

Ep #136: My Journey as a Coach (Part 1)



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 136.

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.

Hello, coach. I am so happy you're here today. Today I want to talk about something that's going to turn into a two-part series. So this week and next week are going to be related. But I decided to break it up into two different episodes because, first, one long episode was going to be very long. But second, they're kind of two different things but just related.

So one thing that I was thinking about after I recorded last week's episode and talking about some of the hate that I've gotten and just how I've dealt with it, I specifically left one thing out that someone had said because I wanted to address it separately. But this is going to be answering the thing that was brought up and why I do it, but also it has nothing to do with last week's episode besides I just didn't say this. I didn't talk about this one.

I specifically saved it because I thought, ooh, this is such a good topic, actually I do want to talk about this. So one thing that someone had said about me, I guess you could say. In the thread I was reading that was about me, so not I guess you could say, someone did say it about me. They said she just wants to – I can't even say this with a straight face, honestly, because it's so weird. I know they meant it not in a kind way. But I can't say it without hearing it as a good thing.

So one thing that someone said was she just wants to keep helping more and more people. Yes, I do. This is true. Like, is it true? Yes. Is it kind? Mostly yes. In the context it was said, not so much. But just that alone, like taken by itself? Yes, of course. Why wouldn't I, right?

Now, I think it was in the context of maybe she just wants to keep making more and more money, or maybe it's like sacrificing client delivery when you're helping more people, both of which are not true. But I'm going to talk

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about that a little bit in this episode. Because this week and next week I'm going to talk about my journey through coaching and give you a very specific, because this is something that comes up a lot in my masterminds and in my spaces.

People want to know these things, they ask me questions. They want to know timelines, right? Like how long was I a one on one coach? Why did I create a group? When did I create a group? When did I hire a business manager? When did I start a podcast, right? Like a timeline.

And one thing that I see a lot of you do, you do it with me but you do it with lots of different coaches, is you just compare your own timeline and you compare yourself. And you maybe even compare yourself now, let's say you're a newer coach or you've been a coach for a few years and you might compare yourself to, well, Lindsay does it this way. Or this coach does it this way. Or I should be doing this or I should be doing this.

And I really just want to dive into that a little bit because I think it can really hurt your coaching. It's something I coach a lot on, even in this current round of the certification that I'm hosting, this is something that comes up, right? Like, well, but I see in your program you do this, or you hired this person, or you blah, blah, blah, whatever it is. And I'm always like, yes, I do. And when I was a newer coach or when I was at the point in my business where you are, I wasn't doing that.

And not that it's bad, right? It's never like my way is the right way, that's never, ever what I'm saying. But I do like to point it out because anytime I see someone comparing their business to mine, just knowing there's a difference in your business when you have maybe more money to hire someone to help you do something. Or you have more money to pay for different types of platforms or services or whatever it is that you're paying for, some of them take money.

And if you're not bringing in the money to support that yet, I think it can sometimes just be hurtful, hurtful for you, hurtful for your business to think I need this thing because that's how Lindsay does it or because that's how

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this other coach does it. And then you start spending lots of money and taking on processes that you might not be able to support financially. Or even with the energy that you have to give to your business when maybe you're one person working in your business versus other businesses that have teams.

I don't have a big team, but I do have contractors and I do have a full-time business manager who does so much work in my business. And so I just want to kind of put it out there and be very clear about what that looks like.

But here's what I'm going to do, because the other thing I've been getting a lot recently is questions because I've been making some changes to my business, making some changes to my offers, and I think that I've confused some people. I've confused some of you. And that's okay, because I'm not confused, so that's all that matters. Which means as long as I keep describing it and tell you what I'm doing, then you'll no longer be confused either.

I'm not confused in my mind, but I clearly haven't said it enough like, oh, yeah, this is what's going on. This is why I've made these changes. So what I'm going to do is on today's episode, I'm going to talk about my current offers. I have three ways that you can work with me. And this isn't just to sell you on why you would want to do that, but it is to just give you an insight into my business, into the way I make decisions.

And then next week I'm going to go through an entire timeline from the beginning of when I started my coaching business until now and all the changes I made, at what point I hired different people, and just all of it. All the details. But I'm going to kind of work backwards.

So first today, because I think it will be good to give you kind of an overview of like, this is what it looks like now, and then to rewind next week and do, and here's all the things, and how many years and all the ways that I've built up to what I'm doing now. All right? So that's what we're going to do.

