

Ep #129: Finding Your Voice with Christine Stuart



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With Your Host

Lindsay Dotzlaf

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Hey, this is Lindsay Dotzlaf and you are listening to *Mastering Coaching Skills*, episode 129.

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 happy you're here today. I have the most fun guest on. I cannot wait for you to hear this interview, this conversation that I have with my client, Christine. She's so fun. And what I really love about this is no matter what kind of coach you are or what you're doing in the world, you will definitely relate to some of the things that she is teaching us and sharing with us in this episode.

We do talk about her experience in my new coach certification, which she's in, but we do it through the lens of some of the things that she's working on in there and how it has really transformed her coaching and the structure of her coaching and her business. So even if you're not in the market to join something like that, please listen to what she has to say because you are going to learn so much from her.

And if you are in the market for something like that, then you should definitely join us. The doors are about to open, so click the link, if you're interested click the link in the show notes and come join us. What are you even waiting for? I'm not sure.

Without further ado, here is my conversation with Christine.

Lindsay: Hello, I am so happy to have you here today on our what, fourth attempt recording this? I forget how many now.

Christine: At least four.

Lindsay: We had some technical difficulties, but we decided the universe has delivered us this gift because today we're feeling ready.

Christine: So ready.

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Lindsay: Perfect. Okay, so let's start with you introducing yourself. Tell everyone who you are and what you do.

Christine: So my name is Christine Stewart, I help folks make money doing what they love to do in the way they love to do it. But I specialize in helping folks who are in the fields where it's like, oh, it would be really hard making money doing that or I've never seen someone make money doing that. Those are my people. It's like all the creative industries that have been undervalued for so long.

Lindsay: I love it.

Christine: It's my favorite part, yeah.

Lindsay: You are in my current round of my new advanced coaching certification, and I just love your niche so much every time you post about it, or we talk about, or you post your process. I'm like, yes, this makes so much sense. This is so good. I love everyone's niche, of course. But sometimes, every once in a while there's just one that I really feel very connected to. Can you give just a couple of examples of the creatives that you're talking about?

Christine: Yeah, totally. So it's like people who are like, I'm a health coach but I'm also a Pilates instructor and I've never seen someone do both. Or like I make coffee, but I also make custom furniture and I don't know how those two things go together. Or I am a health coach who hates meal planning and would love to just talk about Rumi quotes and talk to people about their relationship with themselves and the planet.

It's like people who are like, yeah, this is the thing I do, but the way I want to do it is really different. And I also hate marketing and selling. I think 99% of the world hates marketing and selling and it's just like me and five other people who are like, no, this could actually be really great. This could be really fun. So yeah, those are my people and that's what we do.

Lindsay: I realized as you were saying this the reason I love your niche so much is because you are exactly who I needed before, I can't remember if

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I've told you this, but before I was a coach I made dinosaur capes. Have I ever told you this?

Christine: Oh my God, no. Like capes for dinosaurs or capes with dinosaurs on them? Both are great.

Lindsay: Like to dress as dinosaurs.

Christine: Oh my God, that's even better.

Lindsay: Like a cape that fastens around your neck and then there's a hood with spikes, and the spikes go all the way down. And there's a tail that drags on the floor.

Christine: This is incredible. I'm imagining those really fun towels that little kids put on. Is that kind of –

Lindsay: Yeah, similar. I have pictures.

Christine: So how long did you make them? And do you still make them?

Lindsay: I do not. I do not still make them. I've talked about it a couple of times on the podcast because my husband, I joke that my husband thought that that was his retirement plan. Joke's on him, now I'm a coach making way more money. But I sold them on Etsy. And actually I had my own website and I sold them on Etsy.

And it was just funny the way you said it because that is not something that anyone would ever pick that I would do. Like it was so out of left field. Everyone was like, wait, you're doing what? But I knew how to sew, my grandma taught me how to sew. And one day I just made this dress up outfit for my nephew, actually. And I was home with a newborn. And I was like, this is actually kind of fun. I could do this.

And then next thing you know, I'm making like hundreds of them. I made quite a bit of money doing it. Actually scratch that. I had a high revenue with like zero profit because I had no idea what I was doing.

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Christine: This is amazing. I'm just going to plant the seed, don't feel like you have to answer now.

Lindsay: Will I make you one?

Christine: Yeah, but for like all the founding members of the certification. You don't call us that, but I do.

Lindsay: We'll see. We will see. I don't even know, I can't even imagine now how long that would even take me to do. It's so funny. But I did make them in adult sizes all the time.

Christine: This is amazing. You know we would all wear them on the call.

Lindsay: That would be pretty amazing. Okay, we've gotten off track, but I do think, as you were saying that, I was like, oh yes, that is who I was before I was a coach. I was running this other business that was so kind of outside of my anything. My personality, my area of expertise. I mean people would be like, "Wait, you can sew?" I'm like, yep, this is just what I do while I'm at home with babies.

Christine: This is amazing. Will you put photo examples in the show notes so we can all see?

Lindsay: I will, yes. I will. I think I posted one time maybe on Instagram. And it's just so funny because every time I do, of course, people are like, "Oh my gosh, will you make me one? Will you make me one?" And I'm like, no, I cannot. I will not.

Christine: That's always an option.

Lindsay: But listen, it's a fallback plan. Now that I know how to run a business, if this whole coaching thing goes awry, I know how to make capes.

Christine: Dinosaur capes, no one else is doing it.

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Lindsay: At the time there really hardly was, which was crazy. I even sold them to museums and just all kinds of places. They're probably out in the world living.

Christine: This is amazing.

Lindsay: Yeah. So okay, all that to say, I would have been your ideal client. I didn't even recognize it until this very moment. So it makes a lot of sense why I'm so connected to what you do.

Christine: Yeah, it's so fun. I feel like we live in the best time ever to start a business. Just with access to the internet and the resources and the tools. This is probably the only time in human history where you can make a living selling dinosaur capes, right?

Lindsay: From home, yeah.

