

Ep #130: How Coaching Changes the World with Deb Malkin



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Lindsay Dotzlaf

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Hey, this is Lindsay Dotzlaf and you are listening to *Mastering Coaching Skills*, episode 130.

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. As always I'm so glad that you're here today. You are in for a treat. Today I have such a fun conversation with a client of mine, Deb Malkin. A client, a colleague, a friend. And I think you're going to love it. She is so fun. I love the work that she does in the world.

And, of course, as always, we are going to talk about my new certification. So if that's something you're interested in and you love this conversation, and you listened to the one last week, and you love doing this work, and you think it's for you, make sure to go to the show notes, sign up for the waitlist. Or just keep your eyes open because it actually opens tomorrow if you're listening in real time.

If you're not, then maybe you missed it, but go to the show notes anyway, figure out when the next time it launches is, and get in there because we are having so much fun. We are changing the coaching industry together and it's a blast. So you should definitely come join us.

But I can't wait for you to hear this conversation with Deb. We cover a lot of ground, and I'm going to let her introduce herself. So here we go.

Lindsay: Hello, I am so excited to have you here today. I would love for you to introduce yourself. Tell everyone that's listening, who you are and what you do.

Deb: All right, I will try.

Lindsay: That's a loaded question, right? It's like there's so many ways you could answer that.

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Deb: After you invited me on the podcast, I texted my friend and I was like, "This is amazing, but now I have to have another bio."

Lindsay: Okay, but in the spirit of what we do in the certification, which is really leaning into your individuality, you are welcome to describe yourself however you would love to.

Deb: But I think I'm telling this story because I was like, yeah, I'm never going to let a bio be the thing that stops me from the thing that I love the most. And like how can it be iterative? Like how can that process be for me?

So usually I just start, though, with the complaint.

Lindsay: Love it.

Deb: And then I'm like, all right, and now we're going to do the bio. And so my name is Deb Malkin. I am a feminist mind/body coach and I specialize working with people with chronic pain, or emotional overwhelm, or, I don't know, the things that come up when we're human beings having a human experience.

And so I use coaching and neuro and bio plasticity and hypnosis to help people change these unpleasant experiences that they're having. And I do a very kind of meta process. So I am about, like working with me is transformative, but it's really more of like how we create the experience of transformation for ourselves inside of ourselves. So that they can just do that forever.

Lindsay: I love it. I want to tell you, this might be a little uncomfortable for you, but I want to tell you why I wanted to have you on. Because I just love you so much. And before you even joined my spaces, I feel like I was a fan girl. I follow you, I love your work. And I really became a lot more aware of it, of course, once you were in my spaces because then it was you were getting coaching on it and I was just more aware of what was happening.

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But I really love your approach to coaching and your openness inside of these containers that you're in with me, but also just in the world. On social media, on just talking about your experience of being a human.

Deb: Thank you. I'm just going to graciously receive that because I am a giant fan of you. And I love when we have that kind of mutual respect and admiration. It's like we get to share in that together and I love that.

I like being in containers where I'm not just feeling like it's one directional, it's uni-directional. Like I am paying you to dump all of your knowledge into my brain and I am only receiving or I don't have the skills. So what I think – Well not even I think. I know what I love about being in the container with you is you're always asking us to resource our own minds and bodies and experiences first. And not in a way of like, you should know. But it's the power of curiosity, which this is my new coffee mug. It says, curio.

Lindsay: I love it.

Deb: I love the power of curiosity to go inward in a way that evokes change. So, I love that I'm just like, I am me fully embodied in my coach self in your container. I'm not waiting for Lindsay to bestow upon me the title and the crown of being a good coach, right?

I really feel like you believe everybody in your space already has these qualities. And it's just like, yeah, and then they're just like, how do we either move the drama, the unnecessary drama aside? How can we make it more simple? How can we almost reveal what we're already doing to ourselves? So I think of it as like there's a little bit of magic that's happening.

And then how can we lean into the discomfort in a way that's beneficial and helpful? So I am a giant fan of yours. But I think it's because you're so excited about what you do.

Lindsay: I really am. I was thinking about this earlier and I really love coaching so much. I just think it's so transformative. I think that I'm the luckiest human that I get to do what I get to do. And I want every coach to

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have the experience that I have, right? I want you, for example, and every coach I work with, to be able to show up every day as a coach working with their clients, or every however many days they're doing that.

But to just show up and feel like, "Yes, I can't believe I got to do this. This is so special. It's so special that my clients let me in and let me kind of see this, maybe underside that not everybody gets to see." And to me that's just, there is something magic about it.