So when it comes to thinking about, "She just wants to keep helping more people," this is true, 100%. And a few years ago, let's see, at the end of

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2019 I was still working with one on one clients and it was when I first had the idea to launch Coaching Masters, the mastermind. And I ended up selling it, I think, in December of 2019 and I started it at the very beginning of 2020 right before COVID, right before all the craziness happened.

And I did end up having to make changes. I had planned to offer a live event, I made changes to it, didn't have a live event, all the things. So if I rewind to 2019, that's where we're going to start right now. I was coaching one on one. I think I had actually like 22 one on one clients at the end of 2019 or towards the end of 2019.

And what happened was my thought, honestly, at that point was I'm always going to coach one on one. I don't understand why people create groups. I don't understand, you know, it was just like, why would I do that? That's so silly. And maybe that was my thought at the beginning of 2019.

And then as that year kind of kept going and I was working with a full roster of clients, what happened was my clients started becoming, over that year, maybe over even the last two years, like 2018 2019, my clients started becoming more and more and more similar. And we started working on the same things. And we were working on their coaching, but not necessarily on their businesses. Not necessarily on making money, although that was a little bit of it, but it wasn't my favorite part.

My favorite part was really focusing on their offers, on the structure of their coaching, on what they were charging, just all of that. On the coaching itself, on coaching skills, helping them decide what certifications or trainings they might want and how to plan for that, how to make investments in their business, just all of that. And so someone offered, my coach actually at the time offered me, but if you're coaching everyone on the same thing, how could it be more powerful for you to do that in a group?

And when I say I had resistance to that, and actually let me say I don't know if that's exactly how she said it, but that's kind of what I heard, right? And when I say I had resistance to that, I'm telling you I had all of the resistance. But one thing that happened is I mentioned it to a few of my

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clients. And their response was, “Oh, I think it would be so fun to do work like that in a group.” And it just kind of planted that little tiny seed in my mind that I then just started thinking about and considering.

And one thing I thought of, which is so funny that I had never thought of it until this point, is that at that point I was in a mastermind myself. I was in a group coaching space. I wasn't working with a one on one coach. Now, I've had one-on-one coaches on and off the whole time for different reasons, but at that time in my coaching, I was working with coaches in a group.

And I really started considering what is it about that that I loved? And the more I dug into that and the more I could really see the power of being in a group and why it's so important for certain people sometimes, right? I'm not saying that a group is always better than one on one, or that it's even better at all than one on one, so hear that. Definitely take a note of that. I don't want you to think that's what I'm saying.

And if you're a coach who's like, “Forever I'm doing one on one coaching,” I feel you. I get that. But for me, it was one of those things like once I started seeing it, I couldn't unsee it. So then I was like, okay, what if I just tried it? What if I just had one mastermind? So I did. And, of course, I'm shortening it. This took way longer than just, I didn't just wake up the next day like, okay, this is what I'm doing. But I launched the Coaching Masters mastermind.

And when I saw my clients come into that group and do the work with other people, being surrounded by other people all working on the same thing, it was so powerful what happened. Their results started happening faster. They now had colleagues and friends in the space, right?

I think, especially when you work with entrepreneurs, whether it's coaches or any entrepreneurs who work online and are working mostly by themselves from their house, it's so good for them to have colleagues and friends. You've heard me talk about this a million times. I know this is something that's so important for me. And I know it's become really important for many of my clients.

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So I made that switch at the end of 2019. 2020 is when it started, right? So for all of 2020, all of 2021 and into 2022 I just had the Coaching Masters mastermind. I think I ran it nine or 10 times. And I got really, really good at it, running it over and over, getting more and more clear. What am I teaching here? What am I doing here?

And one thing that I realized is that everyone that comes into this space, it would be super helpful if they all had just coaching foundation knowledge, because I do work with coaches from all over the industry. But what that means, is that everyone was kind of coming in with different skill levels. Even if like there were coaches who'd made quite a bit of money in their business but had realized like, oh, I really need to brush up on my skills.

And or then there were coaches who were newer coaches who wanted to be in that space, but who hadn't had a lot of training in specific coaching skills. So that's how The Coach Lab was born, the idea for The Coach Lab, right? And the thought about that, and this is what ties it into she just wants to keep helping more and more people.