Christine: From home, like on your own schedule.

Lindsay: Yeah, without being already a big company, right?

Christine: Yeah. I think for so long I thought running a business would require me to put on a business suit and be super – This is actually one of the unexpected takeaways I've gotten from the certification program that I never would have imagined, is that I'm wearing my overalls all of the time.

Lindsay: Yes, and I love that.

Christine: Yeah, it's like I used to think you had to be professional to be a business person and to be respected, right? I just associated people who were really good business owners as people who dressed up and wore heels and were different than me.

And the certification program, it has been like, oh, no, I just get to do this in the way that's most true and honest for me. And I get to decide what professional is, how I want to show up on calls, how I want to look, what I want. Like I just get to decide. And that is something I never, like if you would have told me before starting the certification that I was going to end

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up wearing overalls most days to work as a result of being part of it, I would have not believed you.

Lindsay: Oh my gosh. I have to tell you, that really gives me chills because I think that that really feels like part of my mission, just in what I do as a coach. Not necessarily for people to show up wearing overalls, although I love that about you. But just for people to feel comfortable having a business and showing up in whatever way makes sense for them, right? Which is so much of what we learn, of course, in the certification is how to create a coaching practice that really is, that encompasses all those things about yourself.

So it wouldn't even make sense if I was like, "Okay, well, that's what we're doing here, but here's how you have to show up." And yeah, I just really love that about the room in general, because it's exhausting trying to be something you're not.

Christine: Trying to pretend all the time. I remember thinking like, okay, I want to make more money in my business. I want to serve more people. So I have to become someone else and I have to dress up in a certain way and talk like my coach or people I see who I think are more successful. And the thing that, I think, okay, so I made a list of things that I was like, these are all things that surprised me about the certification that I didn't realize before, and this is one of them.

It's like every other coaching certification program out there is like I'm going to teach you how to coach using a modality or theory that is maybe from psychotherapy or yoga or Eastern traditions or something. And then if you graduate from the certification, you're doing that because you're coaching the way we think you should be coaching. You're using our tools in the way that we think you should. And I think that is super useful at certain stages in your coaching business.

Lindsay: Totally. Yeah, I think you have to learn a way first, right? That's kind of what I always say, is you can't just come in blind and have coaching

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mastery. I think there is a certain, okay, I need to learn to coach. I need to learn some tools, which, of course, is why I have the Coach Lab.

But for me, this is the most fun piece, like, okay, I know how. Now how do I make it, like how do I really take it and mold it into what I want it to be?

Christine: Yeah, that's the mastery part, right? It's like you stop imitating other people and you start to like, really, I think this is like the most creative room I've been in because of that. Because you are not teaching us to coach in the way that you coach, or even with like, I know you went to The Life Coach School, we don't do that in this container.

Lindsay: Yeah, sometimes people are like, oh, you don't even talk about the model. I'm like, no, why would I be teaching coaching methods using someone else's coaching method? That doesn't make any sense. It's an amazing tool, don't get me wrong.

Christine: Yeah. No, totally.

Lindsay: But it's certainly not what we're doing in this space.

Christine: No, which I think is so, like the really cool thing is to look around the room and see that everyone's business is so different and so unique, and none of us have projects that are even remotely the same. And we're all going to leave this certification with businesses that are super unique and ideas that are contributions to the field of coaching, that change the way that we coach or that change the way that the field approaches certain things.

And that's the cool thing because coaching is such a young industry, the best ideas have not yet been created. Like my project is creating Camp, which is a group program. And my favorite part about doing it in this container is, one, I don't think I could create something like this in any other business container or certification program because it's not a traditional coaching. Like there's like here's the ways you can create programs as a coach, and mine is just like a little bit different.

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Lindsay: Yeah, it's so good. Okay, let's pause, because we just kind of dove in and I want to give a little context for people listening. So I want to come to the list that you made, which you just told me right before we started that you made a list of things that surprised you.

But first, before we do that I want to talk about your program because it's one of the reasons that you kind of stood out as someone I wanted to have on the podcast. When you posted something in the group, one thing that we do in the certification is I take you through an exercise where we identify your values. I'm just kind of letting the listeners know, because then I'm going to have you talk about it.

And so I take you through an exercise and we kind of talk about values, which is pretty common in a lot of business spaces. But I like to think at least that I kind of do it in a little bit of a different way where I really explain like, here's why we're doing it. These aren't just values because they sound good on paper, they're really the lens that we're going to use to create everything through, right?

So the lens or the filter that you're going to use when you're creating your program, or your podcast, or whatever it is. Whatever your project is, whatever your coaching container is, we're going to use the values to say like, okay, it's like a check, I think, right? Let's run it through this check to see if it is in alignment with all of this.

And so you posted on the page and you were like, "I don't know if this is what I was supposed to do, but here are a few that stood out to me." And so I would love for you to share as many as you want, but particularly the one that you were like, "I don't know if this is allowed to be a value." But in my mind it's one of the most important values in your container.

Christine: Yeah. Okay, so one of my core values, first of all, I have done values exercises a ton as a coach, in lots of different ways. Like we did this and it was such a simple exercise, but it was so impactful.

So one of my values is nature, which when I posted it I was like, I don't know if this is actually allowed. I run a business, I'm on Zoom, I'm inside. I

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don't even know how I would use this as a core value in my business, but it's so important to me. It's one of the reasons I do what I do.

Lindsay: I'm laughing as you say this because as you're saying there's so there's a sign actually hanging behind your head that people can't see that says "go play outside."

Christine: Yeah, I hung that because of this program though. I've had that time forever and I've just never allowed myself to have nature be part of what I do.

So I posted it and I was like I don't know if this is, maybe I should just start over and have a list that's like leadership and service and you know? Like all of the things.

Lindsay: Listen, I would have called you right out. I would have been like, "These are not your values. I know you too well for this. I'm going to need you to redo."