Deb: Yeah. For me, what's been helpful in that, what's really helped me feel so effective in my work is knowing that what happens in the coaching is enough. I mean, also, I'm only with my client for like one hour in an entire week. So they're living inside their own body and mind all the rest of the week.

One of my favorite things is to hear when they have this moment of change where they're like, "I heard your voice in my head." And then they like, you know, it's really their voice in their head, right? It just looks and sounds like me, but it's inviting them to do something different. And that, I'm like that's everything. That's so cool.

So I have a Lindsay in my head. And you were in there just from listening to your podcast. I would listen to your podcast and I would feel better. I would feel less stressed and I would have more things to think about, to bring in, to connect with, and to add to my work in a way that I felt made it richer.

So I was like, I mean, added value, like I paid \$0 for that. So that you that is in my head, one, I really like that the you in my head and the you in real life are pretty identical. And so that's always delightful. Sometimes that doesn't happen.

Lindsay: It's true.

Deb: Sometimes there's like a mismatch, and that's just important to notice.

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Lindsay: Yes. I'm pretty much, like you get what you get. You're not going to – I don't think anyone would be surprised being around me like, "Oh, she's a totally different person over here or over here." Nope, I've really leaned into just owning feeling comfortable being me and just showing up that way wherever I go.

Deb: Yeah. And so I think that that translates. I think there was definitely one of the calls, I don't know if it was in the Coach Lab or in the masters certification where, yeah, multiples of us, we were like, "Oh yeah, this is really just about being confident being me and letting that be enough. And then leaning on the skills and the tools and whatever it is that we have, to share that with the client."

Lindsay: Yes. Well, especially in this container. It was one of my main goals for the container of – And I guess we should mention, we haven't really said this, but you are in the coaching mastery certification, my first round. And you're also in the Coach Lab, which you were in there, I think, from the beginning. Yeah, pretty close.

Deb: I signed up for the Coach Lab on the very first day.

Lindsay: Amazing, gold stars.

Deb: Thank you. I love that. I signed up on the first day because I had been thinking about it. It wasn't a certification at that point, but I'd been thinking about being in that group and I didn't feel ready to be in a mastermind. And it wasn't until I finished this other training that I'd done, I finished this hypnosis training.

And then that somehow felt like it aligned all of these things where I was like, "Oh, I do have a process. Oh, I have been coaching for a few years. Oh, I do have a way that are common themes that work with each client." And I finally felt ready to come into that container and just be like, "Okay, it feels like chaos, but I kind of know it's not."

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And so having somebody to be that mirror and reflect, like having the calm mirror that I can look into outside of the cast that is usually in my mind is going to help me pull out the things that are actually in my process. But I signed up to the Coach Lab on the very first day because I was like, “Oh my God, I actually then get to have more of what’s already helping, what I’m already enjoying.” And it was like a total no-brainer.

Lindsay: I love it. So then I’m curious, we’ll just dive into this now because we’re talking about it. So then you were in the Coach Lab for a while and then recently you signed up for this certification. So what was the, maybe you already mentioned it a little bit because it sounds like you were in something else and you were waiting for it to be over. But what was the switch that happened for you that was like, “Okay, now’s the time.” Like why did you decide to join?

Deb: I decided to join because I had left a job, so a chronic pain coach is the kind of heart of what I do. And then it just becomes like a human being coach because sometimes people –

Lindsay: That’s what we all do, right? We like to make that really complicated, but pretty much that’s just what we’re all doing.

Deb: Because what I notice is sometimes when I help people resolve, on whatever level, like sometimes it’s we bring down the intensity, sometimes the pain goes away, we resolve chronic pain. And what we reveal behind it is like, oh, here’s all the life stuff. And now learning new ways of dealing with setting boundaries, saying no, having emotions, dealing with complicated relationships, making decisions. All the things that sometimes get put in the background when we’re dealing with chronic pain.

So I had just left a job because I was working for myself because I had my own one on one clients and my own kind of program. And then I was working for a digital health company.

Lindsay: Kind of doing some contract coaching, right?

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Deb: Yeah. So I was doing contract coaching with them. And they're a great company and I love them. But it was like I was being asked to do the same work two completely different ways. And I had finished a certification in integrative hypnosis. And, for me, there was just a little moment where I was like, okay, this other thing that you've been doing, you're done now.

