have while creating these results?

And you can just kind of start to poke holes in their story that they believe so strongly. This is also a space where you can explore with them a little bit of like, how do you think this is serving you when, like if you can see that there's this other option but you're not choosing it, how do you think it's serving you to keep believing what you're believing? To keep doing things the way you're doing it?

Not at all from a place of judgment or judging your clients, of course, we're going to clear that up first. But from a place of curiosity, right? Because there's a reason that they keep doing it. If they're just doing the same things over and over, there's a reason. And if you can find it, you can help loosen their grip on it. And then offer to switch the lens, right? Offer some new thoughts, some new beliefs.

And then my last example using myself and my coaching is years ago, maybe a couple years ago, I got coaching from someone who, she was

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coaching me on something else but somehow it came up that I was hiring in my business.

And it was something that was just really kind of heavy on my mind and a little bit related to the other thing we were coaching on. So she was like, well, let's just explore that. What is it? And one thing that I told her is, I am just so scared I'm picking the wrong person and I think I'm hiring people because I like them or because they're nice. And she said something along the lines of like, what's wrong with that?

And, of course, the coaching was a lot more than this. But basically one of the takeaways that I had from that session is, it's okay for that to be one of the filters I use when I hire in my business. I like people around me, like I like to be surrounded by people that are kind, who tell the truth, and are very honest, but are also kind and just have a certain warmth to them, right? Especially when my business is small and I'm working very closely with those people.

And logically, I understood it when we were talking about it. And it really did create a little bit of a shift for me and I felt like, okay, I kind of have this new belief. But then probably a year later something came up in my business that I felt like it was going to be an uncomfortable conversation that I had to have. I was so anxious. I do not love any type of conflict. And it was just creating, it was bringing up these old things, right?

This is like when I say the path in the woods, it's like all overgrown. It really required some sludging through all of the things that were overgrown, right, and peeling back all of those layers. And this is one of those situations where there are things under there that's like, for certain reasons I just don't like conflict.

So it was bringing up so much anxiety, so much like dread, right? All of it, it felt terrible. Then I had the conversation, after dreading it, after, of course, I got some coaching on it. And I just went in, had the conversation that I thought was going to be awful.

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And the transformation from the coaching that I had the year or so before all fell into place and hit me after the conversation. Because what I realized, right, so like I had the permission, like, okay, I could use this as a filter to hire in my business, as, of course, one of the filters, not the only filter, but I can use this as a filter.

So I had been doing that, kind of a little bit without knowing it. It wasn't a specific filter that I was like, okay, here's the checklist, does this person meet all these criteria? But what I realized in that moment, like literally right after I got off the call with the person, was that because I had had that coaching, because I had given myself permission to work with people that I enjoy working with, the conversation, of course, wasn't hard at all. It was actually quite lovely and we came up with the most amazing solution.

And it just hit me at that moment. Like that's the part that felt like the transformation for me. I'm no longer working with that coach. I'm no longer like this was so long ago and I realized, oh, because I have allowed myself to do this, the transformation is I don't actually have to feel anxious about any of these conversations because, in general, the people that surround me are going to treat me with kindness. So I don't have to be in my head thinking, oh, my gosh, there's going to be conflict, there's going to be this, right?

So that's just a very specific example that I kind of noted when it happened because it felt really important, because sometimes this will happen for your clients.

Now, this is not a proponent for all transformation should be like that, right? And you know this about me if you've heard the podcast, I do believe we should be responsible for are our clients moving in the right direction? Are we helping them create the results they want? Do we know what we're doing? Are we great coaches, right? Like all of that I believe in.

And I also believe that sometimes you're going to have sessions with your client that, to you, feel like, okay, it seems like there is some great

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awareness happening here. And your client might not see huge transformational results for a while, right? It might be further down the road.

And when I say that, because when I had that coaching I could see it. I was like, okay, I could see it. I just didn't feel, it wasn't like I was having a brand new experience and my body and I was changed forever.

And I think that that's what gets in the way of thinking sometimes that you're doing a great job as a coach is when you think that every single transformation is supposed to be huge and immediate, and like fireworks going off and angels singing or whatever, right? It's like, ahh, like the skies have opened and the world will never be the same. And it truly is just not true.

How exhausting would that even be, as the client, if that is what was happening, right? Because sometimes transformations can be a lot. Sometimes, here's maybe another little thing that I'll throw in at the end of this episode. Sometimes they don't feel good, right? Sometimes that new lens that you're looking through shows you, it's like now you've zoomed in –

Sidebar, if you have the brand new iPhone, there is a setting on the camera that you can zoom in like a microscope. It is very cool. I 1,000% do not recommend doing it when your camera is over your arm. You can see every little, I mean, it's crazy. It's like what is that? Like that is my arm.

Okay, sometimes that is what coaching feels like to your client, right? Which you just have to sit with and like, yep, okay, that's my arm. Okay, that's actually pretty cool. Like it might take me a minute to adjust. And I think sometimes coaching can feel like that, right?

So when you are thinking, oh no, this is a problem, it's not happening fast enough, or, oh no, this is a problem. We're ending this session or ending this call and my client isn't feeling like rainbows and daisies and sunshine and all of that, they just saw their arm magnified times 100.

I hope that this feels really helpful for you. And I would love to hear any feedback you have, of course. Find me on Instagram. Find me wherever

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you want to find me and let me know how much this has helped. Hopefully, I will see you soon in some of my spaces, but if not, I'll see you back here next week. Goodbye.

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](http://lindsaydotzlafoaching.com). That's Lindsay with an A, D-O-T-Z-L-A-F.com. See you next week.