Christine: Yeah, that's the thing about this container, it's like everyone was like, "No, you have to keep that." But I started to think about how would I use this in my container? And what I realized is I teach marketing and selling through the lens of nature. Like I teach selling through the lens of like, okay, so you know the mycelium network in the forest under the ground? That's what selling is.

Lindsay: So good.

Christine: Right? Because it removes all the judgment. We don't have judgment about trees trading resources, so if we can start to think of selling like that. And so as I was thinking, I was like, yeah, this is how I teach marketing and selling because it just removes all the thoughts and the extra drama we have about it.

This is where I want my group container, we are going to meet in nature. This is going to be a component of it because there's something that happens when you are in the woods. It's the smell of being in the woods.

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It's the sounds of being in the woods. It's like taking time away from the busyness of life to reconnect with yourself. That really only happens in nature, and it's so valuable.

Lindsay: Even as you're saying it, I'm like, "Wait, let's go right now. What are we even doing here?" It's so good, right? I totally agree with you.

And I think sometimes you just, I think one thing I try to do in this container is hold a space where people can say things like what you're saying right now, say them out loud. And have someone there, me and the rest of the group, to say like, "Yes. Oh my gosh."

Just to let you see that, oh, they get it. This does make sense, right? Because sometimes we have all these ideas in our mind that we're like, does this make sense to other people? Because to me, it makes perfect sense, but when I say it out loud is it still going to make sense? And watching you do that has been really fun for me.

Christine: Well, especially as I think most coaches are solopreneurs, right? So we don't have teams to bounce ideas off of, we don't have people approving our ideas or being like, "Yeah, that's a good one. You should use that one, but think about this one differently." It's just us. And so to have a space where you're like, I think this is a pretty crazy idea. I don't really know what it's going to look like for nature to be a core value in my business.

And as soon as I posted it, I had all these thoughts of like, I should rewrite it and delete it and start over. And I would have done that had I not been in this container.

Lindsay: I think too, one thing that I just want to mention because you just said it is I think what's really fun about doing some of these exercises and identifying your values and really making sure that they are in alignment with you and what you do, is that now as you grow, if you choose to have a team, if you choose to have people working with you on these things, it'll be so useful for you to have these upfront so that when you hire people, it's like do they get this, right? Do they align with these?

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Even if maybe they're not exactly what they would pick, but you at least want to find people who are like, "Oh my gosh, nature as a business value. Yes, I'm all in on this," right? And you can just know that moving forward, instead of having to look for, you know, doing it kind of the other way around. Which neither is a problem, it's just going to be really fun for you to have this experience as you grow.

Christine: Yeah, no, and like all of the ways that we can use our core values. That's the cool thing, in the container it's like none of us are using the same decision filtering questions. No one else is filtering through; does this embody my value of nature? That's the cool thing.

I think sometimes I've been in containers, especially earlier in my coaching journey, where I was like, oh, the way this coach does it is the right way. And if I disagree, or do it differently, then that would make me wrong. And I've been scared to share my ideas. I've been scared to say I disagree with this or I think I would do it differently.

And that's what's so different about this certification. It's like, oh, no, it's just the expectation that we are all going to do it differently and no one's going to do it like you would do it. And it's so safe to share our ideas. And no one is coming with a lens of like, well, this is different than what we're doing in this group, and so you should change your thoughts about it, or you should change your approach because it's the wrong way.

It is surprisingly, that was on my list, is this is a very creative container in a way I didn't expect just because there's full freedom to share your ideas with no – Like I just don't have any fear that someone's going to say, "Oh, that's not the way we do it in here."

Lindsay: Yeah, if they did I'd be like, "Hold on. Wait, what?" Absolutely. I was actually thinking about this in the shower this morning. I thought there's something about this container, and I've been very open with you all inside of this container that I'm learning too, right? That this is the first iteration, that I'm kind of learning as I go and putting it all together.

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And one thing that's been really surprising to me is also the creativity and the innovation in the room. And just watching people grow and shine in ways that I couldn't have even predicted. And then also being able to see, like I think what we have all done together is created a space where it's also really easy to see when someone is trying to conform to what they think they should be doing, right?

And you can tell, because when we're all a little bit like, "Oh, okay, this is a great start, and let's dig into this a little bit. Why did you pick this? Or what makes you say this?" And it's just so fun to watch you all support each other. I literally get chills sometimes on calls because I feel like I could just sit here and watch you all have conversations and just teach each other and it's so beautiful. So I appreciate that.

Christine: Yeah, I remember, so I joined this certification because I am friends with Jess Johnson. And for a year to a year and a half she would tell me over and over, you need to join this program.

Lindsay: And then it was Coaching Masters. Yeah, I had a mastermind, Coaching Masters, which I have taken some of that and kind of shifted it into the certification.

Christine: Yeah. And I remember looking at her and like Kimberly and other people who had been in your containers, and they just felt so confident in themselves as a coach. That was never a problem they were ever solving for in their business. Whereas I was always feeling like I'm pretty sure people are getting results, but how can I be absolutely sure? Or like, I think I'm a really good coach, but I don't know exactly what I would even need to work on. I just had confidence, but it was like shaky confidence.

And I did not understand how someone could be like, "No, I am a really good coach. And I really feel good about the container I create and the results my clients are getting," with such confidence until being in this room, because I think what we're talking about is the thing that creates that. Because it's really hard to feel confident when you're imitating someone else.

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Lindsay: I completely agree. And I think that's the reason I created this, right? I had to do that for myself. I have worked with the same coach for quite a while. And I knew as I was going there were always things that I'm like, oh, I really resonate with this. I really don't resonate with this.

And to me, that has always been okay. I don't think that I have to agree with every single thing my coach says ever. And I just have a brain that's like, I'm able to do that, like pick and choose. Okay, I love this, don't love this, whatever, and keep going and find the things that work for me.

But I really started to notice like, oh, what if I could teach other people to do this, right? I think it's so much more comfortable to be in any container if you're able to pick and choose like these are the things that I really resonate with, some of this other stuff, not so much, and that's totally fine.