So I left that other job and I just felt ready to be more all in on my own work. And also really reveal to myself it is a job. I am doing it. I've been doing it for a few years. People have great results working with me. And so I've been a little bit like, "Oh, that's just a fluke. Those things just happen." And I was like, okay, but I can't keep telling myself that story. One, it's not helping me and it's not helping me help more people.

And so this just felt like but I needed a gentle landing place. And every time I work with you, or I get coached by you, or oftentimes they come to a call in the Coach Lab and I'm like, "I don't know what I need help with, but I need help." And then you're like, "Okay." And then we just start and then I go through this little journey and I come out the end of it feeling much more clear, much more calm, refocused on what's working.

And I was like, great, I want to say yes to that, to say yes to more of that. And I could go try to figure out how to get that somewhere else, or I could just do this mastermind.

Lindsay: I love it. One thing that I love doing as a coach is helping – In this container it's one of the reasons that I have created the containers that I have. One of the things I love doing is helping coaches who are similar to me who have this. I don't know if you would describe yourself this way, so you get to decide if this defines you or not. But I know that I always have this, like, oh, I need to learn more.

I've always had, in a good way, like education is good, like that kind of thought. But then I also can use that sometimes as a buffer. Like I need to learn more so that I can be more knowledgeable so I can know what I'm

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doing finally, and I'm never going to know what I'm doing until I do more and more and more.

And now that I'm kind of on the other side of that, I love helping coaches who come into my space with like, okay, I have all of these trainings, sometimes way more knowledge about coaching or different styles of coaching than even I have, which I would say is definitely you. Whether you call them all coaching or not, they're at least coaching adjacent.

And I love that about you because you kind of came in with like, "Okay, well I do this and I do this and here's the whole buffet." And watching you figure out how to turn that into like, "Okay, here's my process. This is how I work with my clients," and become really settled in that. It just feels so fun for me to just watch because I know how much magic is packed in there, that you just have to figure out how to harness it to an even greater level.

Deb: Yeah, I love the word settle. I mean, for me when I coach, words are evocative and I use them on purpose. And part of it, like sometimes I think of it as embodied storytelling. And so we're always inviting the body into the process of this internal and external communication. And so, yeah, just like you said, settled and my body also kind of said, yes. And I was like, "Yeah, that is what it feels like to be in that space."

And I'm really happy that I gave myself that hour. It is a choice. I could not do it. I could not do it and maybe I would still be signing clients. I mean, I definitely would be signing clients, I signed them before. But my thoughts and my feelings about it would be really different. And what I would be focusing my energy and attention on would be really different. I think I would be stuck in a lot of confusion still.

And your process is very much like, you know that you feel confused, but you're not confused. It's like the actions you're taking and the things that you're doing most often repeatedly are not confused, you're just confused about them. They just don't feel settled. So how can we get this feeling of

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settled? And I think your intention and the way you serve that intention really, for me, like I just feel it.

Like I'm wearing a shirt that says, "have feelings." I'm a feelings first kind of person. And for me, that's like I need a certain amount of coherence to be able to show up. And then my brain comes along. And it's like, "Oh, okay, this is what we're doing." And then it's like, "All right." And then it leaves its little bubble where it's safe to feel stuck or confused or like, oh, we don't really know what we're doing. You know, leaving feeling powerless or whatever it is.

And I like that the container that you create is very, not that it's not about money, because obviously this is a job. But we're focusing on it's like money becomes the byproduct of being excellent at what we do. And also building a business that really, that we don't want to leave, right, that we're in love with.

And that was another thing that I discovered inside of the mastermind was like, oh, I had an old business and I was really afraid of building this new business that was going to be like that. That was hard, challenging and painful. Of course I didn't know anything about coaching when I had that business.

Lindsay: Yeah, I can relate to that because I had a business before as well. And I remember just thinking like, "Well, I can never do this again. This is terrible." And yeah, now here I am running a different business. And of course, now that I have coaching, it feels so different and the experience is different.

But maybe there's a piece of that that's like, this is why I feel so passionately about coaches loving what they do. Because it just feels so different to show up every day, or however many days, or to just identify as, I'm a coach, this is what I do. And to feel amazing about it versus like, "I'm a coach. I don't know. This is maybe what I do sometimes, some days, on

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Tuesday mornings only,” you know, whatever. There’s just such a difference between those two things.

Deb: Yeah, and I love the simplicity because the invitation, like when you’re sitting down as a coach, sometimes we do, we get confused at what is our job and what’s our clients job. And it’s like in this one hour, we have just one simple job.

Lindsay: Yes.

Deb: And then sometimes we give homework.