My thought about that is, oh, these skills that I had then started teaching in Coaching Masters, but some people in that space needed them and some didn't. But my thought was like, every coach needs these skills, especially if they don't have them.

So I want to create a space, a safe space where coaches, any coaches can come learn these skills and then get coached on them if they want, but also just a video library that they can consume over and over and over if that's what they want to do. And this big community of support, basically, right.

So that's how The Coach Lab was born. Now I have The Coach Lab, so this is my lifetime access program that is \$2,000. That's the coaching foundational skill offer that I have. I will have that, at this point I'm going to say I will have that for a long time.

I do want to point this out, because this blew someone's mind the other day when I said it, lifetime access, what that means, and I tell you this for your own knowledge as a coach for thinking about you developing your own

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programs. Lifetime access just means for the lifetime of the program, not for the lifetime of the human, or for the coaching industry, or for anything like that. It's just the lifetime of that program.

So someday I might not have that offer. I don't see that being anytime soon, so rest assured. And if for some reason that is a thing that were to happen, that I was going to close it, you would have plenty of benefits, whatever. I'm not even going to go down that road, but people have asked me so I just want to make it clear what that means, even if it's just for you, for your coach knowledge. That's what it means, it's for the lifetime of the program.

So it's \$2,000, you never have to pay anything else. You don't ever have to, like there's no yearly fee, there's no anything. You can just come there, you can be there forever, you can come every week and get coaching, if that's what you want to do, on the skills that I teach inside. We have monthly workshops.

That is how I made the majority of the money I made last year, it actually came from The Coach Lab, which is incredible in my mind when I saw that at the end of the year. Because I had just decided after watching so many of my friends and colleagues try to sell programs that it was going to be really, really hard to make money with a program. And for me that just wasn't the experience I had. So that's it, that is my foundational offer.

So I started that last year, I've run it now for a little over a year. I love it there. It's one of my favorite places to coach. It's one of my favorite spaces of just the conversations that happen in that space. My clients are always blowing my mind. So that's that.

Then what happened is, so then I still had the Coaching Masters mastermind. And so now I've taken the foundational piece out of that to create The Coach Lab. Now I have the Coaching Masters mastermind, but what I noticed with that mastermind is that there were two different clients coming into it.

There were clients who have been coaches for a long time, who make quite a bit of money in their business, who have a very clear concept of who they

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are and what they do. And they're just kind of ready for that next level, right? Wanting the community and wanting that next level of support. Maybe moving into new offers, creating programs, starting podcasts, really thinking about things like, how do I stand out in this industry? How do I make my work known in the world? How do I be even more clear about who I am and what I do?

And then there were clients who were in The Coach Lab who were newer coaches, who also were like, oh, is this for me? I'm not sure. Is it too advanced? I don't know. And some of them would be brave enough to apply, and they would get in and so there would be kind of a mix. And then some of them wouldn't apply because their thought was like, this is too advanced or I'm not ready for this.

So then I created, and this happened at the beginning of this year, 2023. I created the Advanced Certification in Coaching Mastery, which I'm now in the middle of running the first round of. It's been so fun. But I created that, and what I did, that was really for the people who were coming into Coaching Masters who were really ready for that next level, right? Who weren't like stressing about the making money in their business, or the, oh no, I'm never going to sell a coaching again.

Now, let's be clear, that is all of us sometimes. But overall, they know how to make money, they know what their offer is, they know who they coach, all of that. I really created that offer for them. So now I've kind of pulled that group of people out of Coaching Masters and said, "Hey, this is now the offer for you this advanced certification."

It has been so fun coaching them and really helping them step into who they are in a much deeper way, right? Like really thinking about what are their values as a human? What is it about them as a human, about their personality? How do we create this business that stands out, that is like, whoa, anyone could look at this and say, "This is you." That's the work we're doing in that space.

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While I was doing that, I kind of put a pause on the Coaching Masters mastermind. And the reason I did that is because I knew that I was kind of pulling, so I'd already pulled the foundational skills out and created The Coach Lab. Now I pulled the more advanced skills out and created the certification.

So then there was like this middle space that I just wasn't quite sure what it was. I had to sit with it. I had to kind of marinate in it. Those of you that know me or that have worked with me, you know this is kind of what I like to do, is just sit with things. Kind of let them marinate a little bit before I just make decisions and move really fast. So that's what I did.