Christine: Yeah, it's like there's so many ways up the mountain, there's so many ways to do it. And one way isn't the right way. And I think it's like you can know that, but to live by that as a different thing. And that's, I think, like I am not just, I think, coaching better. I feel more like I'm just having more fun in my business.

Like even selling my group program, I'm filtering it through like, is it creative? Is it simple? Does it embody nature and play? And all of these values that I'm like, I just have never seen a coaching business do any of those things. But I want to do that because that's who I am and that's what's important to me.

And so even though we don't talk about marketing or business strategy, per se, it's just impacted every aspect of my business in a way that I didn't – I thought I would just leave like, okay, I'm a confident coach and I feel like I can handle anything. And now I'm like, oh, no, every aspect of my business feels more like me.

Lindsay: I love that. Yeah, think how different it would be if you were trying to filter everything through like, okay, here are my core values, leadership and whatever else. Whatever else there is.

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Christine: Integrity.

Lindsay: Professionalism, integrity, yeah, just ones that you're like, "Okay, what does this even mean to me? I'm not really sure." And I want to be clear, there's nothing wrong with any of those. Those are definitely people's values and they make so much sense to them. And you just have to find the ones that really resonate for you.

So tell them, before we move on to something else, tell them so through this lens you have created your, it's your project, right, in the certification is to create your group program, which is new for you?

Christine: Yeah, brand new. It's called Camp.

Lindsay: So good. And tell them just some things about it that will just make sense, tie in the whole nature and all of it.

Christine: Yeah. So can I give the backstory to Camp?

Lindsay: Yeah. Oh, yes, of course.

Christine: So when I was a kid I started going to summer camp in the fourth grade. And it was like my favorite. Like my countdown to camp started on January 1st and I would start packing for camp at least a full month before I would leave. So I'd like pack and unpack, and pack and unpack. It was just this whole –

Lindsay: As a parent, just envisioning this really delights me. It's so fun.

Christine: It was just like the only place I really felt super safe as a kid. And what's so interesting is like I think what I know now is like as a queer kid who didn't know she was queer, camp was like the only place where drag queens would come to breakfast. It was like a Christian camp but there would be drag queens at breakfast and everyone would be like, "Oh, that's cool."

Lindsay: Listen, I was just getting ready to say the only camps I went to were church camps, so I don't know what you're talking about. But that is

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my kind of camp. But you're telling me this is a Christian camp and drag queens were at breakfast?

Christine: Yeah, and like masculine women and feminine men. I remember sitting there, sitting on a picnic table, having grown out my leg hair for the last week and a half, which I didn't even know was a thing women were allowed to do. Listening to the Indigo Girls and journaling without a bra on. And I was like, "Wow, I just feel like I'm more of myself."

Lindsay: Man, what is this life?

Christine: Yeah.

Lindsay: So good.

Christine: Because growing up at the time there wasn't representation. And I had no idea that it was even possible for someone to be attracted to people, regardless of the body, just like who those people are, like their souls. I didn't even know. This was like the 90s and 2000s, right? Like kids would say, "That's so gay," and it would be like, "That's so stupid."

Yeah, so I had no idea, but I just created this really strong association with summer camp as a really safe place where everyone could go. And it was safe for them to be themselves and they would be respected for it and belong and loved because of that.

So I worked for camps for 10 years after that. Camp is basically just like experiential coaching, you know? Like in coaching we have transformational conversations, but at camp, you have transformational experiences. So they're so similar, which I didn't put together until the certification program. So that's the backdrop.

And the program, it's camp for creative entrepreneurs. We're going to learn how to market and sell by playing, which is like for neurodivergent folks this is a dream. We're not going to be lecturing and taking notes. It's like, no, camp activities, you are going to learn how to market and sell your work in a way you love, by playing.

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Lindsay: So good, especially for people who think that they don't love marketing or selling or any of that, right? So fun to learn to associate it with play or things that are enjoyable, versus like I must sit down and write this email or whatever they are associating it with now.

Christine: Right, like I have to create funnels and I have to make reels, and I have to do all these things. The thing with marketing and selling, it's like if you were like, I want to start exercising, but I hate running. So I can't exercise because I hate running, that's just like one way of exercising. And the same is true with marketing and selling.

So the program starts with four days at a summer camp where we're going to learn all of those foundations. And then we're going to meet every single week for six months as a group for the weekly coaching calls, for the implementation piece, which is so fun. I never imagined before this program that I could get to do both. I always felt like I had to choose, until you were like in Miami, you were coaching me on picking my projects.

And I just was like a full realization in my body of like, oh, I can do both here. Even though this is outside the realm of what most coaches would do.

Lindsay: I just realized, this feels like a full circle moment because I just remember on our very first call, I think, or maybe second call you got coached – And we can cut this out if you don't want it to be in the podcast because we haven't circled back to it.

But in the very first call you were trying to decide, you had an offer or something to go run a camp or do something in that world. And you wanted coaching on it because you were trying to decide what to do and how to manage your coaching practice around it.

Christine: Yeah. Yeah, I know.

Lindsay: And now I'm like, wait a minute. You must have decided no, you're not doing that?

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Christine: It's still TBD. We've been negotiating.

Lindsay: But you're like, you know what? I'll just do it in my business. Yes, I'm going to run a camp.

Christine: Yeah because I was like, "I'm so excited at the prospect of going outside and playing and being at camp again." Something within me was like – Yeah, and this was before Miami, this was before I decided on my project. I didn't put that together either.

Lindsay: I just thought of it when you were saying that. I was like wait a minute, we talked about this. I completely forgot about that.

Christine: Yeah, it felt so dramatic for me when I was getting coached on it because I was like, well, I have to choose. I can either do camp or coaching.

Lindsay: Yeah, I remember that.

Christine: Yeah.

Lindsay: And I happily coached you on it because I see that happen sometimes. And I know that it can feel very like, no, you don't understand, this is like a really strong pull. And I'm just so excited for you that you have incorporated, no matter what happens with the other thing, you've incorporated both in your own business.