Lindsay: Yes. Yeah, and then they get to take that with them and you know, do with it what they want, right? But I think that just knowing this hour, we don’t have to solve all the world’s issues in one hour. We are really just helping all of our clients create self-awareness.

I was thinking about this even in this container. It’s like there’s so much about it that is just self-awareness stacked onto whatever the type of container does that we’re running, right? Like whatever strategy we’re teaching, whatever tools we’re using. But really, so much of it just comes back to helping people have a better understanding of themselves.

Deb: Yeah. And I think most often people avoid self-awareness because it’s so full of shame, right? And so, self-awareness in and of itself kind of isn’t enough. Meaning kind of like self-awareness with that de-shamifying experience, with that re-humanizing, with that connecting with love and care and just being like, “Yeah, that sounds like that was really hard for you.”

So having that kind of reflection of love and care while people are creating that awareness. And for me, in mind/body coaching, a lot of it is creating awareness on purpose so that we can tell our nervous system a different story. And using predictive brain coding, and blah, blah, blah, insert sciency words.

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Lindsay: I love it. I love all the science words. I'm like, "Ooh, yeah, say it again."

Deb: Yeah, and so a lot of times I talk to clients about their attention system. And so I like to scaffold and explain why I'm asking them to think about something differently, or feel something, or come in contact with an unpleasant sensation. And how do we change the experience of that? How do we teach the brain that this experience is safe and not dangerous? And maybe figure out more about what it is that we're thinking and feeling and believing.

Because strangely enough, belief, scientifically, they've done so many studies about how we change our physiology just through belief. I mean, just the ideas of nocebo, placebo, are belief-based systems that change our physiology. So they have real impacts on our bodies. And so it's not made up stuff. And it's not like, "Oh, it's all in your head." There's no such thing, really, as something only being in your head.

And so the way that the mind and the body are connected together and the role of the nervous system, like those are tools. Like psycho education is a part of, like a foundational piece of how I coach and how I teach people about their mind and body. Because it's like, yeah, when you have a different understanding, then you can just relate to things differently.

And that's what I like about being in the container with you and the other folks in the mastermind also, is I also then get to watch people have these aha moments. And that is like the most fun when somebody makes this discovery. They're like, "Oh, this part's hard and this has been hard." And the answer is not to just get rid of hard things, but just to have that moment of awareness where it clicks and you're like, "Oh." And then figuring out how to solve for that one piece.

Or even just the understanding changes the way that it feels. And then that creates this new pathway forward. So it's really fun, also, when you're in a container and it's not your stuff. So your nervous system is not being

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wherever it is, in its kind of fight, flight, freeze response, right? I'm able to sit and watch.

So when I'm watching other people get coached, I'm really watching their whole body, their mind, like the process, how they go from feeling confused to clarity, and watching their face change and watching their body language change. And it's so much fun to watch. And now what happens is people come back the next week and they're like, I made a whole new program, or I did this thing that was part. And I'm just like, ah, people are amazing.

Lindsay: Yes. This is why we get along so well, because I love this too. Just that look on their face when that just teensiest thing unlocks. And it's like, you just see it happening. So good.

And I think there's something about, you know, I knew coming into this one thing that I really wanted to be able to do, is just create that safety, create a space where it's all okay, just bring all the messy. We're just going to unpack it all. It's okay to say it out loud because guaranteed we've all been there.

We've all had those thoughts and the fact that we just usually keep them to ourselves and don't share them and hide them does create, again, it comes back around to some of the shame that you were talking about, right? It's like, oh, we've created this little purse where we're just carrying all the shame and nobody can know about it.

But if we just look at it, there doesn't actually have to be any shame there at all. We can just solve it and let it be okay if that is something that you are willing to do. And I'm just so grateful every time I see someone being willing to just be like, "Okay, here it is, I'm just going to say it and then we're going to work on it." And I just love that so much.

Deb: It's like then we get to be brave together. And I think that's something that's been fun for me. That has come, for me, through different communities that I've been in. So being in queer community, and fat

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community, and being in marginalized communities in which other people are trying to hand us shame. They're like, "This shame, this shame."

Lindsay: Yeah, you should take this.

Deb: "We think you are shameful. We think your body is shameful, your life is shameful." And we're just like, "I want to hand you back that shame." But it's hard, these are things that we kind of grow up thinking and feeling and believing about ourselves. And so I've had a lot of practice, not necessarily consciously, but the way that we create community and connection and belief in our wholeness as a human.