So I haven't been offering Coaching Masters at the end of last year into this year, because I've really been thinking about what is that space? The advanced certification is a higher priced to offer. And to me, it didn't make sense in my mind to have the foundational skills offer and then a mastermind, Coaching Masters mastermind, and the certification and have both of those things be kind of similar price points and similar setups, right?

So it was like, okay, what is that middle thing going to be? Which is why, and this is what I'm currently selling. So if you follow me on Instagram or if you're on my list, if you're listening to this in real time this is available for you right now. But I have figured out what Coaching Masters is. I'm so excited to run this, I cannot wait to take the first group through it. We start in June. I believe June 20th.

So what I've done is I've really created a space for that middle ground. So in The Coach Lab you're going to learn the foundational skills. In Coaching Masters, this is where you're like, I'm ready to move out of the foundations. I'm ready to really think about what is the program that I run? What is my coaching program?

How do I make sure that all of my clients are creating the results they want and maybe know what to do when clients aren't, right? Because there's never going to be a time or a space where 100% of every single person that works with you creates the exact results that you know they can or that

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they come to you for, right? There are always going to be life circumstances, things that happen or get in the way, or just clients that doubt themselves that you don't know how to handle.

So that's what the middle space is, it's like let me show you how to make sure that all of your clients are getting results. And it's no longer, I'm not calling it a mastermind, I'm calling it the Coaching Masters Intensive because it is more focused. It's going to be a little more like, come into this space over the next three months, so it's now three months instead of six. Over the next three months, we're going to be laser focused on your coaching program.

We're going to talk about and get rid of any niche confusion, if you have it. Even sometimes coaches that make quite a bit of money or that come into my spaces that in my mind I'm like, you really know what you're doing, sometimes they still have this come up. Niche confusion. I don't call it drama. To me it's just confusion. It's like, oh, you're just a little confused.

Or you're confused maybe about how to talk about it or how to explain to potential clients what exactly it is you do. Or you spend a lot of time doubting yourself around your niche. Like you're very clear about what it is. But you doubt yourself so often that that doubt shows up when you're talking to anyone that's like, oh, what do you do? Or how do you work with clients or whatever it is, like that doubt is just apparent.

So if that's you, and it doesn't have to be, you might be totally clear about what your niche is. But if that is you, that is something we are going to focus on in the very beginning of the Coaching Masters Intensive. So we're going to focus on that and then, okay, now that we've figured out exactly who you work with, what does your program look like?

I'm saying program in quotes, but it's basically how do you create the results? What is it about what you offer that creates the exact results that your clients are hiring you for? Not in one call, but in your entire program, right, from start to finish. What does that look like? What does it look like to guarantee results?

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Now, I'm not suggesting, when I say guarantee I don't necessarily mean like a money back guarantee. But I just mean if you did have a money back guarantee or if you were like, I'm going to put money on this, that this client is going to create these results, what does that look like? What can you guarantee by the knowledge that you have, the coaching that you do? What are the results that you can offer?

Let's get really settled in that so that there's just never confusion around it. So that you're not, and I talked about this a couple of weeks ago on here on the podcast, so that you're not ever putting yourself in the situation where you're like, oh no, I don't know how to do this. Let me Google it. Let me buy the book, let me whatever, and it's something that you're only doing because one client is like, hey, can you help me with this? Or how do I do this?

I want to bring you back to really owning what is your expertise as a coach. Maybe it's just the mindset piece, right? Maybe you're not an expert in any strategies that your clients bring you. Maybe you can just coach them on every single thing because what you're going to do is examine their thoughts, their feelings. Like really partner with them in the experience that they're having, while creating whatever results that it is they want to create. And both of you create clarity and awareness around what it is that they're working on.

These are the things that we're going to do over three months. We're going to practice coaching and get feedback on it. We're going to practice doing evaluations so that you have that skill forever. I do this in The Coach Lab, but in the Coaching Masters Intensive it's going to be just a lot more individualized work, right? It's going to be a smaller space for you to really say, here's an evaluation, here's specifically what I'm working on.

And then we're going to talk about it next week. You're going to practice coaching, you're going to get feedback, you're going to just spend three months laser focused on being the best possible coach and creating the results that your clients hire you for. I think of this as, I recently wrote an email about this, but I think of it as –

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I don't know why this is so funny to me, because I don't really play video games at all. But I've watched my kids play them enough that I get the gist. And this is like when you're playing an adventure game, right? And you're like going from start to finish, every once in a while you're offered these maybe challenges where your character, your avatar, gets to level up, maybe their speed and their agility and their knowledge or whatever it is. That's what this is.