Christine: Yeah, because my values are like nature and play. I just don't feel like this program would have been, at least in this timeline in this moment, could have been born in any other container. Like it was just the safety to find our own values and the expectation that this is not a program where we imitate, it's a program where we ask ourselves the questions. And then the answers we give are, okay. Like, that's the answer.

Lindsay: So good, I just love it. I'm so happy for you. And I'm so happy to just watch you talk about it. And it feels like you're so lit up about this thing you're creating, which is so much more fun than trying to create something that you don't feel that way about.

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Christine: Yeah, it's really hard to sell things that you don't totally believe in or even completely want to do.

Lindsay: Yes, it really is. And we all do it. Every once in a while you'll end up in a situation where you're like, wait, how did I get here? What am I selling? What's happening? And I think that's normal. But for you to notice it, to not have to go through like four iterations of this program before finding this, that's really fun.

Christine: Yeah, can I give my list, Lindsay?

Lindsay: Yeah, let's do it.

Christine: Okay. Okay, so these are all things I signed up for this program because so many people had gone through Coaching Masters, which is different, but had gone through this and were like, "You have to join."

So I signed up because past clients of yours are out there just like spreading the good word. But I had no idea that these things would be my favorite parts of it, or even part of it at all. The first thing is you, I'm forgetting if you said this in Miami, but you have a policy of kind of like you can ask me anything about my business, and I'll share it with you.

And sometimes you're in a container or a mentorship where the mentor or coach won't answer the question, but will just reflect it back to you and ask you to answer, which can be really helpful. And it's also really helpful sometimes to just be like, no, but how did you do that and how did you think about it? And to get the real answer.

It's just like a mix of mentorship that I didn't expect that has been really, like even for really simple things like I want to create an application for camp, what tools did you use to do it? And you just tell us.

Lindsay: Yeah, one thing I said going in, a decision I made going in when I created this new container is that this is going to be the space where I'm working with you, like I'm doing all the same work that you guys are doing, right? And I think it is ongoing work, like I'm always re-addressing my

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values. And I always have my own projects happening, and thinking about my own processes, and all of that.

And I remember telling you all in Miami, like this is a total behind the scenes. And I'm usually a pretty open book, but it's just not as appropriate in all the other containers. I'll definitely give answers, like use type form or whatever in other containers, but this is like 100% behind the scenes. And it has been so fun for me. And just so fun watching the reception of it with all of you.

Christine: Oh my God, it's incredible. One of the reasons I think I was drawn to you as a coach was I really like the way she runs her business. It seems like, and I don't know if this is true, this is just my perception, but it seems like you run your business by really over delivering to your clients. And then that is your selling because those people renew or tell other people about it. And I love that. Like, just as a business strategy, I love that.

So to be able to ask questions and to get the answers to it has just been really useful. Even if the way you do it might not be the way I do it, to know how you think about it is really useful.

Lindsay: Yeah, I definitely realized early on, kind of like a lot of your clients what you were saying earlier, that I had lots of thoughts about marketing and selling that weren't super useful. And my strategy kind of became like, okay, if I double down on the delivery, on the coaching, on being the best coach –

This was my thought, it certainly does not have to be true. But my thought at the time was like, it might take a little longer, but I'm still going to do it. I'm still going to build the business that I want to have until I can get to the point where I can pay people to help me with some of the things that I don't love to do. And it's worked so far.

Christine: Yeah, that's the thing, right? It's like delivery is selling. And you can just pick your favorite way of selling to sell. Yeah, okay, so that was thing number one.

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We've already talked a little bit about this, but I just want to bullet point this, is that this is a really creative space to work it out. And the people in this program, this certification have seen every iteration of Camp, like all 20 names that I thought of. And people have been part of the brainstorming and asking questions.

And we're all doing that for each other. We're like helping pick what photo to use in a podcast or workshop content. It's just such a collaborative space, which I think is pretty unique for any kind of certification.

Lindsay: It's also very diverse as far as the types of people, like the way they think and the way they approach things. So like you, I would consider you an extremely creative person. Not everyone in the group, I would say, fits that mold. Some people are totally the opposite, more like clinician types, like nurses, right?

But to me, that's part of the magic of it because that person might, like you might post something that you're all in your creativity. And that person might catch something that's like, okay, this is amazing, and this one thing here, I don't know what it means. Or should you change this word or redefine it or whatever?

And to me, that creates a certain type of magic within the room that is just so useful. Instead of it becoming more of like a group think, like everyone thinks similarly and now we're all going to just choose this one thing.

Christine: Yeah, no, for sure. Yeah, it's like the balance of the left and right brain people, yeah. I also think I didn't expect to make such good friends through the program, the certification. And the live event piece was really, if someone's listening to this and thinking like, "I'm in," here's my advice. Here's what I think you should do, when you go to the live event, either share an Airbnb or a hotel or something with other coaches in this program.

Because just having really good friends who are coaches in similar spots in their business who you can text, or message, or whatever is something that you get to have way after the program ends. And it's just so useful. And I think that's what's so cool about group programs, is you get to watch other

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people that you know and care about, like you get to see them get coached, see what they're working on, see what they're struggling with, and see them overcome it.

And then it just makes that more possible for you. And then you just get to take those relationships with you. And I didn't expect to leave Miami with, like I didn't know the people that I shared an Airbnb with, we just met there. And by the end of the week I was like, "Oh, these are my people." And I did not expect that to happen.

Lindsay: Yeah, it's one of my favorite things to watch because, to me, that has probably been one of the most important things in my business, just finding those people, either in any space that I'm in or just in general in the coaching world. I've been here long enough at this point that I have made so many amazing connections. And I just think it's so important. I can't imagine doing this business without that.

Christine: Yeah, it can be really lonely.