Now, as a coach, I can go back and reflect on all of that and be like, "Oh, that's why that felt so powerful. That's why these groups that I was a part of or ways that I changed my life felt really empowering." And now I just see it everywhere. So everybody's got their little purses, whether they were given to them as a child, or just your social and cultural conditioning.

Feeling shame is a very human experience. We all have, it doesn't mean we've done something shameful. But how we kind of are willing to engage with it. So it's great to have so many places, to have this place to intentionally come and be like you are invited to be missing here.

Lindsay: Yes.

Deb: That is really fine. And I think, before I became a coach, masterminds and business things, like I just would have had a lot of eye rolls for because I was like, "None of that is for me, and I don't understand what any of that is." And I love that this group is like, "No, you don't have to be a fully perfect example where you're up on this pedestal and then you're trying to sell from that place."

So I think it's just so exciting to just be like, okay, I get to really be human and be fully myself inside of this group. In which I did some intentional belonging and self-coaching work before I came to the event in Miami

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because I was like, well, one, I paid for this thing and I really want to show up. I want to show up for myself. And what's keeping me from showing up?

But I think I did that also in the Coach Lab, like really committing to coming to the calls on Thursdays. Committing to coming to the calls and then committing to be coached. So feeling like whenever, even if I don't know exactly what it is, just allowing myself to be like, there's something here I want coaching on, and then just raising my hand.

Lindsay: Do you mind if we explore this for a second? Because I think this could be really useful for people listening. Because I feel this from you, right? As the coach who's in these places with you, I feel that you are showing up like, "I am here to work. To fit in as much as I want to and to kind of create my own experience."

And you have a very powerful presence in the room. And I can tell that you show up in a way, at least on the outside, my perception of it is that every idea or whatever I have is equally as important as anyone in the room and I belong here. And so I'm curious because I know so many people, coaches, struggle with this in any spaces that they're in when you say like, I coached myself or I did the work to show up that way, can you name specifically what that looks like for you?

Deb: One, it is just honoring that I am the one choosing to be here, nobody's making me. And also really revealing in that. Any kind of subtle should, you know? So not like, oh, I should be in this because whatever, it would look this way. But really just, yeah, that simple ownership of there's something here that I want and desire. And so I'm going to bring my attention to it and then be ready to receive it when it happens.

Because it also is easy to miss. Like you can have your zoom on and you can be there, but if you're not really paying attention also, you're not there, you're not getting it. And sometimes I do show up to other things with a half-attention mind, and that's also fine.

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But there is something about – It was like a little challenge to myself. And I was like, how would this experience be better if I showed up really paying attention and just believing ahead of time that there's something in each call that's going to be valuable for me to hear, receive, or volunteer for coaching?

Lindsay: And what allows you to volunteer? When you gave the example of like, and then I'll just raise my hand and get coached anyway, what allows you in that moment? Can you pinpoint a feeling or a thought that you have that's like, I'm just doing it anyway?

Deb: I think now, because I've trained my own mind that Lindsay helps me find clarity where I'm confused, that usually I just start with, where do I feel confusion? And then that usually, like when I ask myself that question, something pops up. And obviously, it's got to be relevant to coaching, not just like, what should I eat for dinner?

Lindsay: Right. I mean, you could ask. We would see.

Deb: Yeah, but in this container being relevant and being like, okay, there's this process. Now I really have experienced it enough that what I love about it is I don't have to feel the pressure of having solved it and delivering it to you like this is how I've figured all this out.

And I have recognized that I'm a verbal processor. So as I even start to describe the problem, my mind is already working on sometimes just de-problematizing. I honestly feel like there was some recent call where I was like, "I don't know if this is a problem. It feels like a problem." And then we talked through it. And I was like, "Oh, yeah, there's actually not a problem here."

But that's coaching, right? That's like it changed my experience and feeling and it's a place where I was having an energy drain or a leak. And it's like I was able to plug that. And now it's just not taking anything away from me.

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Lindsay: Sometimes the problem, like in quotes, right? Sometimes the “problem” is just the thing that’s taking up way more brain space or energy than it should. That’s how I think about it sometimes.

It’s like, this feels so simple. And when I’m getting coached in other containers I’m like, “This feels so simple, I’m not going to ask about this. And then I’m like, wait, it’s not simple because I’m thinking about it for a ridiculous amount of time throughout the week. So I am actually going to ask about it. Let’s just get this cleared up.”

Deb: Yeah, and I think that’s the thing. It’s like what do I notice that I’m ruminating on or avoiding. Those are kind of the two best indicators for me that I could use some coaching. It’s like I’m either avoiding it and knowing that I’m avoiding it, or fixating on it and not kind of coming to a resolution about it.