This is like let's take three months and level up all of that in your coaching. And the reason I'm spending so much time on this is because this is the offer that I've been getting questions about. And when I wasn't selling Coaching Masters, people were like, "Oh, no, where did it go? Is it coming back? Are you still offering this?"

So I really want to be very, very clear, at least right now this is what it is. This is the new offer. I wanted it to be more accessible and more, again, laser focused on the actual coaching, on taking those foundational coaching skills and learning to use them as an expert from start to finish with your clients. Those are the things we'll be doing in that space.

Like I already said, it is enrolling now, unless it's full. So I have opened enrollment, and it closes June 20th, or before that if it fills up. So if you're hearing that and you're interested, please go to the link, it's in my show notes, you can see if it's still available. That means you can buy it. There's no application, there's no requirements to get in. It's just available for you right now.

So that's what it is. That is the way that I have currently structured my business. And the reason I'm doing it is because I really love helping all of the coaches. It's true, I do love helping all of the coaches. You can make that mean a bad thing about me if you want, but I don't know why you would. I love helping you at every different level. At the foundational level, at that middle level.

And I remember this middle level being the stickiest for me personally, where in the beginning it was like I was so excited. I was consuming the

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new skills. I was like, “Yes, this is amazing. I love coaching,” right? Everything was like, I love coaching. And then when I started actually signing clients and working with a bunch of clients, then it was like all of this stuff came up that I just wasn't prepared for and sometimes felt like I didn't have the support for, even in the spaces where I was learning coaching skills and certifications and trainings.

There was the teaching, but I really wanted the hands on, real life but what do I do in this case? Which is why I created The Coach Lab. And it's also now why I've created this next offer, right? The Coach Lab, I do that, but for foundational skills. This is that next offer for that sticky space where you're like, okay, I know how to make money. But am I really doing a great job? I want to be sure my clients are getting the results they came for, how can I do that? That's what the Coaching Masters Intensive is for.

And then there's the certification, which I am not selling in this moment if you're listening in real time. But there is a link, if you want to sign up for the waitlist. You can go to my website or go to the show notes, and there will be a link there. But that's really for the coach who has kind of done these first two steps and now they're ready to say like, “Okay, how do I make it my own?”

I think I've talked about this on the podcast before, but I think about it like building a house, right? The foundations are like the walls and the floor. And you could walk into the house and say, “Okay, I guess it has everything that I need.” This middle piece is like, let's make it a real house. Like let's paint the walls. Let's put in some carpet. Let's make it a comfortable house that someone would be so happy to live in.

And then the certification is the next level where it's like, let's deck it out, right? Let's paint it some crazy colors. Let's make it undeniably yours so that when your neighbors drive by they're like, “Of course, that's Lindsay's house.” That's what the certification is.

So I hope this helps. I really wanted to kind of dive into each thing, first, to clear up any confusion. If you're like, “Wait, I know I want to work with

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Lindsay. But I have no idea how, I'm a little confused," there we go. Hopefully this clears that up. If it doesn't, send me a message. Send me an email. I will respond to you. Find me in my DMs, whatever you need to do, I am pretty responsive to those types of things. So get your questions answered however you need to do that.

But then the other piece of it is the takeaway for you as a coach can be what does this look like for you, right? Are you diehard one on one, you're never giving it up? Perfect. I love that. I really do, I'm not just saying that. I think you can build an incredible coaching business. That was my plan. That is where I was going to stay. I was dead set on it until I started seeing things that I couldn't see.

And now I just love my communities so much. I adore my clients. I think that they are the most incredible humans, the most incredible coaches, and come join us. You should definitely do that. I will hopefully see you there sometime soon. Again, if you have any questions, let me know.

And the follow up for this next week will be everything that led up to this point because some of you, especially if you just found me, I think it's really easy to think I just woke up yesterday and this was just the business that I just woke up with and I decided overnight, this is what I'm going to do. Nope, it started in, what, 2015. It's been a journey, almost 10 years, which is so wild.

And I want to let you in on all of it so that you can not compare yourself or so that you can take notes on what I learned, all my fails, all my successes and just really take away anything that works for you. That is obviously always the point here. So thank you for listening. Thank you for being here. And I will see you again next week. Goodbye.

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