Lindsay: Yeah, even when you're talking to clients all day. I remember when I would have back to back calls, there was something about it that it's not the same, right? It's not like interacting with colleagues or friends that really get the things that you're going through or working on or struggling with, or whatever. Or the celebrations. And yeah, I think it's so important in any space, I highly recommend it for anyone listening.

Christine: I especially think for coaches and healers, or people who hold space for other people to do work, like you, it's like such an intimate experience to be a coach for someone because you're just holding this container where everything is safe and you're super present with people.

And you do feel an element of connection, but it's different than being with a peer who can then hold space for you or ask like do you want me to coach you on this? Or do you want a friend? Do you want me to just listen? That has been a piece of the program that I didn't expect. I've done other business coaching programs, I've done other certifications, I don't think I've ever left, we're only halfway through, but I don't think I've ever left any of

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those programs with the like depth of friendships that I've created through this.

Lindsay: Yeah, I love that. I love watching it. And I can feel it. I love when people say on the calls like, "Well I texted so and so yesterday and she gave me a pep talk." Or you know, "A couple of us got together and talked about this thing." And I just love that connection. I just think it's so important, so I'm glad you said it.

Christine: Yeah. Okay, I've got one more thing perfect.

Lindsay: Perfect.

Christine: Okay, perfect.

Lindsay: This is amazing.

Christine: You're like, "How long is this list?"

Lindsay: No, are you kidding me? I'm like, "How many do we have, 20? Let's keep going." No, this is so perfect. I actually am tempted, like a couple of times I'm like, "Oh, I've got to write this down." I'm like, "No, I can go back and listen. We're fine, we have it recorded." Because I just love the way you are saying it.

And some of these things are things that I know I have created intentionally, but hearing you say them and the way that you say them is, first of all, I just love it. Like it's really kind of, it feels very touching in this moment for me. But also, it's like, oh, hearing it in your words is very different than the way I am like, "How do I say this in an email? Or how do I let the people know what's really going on in this space?"

Christine: Yeah, no, I am all about the behind the scenes. I feel like the more people know just what the actual experience is like, you can then decide if it's for you.

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Okay, the thing that I think I will take with me as a business owner forever is the value of just picking one thing to focus on. We don't have like a million things to do here. We have one project, one goal.

And it's just such a relief because I think for a long time, as a business owner, I was like, I've got to work on everything. I'm going to work on my copy and my selling. And I'm going to over deliver. And I'm going to work on this and that. And I wouldn't work on anything because I would just feel really overwhelmed.

And for this it's like, no, I'm only working on one project, with the goal of building belief in this one thing for me that if I achieve this it will make a huge difference in lots of different things. And every aspect, that's just one example, I think, of how simple the certification is.

But it has changed, I am now firmly in the camp of simple is better, simple is more effective, simple is the fastest way to go where I want to go. And it's also the way for me to do that while still having a life outside of my business, while being able to rest and play and create and spend mornings in the park and all of that stuff that I also want to do while I build my business.

And I was in the place of like I'm going to set three goals for every six month period, was how I was thinking about it. And then I really wouldn't feel like I was making much progress on any of them. And now I'm like, when we set one goal and focus on one thing, I feel so much calmer and I get so much farther.

Lindsay: It's kind of like a trick, I think, that I do within the spaces. That's what I realized about a project because at first, I had them do this in the last round that I ran on the Coaching Masters mastermind. Now the project will only be like in the certification part.

But it became one of my very favorite things in that round because what I noticed is that giving your brain something to focus on, right? Like here's the one thing I'm working on. And the projects vary, they're really all over

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the place as far as what they are. But just watching each of you, like your brain has something to focus on that we can always come back to.

So even when I'm teaching other things on the calls and we're going through values, and we're talking about your process, and we're doing all of that, like that's mostly work that is done on the call. And I'm asking you to access things that you're already doing for the most part, except for those of you that are like, "Okay, my project is creating this new process or creating this group container, creating this new thing." And then there might be more work outside.

But I just really think that always being able to bring yourself back to like, "Wait, this is what I'm working on," helps all the other things just kind of fall in line. Instead of like, "Oh no, I have to fix this. And I have to work on this. And I have to create this." And now you have this whole umbrella of 20 things that you must complete today. And then none of them get done, of course.

Christine: Yeah. Yeah. I think really, the only reason I've ever had so many things to work on in my business was because it was coming from this belief of like I'm not doing it well or I'm not where I should be. And what's so beautiful about this, it's like, oh no, I'm working on one thing and everything else is great. Like it's fine. There are things on my nightstand that I'm going to work on later, right?

But it is such a calmer place to build a coaching practice than like, I'm really far behind and I have to learn how to do 100 things before I can coach people or achieve this next level, whatever that is.

Lindsay: Yeah, I love it. All right, was that the last one?

Christine: That was the last one.

Lindsay: Thank you so much for doing that. I did not give you that homework, but I love that you brought it because it was perfect. Thank you.

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Christine: Yeah, no, you did not give me that homework. But I was thinking, because after the live event I stayed in Miami for a few extra days. And I was just marinating in all of this after the live event because I felt like I got my money's worth for this certification after just that. And I was like, "Okay, what is she doing to create this container?"

And so much of what I saw you do, I was like, I want to pull this into my program. In a way that's me, but this was so impactful for me as a client. That's why I have the list, that's part of my project.

Lindsay: That's so good, though, right? And this is exactly what I was talking about a little bit ago, where I really do think there's something about, especially for people listening, because it's going to be mostly coaches who hear this. And I'm sure most of them are hiring coaches to help them in their business or whatever.

And I just think it's so important to say, "Okay, here are the pieces I love. Let me pick these out and hold on to them. And how do I create this in my own way?" It's such a powerful thing to do, instead of like, "Well, some of these things I don't resonate with," and make it a bad thing. Because, of course, there are going to be things, always, I'm sure I've done things that people in the group were like, "I don't know if I would have taught it that way." Or I don't know if I would have whatever. And that's totally fine.

Christine: It's totally fine. There's this Ram Dass quote about the trees, do you know this?