And then the discovery process, like the discovery process feels luxurious in the container with you. Because I’m not then being asked like, well, then what are you going to do? And what are the action steps? And I sometimes know that I avoid inquiry because I feel like immediately afterwards I have to know what I’m going to do.

And the more I separate those two things, what I start to notice about myself is that action reveals itself. So then I actually normally just want to do the thing, whatever the thing is, if I’m not also telling myself I have to. Because I am demand avoidant, even with myself.

Lindsay: Me too.

Deb: I joke, I’m like I am both my worst employer and worst employee, right? There’s only me, so I have nobody to blame. But I noticed that that “have to” pressure approach doesn’t work for me. But I am a strong action taker. I do a lot of things. So I really honor that part of myself. That’s helping me build trust, that once I kind of go through that process of inquiry, then what the next steps are will become really clear. And then I’ll just take them. And I really trust that about myself.

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So, so much of what's happened for me inside of the mastermind is really letting what feels good feel really, really good. So with my one-on-one coaching, I thought I was going to make this small group, which I may make in the future. But I was like, my one-on-one coaching feels so amazing and incredible, and I love that. And I was like, I don't want to leave this business that I love to go make something else right now.

And then all of a sudden, it's just been like that love has transformed the way that I show up on my calls and the way that I work with clients. And in my consults I feel really relaxed, I feel really connected to what I do. And I've had a lot more people saying yes to working with me. And it's been easy.

Lindsay: I love that. It's really fun, I think, just my experience . It's very fun to create the next thing from this space. From it's working, things are going good. Now, I'm not saying you should do it now, right? But just sometimes I see people come into my spaces that are like, "Okay, but now the next thing is I have to create a group."

And I can just tell by the way they say it, that they're doing it because they don't like where they are now. So I must move, right? I have to move, I have to do this next thing. Or I heard that's the next step, so I have to get there as fast as possible. Instead of, no, let's enjoy this space. It's going to be so much more fun to create the next thing when you are in love with where you are right now.

Deb: Yeah. And because of some things in my life, the flexibility that I have with the one on one coaching really, really serves it. And I am not interested in adding a different level of complexity right now. But I also notice that I'm thinking about things like, okay, what is the next thing? But it doesn't feel pressured. It isn't pressure filled, it feels done in a way that feels really relaxed.

And I love that I'm in this container where I'm watching other people who are creating groups. And then I can just learn from them. I can just watch

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and observe what they're doing and get new ideas. And it's not like their ideas are better. But like no one is an island, we all learn from each other.

So it's really fun to watch other people create and be in that cycle of creation. And knowing I'm also, yeah, creating the business for me. It's really just my business is for me. Somehow that actually feels like a really radical statement.

Lindsay: That's amazing.

Deb: Yeah. And so really being like, yeah, making the business that I love to be in, my number one priority.

Lindsay: Yeah, it is interesting to think about, just in general, building businesses for those of us that are coaches who maybe came into this realm, maybe like I did, which is like the love of coaching, not necessarily the love of business. And it's just an interesting premise, right, that we kind of hire mentors or coaches to help us build businesses.

But most of the time we don't want to build a business that looks exactly like any person that we're working with, right? So it's like, how can you grab the things that work really well for you? And I think that that's one of the things that I try to encompass within this space, even though we're not necessarily talking business, like numbers, and launches and those types of things.

But I think of it more like create the structure of your business that you love, right? Let's at least start there. Even if I'm like, "Oh, I wouldn't do that," that doesn't matter at all because it's all about what's the thing that you want? What do you want to create? And I have so much fun just watching people, like the ideas that they come up with that I'm like, "Yes, that's genius, you should definitely do that."

Deb: Yeah, and I love the freedom that is created. And I feel like the more freedom we feel, the more it shows up in our coaching that we're not creating our clients having to be little mini me's. If they're going to solve

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their own problems, it's got to make sense in their own mind from their own life and history and all the things. It's not do things the way I do them. That would be terrible.

Lindsay: Yes. Especially, I think you and I have this in common, where my brain immediately when I hear that is like, "No, absolutely not. I'm doing it my way." I am like a little kid when it comes to that. I will throw a tantrum. I will just resist it at every turn.

And so I think finding the people that help you nurture that and like say, "Okay, there has to be some structure. Let me give you some structure and some tools. But then with that you create what you want." To me, that just feels so powerful.

Deb: And I think it's powerful, like it sounds like a nice to have, but I actually am like, "Oh no, for me, it's this deeply empowering must have." It's feminist as fuck and, yeah, that's all I have to say about that.

Lindsay: I love it. Okay, I'm going to tell you this. I've already told you this once, but I'm going to say it here so we can talk about it for a second. When we were in Miami we were sitting at dinner on the first night, right? And we were just having a conversation and I said something like, I don't remember exactly what we were talking about. But I said something like my style of marketing and coaching and being out in the world isn't, I think I said, isn't very activist-y, right?

We were kind of talking about how sometimes you'll see coaches who they're out like fighting the fight, right? Being very open with their opinions about lots of things. And I just am like, that's not mean necessarily. It doesn't mean that I'm not doing that on the inside, but I just am not talking about it a lot. And you said, what if what you're doing is your form of activism?

And I've literally thought about it probably every day since then and it has made a huge impact on me. So I want to tell you that, first of all. But it's really made me think about, and this relates to what you just said, how just

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helping people in general be in the world doing the thing that they want to do is like the ultimate form of activism, of helping people create that freedom for themselves.

Deb: I cosign.

Lindsay: Cosign. I was going to say I was curious what your opinion is on that. Is it different? Or are you like, yep, that's just it?

Deb: I think the desire to create change – We are going to be different and we need to really, we want the external world to value difference. And we also, as individuals, need to value difference and different people's ability to participate in change making at levels that people are able to. So it's like, more is better, fight?

And I had a client call today and we were talking about some work stuff that was creating anxiety. And I work with people who are activists, people who believe strongly in social change, whether or not their job is related to that or not. But oftentimes, they're doing kind of like secondary work or activist work on the side, right? And we live in capitalism, we need money to pay for things like housing and food and stuff.

And what we talked about was the problem with the shorthand of blaming capitalism for all of the discomforts, like you can't solve for it because an individual can't solve for capitalism, right? And if you want to get fancy and call it late stage capitalism, or toxic capitalism, or whatever way or name you want to place on it, right? Because it's a system created by more than one person and also affecting more than one person.

But when we're coaching, we're coaching a singular person that lives within a system that is related to their mind and body. So it's like a lot about that individual empowerment, like helping my client operate and do his job well, in whatever version that means for them, right? Regardless of our thoughts and feelings about capitalism, it's like once we identify like, "Oh, your brain just goes to like, oh, blech, capitalism," whenever it feels stressed, we just can't ever fix that.

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Lindsay: Nothing you can solve for.

Deb: Yeah. We don't have to agree or disagree on that, but they're always like we can make this feel better. How can we find that empowerment? What is it that you love about your job? We made so many discoveries through the coaching conversation.

And then we did some somatic work and we did some growing good feelings and stuff like that. And it's like, there's so much room that an individual person will do, and the more better they feel in their life, then that reflects on the work that they can do in creating change in the world.

And if they feel better in their skills, like yeah, maybe this job is not the job that they want to stay in. But then maybe they take those skills and then go find a job that more matches their values, right? But you need the confidence in who you are and what you know how to do. And so that's what we're building in coaching.

And I feel like I can't be the one to say that doesn't change the world, only this type of activism is the thing that's going to change the world. That's very limiting. I'm also not in charge of everything. I don't really know. Like I don't know the answers, right?

I've just done a lot of different types of activism and so I think it really depends on people feeling safe and secure and empowered. And feeling like they have that power, that internal intrinsic power to make change. So it could just be looking at your business and reflecting upon it and being like, hey, there's some diversity that's missing here. What are things that I need to do? What are the conversations I need to have? What are changes I need to make because that's a value that I hold?

And you don't have to then announce it on the internet, right? You just do it like that. But I love that. But even the coaching, like that whatever the words that I said to you are now in your mind and they're a part of your daily experience when you think about your work.

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Lindsay: It actually reminded me of something that I haven't thought about in years, which is years ago I worked with this organization or I volunteered for a couple years with an organization called Girls Inc. I'm not sure if you've heard of it, but I love them and locally they do a lot of great work.

And I worked with them and at one point someone said to me, the director, I became really close with her. And she said to me, we were talking about I don't even remember now what was happening, but it was like someone needed to go to the State House and talk to this person about this thing.

And I was like, "Well, I guess, but." And she's like, "Listen, I just don't think that's your role." And I said, "You're totally right. That is not me. That is not what I'm good at. That's not using my strengths." Right? Because I am not a fighter. I'm not going to go there. And I'm the one who's going to be like, "Okay, whatever you say, that's great. Thanks for listening." Because sometimes in situations like that I just get weird. And I just avoid conflict at all costs.