Lindsay: I don't know. Say it and I'll tell you.

Christine: He says when we go out into the forest and we see all these different types of trees, you see really tall ones, and short and fat ones, and ones that are growing in weird directions because of the sunlight. And you never go out into the forest and say, "That tree should be taller, like a pine tree, or that should be different." You just appreciate the trees.

And the quote is basically, what if we just treated people like trees? Like how nice. And that's, I feel like what we're talking about. We all get to

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express this in a way that's unique to our life experiences, the tools and modalities that resonated and helped us, like there's a reason we all became coaches. And we get to tie in all of those experiences and create something really unique. And your version of it's not better than mine or anyone else's, they're all just trees in the forest.

Lindsay: Yeah, I love that quote and the analogy is perfect. That's exactly how I think about this space. In Miami it felt so powerful to just look around the room and for me, as the coach, to just kind of let it sink in. Literally one of the thoughts I have is like, everyone here is an innovator and a genius. And I'm so lucky to be surrounded by all of these incredible humans.

And from that thought, I just interact with all of you like that's true, right? Because I really do believe it. And I think everyone has genius to add. And it's so fun getting, I just happen to have the tools to pull it out of you. And I'm just here to facilitate that process.

But other than that, it's just so fun for me to watch it all unfold and to watch people come up with ideas that I couldn't have even come up with, right, because I'm not in your mind. I couldn't have sat down with you and said, "Okay, here's what I see. Here's the value you need to have. Here's the thing you should create." I can only give you the tools to create it and then watch what you come up with from there.

Christine: Okay, yes, so this would have been on my list because what I think you're speaking to you is like when you hire a coach, you are hiring someone to hold certain beliefs about you. Because the way you interact with me, or any of us through, the lens of like you're all geniuses and all innovators and going to create something or creating something really impactful in the fields, it's so apparent and every single interaction or the questions you ask us.

And I remember we were in Miami, at the end of the live event, we had dinner and we were all just hanging out and drinking wine. And I remember sitting around the table and you were talking to Deb about her industry and

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her contribution and asking her questions. And I was like, “Wow, what is happening?” It’s so apparent that you believe that about us.

And because you believed that about her, asking her the questions, that is what was tapped into within her. And then it became so clear to everyone at the table that what she was creating was so innovative and such a contribution. And I think that is something I didn’t have full awareness of until the certification, is like the beliefs and the thoughts we have about our clients is why people hire us.

It impacts every aspect of how we hold the space, what questions we ask, how we interact with people, our energy on the call. And you role modeled that and then it became apparent to me as I was evaluating my coaching throughout the certification of like, oh, this is why I’m struggling with certain things in my coaching. It’s because of the way I’m thinking about a particular client.

Lindsay: Mm-hmm, yeah.

Christine: Which didn’t click for me until we were drinking wine in Miami.

Lindsay: We did. So let’s just set the scene. We had wrapped, we had finished the days and we had a catered dinner at the house. And there was some wine. So we were eating sushi, drinking a couple of glasses of wine, maybe not everyone, I’m not sure. But I was definitely, and you were and it was amazing. Even in-person it’s very be who you are, do what you want to do, I will support you in that. And that’s just what I try to hold on to.

Christine: Yeah, I think for a long time in my coaching practice I had this thought that really successful people were really different from me. And I think being in this container has changed, like the way that you show up as like, “No, we all get to be ourselves here.” And you are a full human and you show your humanity in the program and there’s no guards up, if that makes sense.

And it really changes, and I think, chips away at my belief that you’re different from me because you’re a few steps ahead in your business. It’s

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like, no, we're all humans. We all have thoughts. We're all working on things all the time. And what you have, the level of success you have, what you've been able to create with your work is accessible to me.

Lindsay: I actually think that the more – I think about this often. I think that the more I embrace, like the more comfortable I am in truly who I am and how I show up in my life, in my business and everywhere, and just embrace all of it, imperfections, failures, and the good things, right? Like just really embrace it all and allow people in, the more successful I become. And I haven't linked that until recently.

And I think if you think about really like your clients, right, what you're going to help them with, I think this is such a perfect example of that's what they need too, right? Because you said so many of them have thoughts that are like, "Oh, but I couldn't possibly be successful doing this or make money doing this." And I think it's the opposite. I think it's like no, the more you settle into this is what I'm here to do with exactly how I am, with all the flaws, all the everything, that's when it works.

Christine: Yeah, that's so interesting. I don't know if this is true, but one of my thoughts about that is probably because I think when we're judging our own rate of growth or someone else's rate of growth, it slows us down. Like a Zen year, for a lot of reasons, one, it's how you're using your energy. But two it's like that becomes your story of yourself. Like I'm moving slowly or other people are ahead, or I'm not good enough or whatever that translates to.

And I think when you're doing what you're describing, which is like wearing overalls to work or embracing whatever it is that's you that you haven't embraced yet or allowed yourself to embrace in your coaching, it allows you to imagine that I can be successful just as I am.

Lindsay: Yeah. And some people love the opposite, right? They love the feeling of putting on fancy clothes and dressing up. And I love that on occasion. I'm very hot or cold, I love both sides of it. But you can just feel it

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when someone shows up not in their own skin, right? Like trying to be something else.

And I think there's a fine line between that edge of growth, right? Like, oh, I'm trying this. This is a new thing I'm trying and it feels good, versus I'm trying it because I think I have to or because I'm going to be like someone else or show up in a way that I think I have to in order to create this thing.

Christine: Yeah. Or like, okay, if I just showed up like this person I would feel more confident.

Lindsay: And I would have the same results as them.

Christine: Yeah, I think I had that thought for a long time. Anytime I joined a container I'd be like, "Oh, it's like a makeover program. I'm just going to get a new outfit and I'll emerge on the other side a different person." But it's really like, yeah, God, I just have so much appreciation for the container you've created.