And so it really has taken me back to that of like, oh yeah, it takes all the roles. And I just think it's important for some people listening right now to hear that because I do see this sometimes holding people back in their businesses, right? Thinking like, I should be more this way, or I should, whatever that looks like for them. I should be doing this or I should be doing this. And that's just never a great place to go in your mind because you probably shouldn't.

Deb: And also, if we feel connected to change and doing it like, oh, I should because then these other people on the internet will think good thoughts about me. That's not really the motivation that we want to take empowered, embolden action from.

Lindsay: Yeah. It's also not true, right? Because there will be lots of people who also think not great thoughts about you.

Deb: Totally. 100%, there are people thinking all kinds of thoughts, or no thoughts about you on the internet.

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Lindsay: Yep, not caring at all, no matter what you do. I was actually thinking about recording a podcast about this. About just how I see coaches get stuck in that like, oh, but I have to say it this way. Or I have to do it this way. Or I have to have this style because then no one will be mad at me, right? No one will think I'm doing it wrong.

And what I've learned over years of coaching is someone is always going to think you're doing it wrong.

Deb: Somebody's always going to think you're doing it wrong. And most of the people aren't paying any attention.

Lindsay: Yes, that's a big one, too.

Deb: Yeah, I was just thinking of it like, oh, we're overthrowing the government inside of our own mind. Like authority and becoming your own self-authority, which can be very scary.

Lindsay: Yes, definitely. Is there anything else that we haven't covered that you want to talk about before we wrap up? I feel like you're a wealth of knowledge, you could say like 100 things right now. Is there anything you were hoping I would ask you?

Deb: No, I was just wanting to say something completely silly.

Lindsay: That's perfect too.

Deb: I think the most important thing, like I keep coming back to the word curious and curiosity, is like now if I were to get another tattoo, it would definitely say that. I do have a tattoo that says feelings are friends though.

Lindsay: Oh, I love that.

Deb: Yeah, so I believe strongly in feelings, but I also really believe in curiosity. And so I think whatever people are struggling with, as a coach, in your business, in your life, with your clients. Even if you're like, "I have no idea what to do with this client in this session," there's only one thing you

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can bring. It's like, not Survivor, but like Naked and Afraid or whatever where you have to pick one tool.

Lindsay: You get to bring one thing.

Deb: Yeah, bring curiosity.

Lindsay: It's so good. I actually just wrote something about this, it cures so many things, I think. It's like the cure for everything.

Deb: That is, I'm going to say this now, the name of my future small group is going to be called the curiosity cure.

Lindsay: So good. I love it.

Deb: I already decided that. So whenever that will be in the future. But I will say, yeah, just to practice, become adept at inviting curiosity to any mind/body experience you're having. And then just noticing what's different.

Lindsay: I think curiosity, to me, is often a path to compassion, whether it's for myself or for someone else, right? Like if I disagree with something someone's doing, if I can slip into just at least a teensiest bit of curiosity like, "But why?" Right? Instead of just automatic judgment or whatever, whatever it is that I'm feeling, it can sometimes open up doors that are like, okay, I don't agree with it, but I can understand maybe. I can have a little compassion for it.

And the same is true for myself, right? Like, oh, why did I react that way or why did I whatever? If I can be curious, instead of shame myself or judge myself, it can create so much self-compassion. And I think that it is just a really, really powerful tool. So I'm glad that you said that.

All right, I don't want to take up any more of your time. I think we could talk for hours, so we'll just have to have you back at some point. Tell them, for everybody listening, where can they find you? All the things.

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Deb: Okay. My website is movewithdeb.com, and that is also my Instagram. And I have a podcast called *Move With Them the Podcast*. At some point maybe it will have a different name, we don't know. But you can all find it on my website. And if you are curious, like if you deal with chronic pain and you're looking for a mind/body approach, you can book a free call with me and I'm happy to tell you everything about it.

Lindsay: Such important work. I love that. That's one of the things that really drew me to you a long time ago, is just I think it's a very important topic and I love that anytime I see people talking about it. So that connection between our mind and our body is strong. Sometimes a little too, I don't know what the word is, but it can create havoc sometimes in our body. So I think that that is so important and I love that you do that work.

Deb: Yeah.

Lindsay: Thank you so much for being here. This was such a pleasure, and I'll see you soon on a call.

Deb: We'll see you soon. 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.