Lindsay: And I think we could say like, okay, maybe it is a little bit like that, if we're going to go down that road. But this is like the makeover for, you know, if we're thinking of me as the stylist or someone, right? My job isn't to be like, here's some beautiful clothes that will look amazing on you. It's to ask you a bunch of questions and figure out what you like and really dig into what makes you you.

And then creating the makeover, the new look, the whatever that's like 100% you that you're like, "Oh my gosh, what?" But it all comes from you, which I think is just very different than like, "Okay, here's the perfect outfit to wear. And here's how you show up to every call," which is just not how I run things.

Christine: No, yeah. No, and I think the thing that can be hard for folks is that that's going to require some courage to show your real thoughts and your real values and your daydreams.

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Lindsay: I think that's why I have to go first, right? It's why I have committed to being so open even when sometimes it feels really uncomfortable. Like, oh, I tried this thing. It didn't really work or whatever. It's like showing things that feel vulnerable to me, I think that's where it starts inside of this container.

And it's doable because it's a fairly small space, we stay pretty intimate. And I am just so happy for people when they are able to do that, because I think it feels so freeing to just show up with total honesty in any space.

Christine: Yeah. And it impacts – Okay, this is the cool thing, I think, about building a business. This is part of what I love coaching people on because it also impacts every other area of your life. Like if I can do this in work, then I can show up on my weekends to events or to things just like –

Lindsay: In overalls.

Christine: In overalls.

Lindsay: That's so good. I want to tell you, I almost wore my overalls today and I totally forgot about it. I even washed them.

Christine: You have overalls?

Lindsay: I do, come on.

Christine: Okay, maybe on Tuesdays we all wear overalls and that'll just be a thing we as founders.

Lindsay: Like half the people will be like, "I definitely don't have overalls." That's okay, we still love them.

Christine: That's true. Yeah, but it shows up all over, right? Like I started asking myself, what's honest for me? It really has built belief in the thought, I love me just as I am, and if other people don't that is totally fine. But I can't change myself to be, like I'm just unwilling to change myself to be more likable, to try to make other people have positive thoughts about me when that is so far outside of the realm of my control.

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That is, I think at the deepest level, some of the work we do in the certification.

Lindsay: Okay, now we've crossed the line. We might be scaring people away. They're going to be like, "Oh, hold on."

Christine: Okay, sorry. Yeah, it's not like that, it's like a makeover.

Lindsay: No, I'm kidding, I'm kidding.

Christine: Mostly we talk about dinosaur capes.

Lindsay: Yes. No, I am kidding. I love it. And I just think it's such powerful work to do, no matter what. I think the willingness to do it while you're building a business is pretty powerful. And it really, although business is still sometimes hard and there are still things that happen that are totally outside of your control and that suck. But if you're just comfortable in who you are and what you're doing, at least there's an ease to that piece of it.

Christine: Yeah. Versus basically recreating a corporate job for yourself where you have to kind of like show up and pretend to be someone else to go to work.

Lindsay: I hate when I see people doing that. I'm like, wait a minute, I know this is not why you became a coach, to just recreate whatever situation you were in before. No, let's create it however you want to create it, let's at least start there.

And one thing I talk about often in this space is just seeing the difference between, oh, something feels hard or feels outside of my comfort zone because I've never done it before or because I'm asking myself to focus my mind on something that just is like, oh, it just feels hard because I've never done it.

Versus this is extremely uncomfortable because it's totally outside the realm of anything I care to be doing ever. Those are just very different things. And I think recognizing that difference, for most people building a business, is really useful.

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Christine: Oh, that's so good. Yeah.

Lindsay: Because sometimes things are uncomfortable because they go against your values or things that you believe as a human. And sometimes they're just uncomfortable and hard. And they suck and you don't want to do them and you do them anyway because it's part of running a business.

Christine: Yes. Yeah, 100%. I remember I learned to sell by working for Lululemon. So I remember feeling so uncomfortable selling – This was before I'd ever worn any of the clothes or even liked the clothes. My primary thoughts were like, "This is way too expensive." I was awful at sales.

Lindsay: I love it. You're like, "I'm just here to make money, I'm not here for the clothes."

Christine: Yeah, and it was so uncomfortable for me because it was going against my values. I didn't feel like I was being honest or truthful. And then I started to fall in love with the company and the clothes and the products, and then it became something that was true for me. But there is a difference.

It's like I think the discomfort of doing something that just contradicts your values is like a thing that feels really icky and gross and heavy for me in my chest. Versus something I'm doing that's uncomfortable for me, like sharing this camp program, right? When I share it, I feel it.

When I sent the email that was announcing it to everyone, I still had fear in my chest. I could still feel it, but it's like a very different type of discomfort than, "Okay, so to sell my program I have to slide into everyone's DMs and make a ton of reels where I'm dancing and do all these things that I really don't want to do.

Lindsay: Yes.

Christine: Yeah.

Lindsay: I can't even imagine you doing that.

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Christine: I would only do it if I had a dinosaur cape.

Lindsay: That is always the exception, of course.

Okay, let's tell them where they can find you, share any information you want. I'm so grateful for you being here today. We've been on for a while. I don't want to take up too much more of your time, but I really appreciate you. Truly, I feel so thankful and grateful that you're here. Tell them all the things. Where can they find you? Where can they follow you? Anything you want.

Christine: Oh my God. Well, first of all, thank you so much for having me. I'm so grateful to be here, but also really grateful for the container you've created and for just choosing to believe, because there's nothing else like this in the industry. Like just choosing to believe that you could build it and people would come and having the courage to do that, because I don't think this program would have been born, at least in this moment, without it. So thank you.

Folks can find me on Instagram, it's ChristineM.Stewart on Instagram. That's where all of my links are, you can sign up for the waitlist for Camp, you can sign up to hear from me once a week. All of that stuff is over on Instagram.

Lindsay: I love it. We will link that also in the show notes. So it will be there, people can find it. And, again, I'm just so grateful. Thank you for being here.

Christine: Thank you, Lindsay.

Lindsay: 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.