

## Ep #150: Your Business Questions Answered: Q&A 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 150.

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'm so glad you're here today. This is episode 150, which means today is Q&A. And what I've done is I've split the questions up a little bit, actually into two episodes. So this very first episode is going to be mostly business questions.

It's going to be about making money in your business, about signing clients. I had lots of those questions and some of them were very similar. And it really felt like they all kind of deserved one episode.

And then next week will be all the rest of the questions. Some of them are coaching questions, like coaching specific. How do you handle this? What do you do about this? Some of them are personal. And some of them are kind of funny. And I will cover all of those next time.

So today, I'm going to answer all of the business questions that you sent in. Some of them were great. And some of them, most of them I think, I just want to put this out there, are questions that so many coaches have. Especially newer coaches, especially in the beginning of your business. These are excellent questions and I will answer them.

And I want to give the caveat headed into this episode that I'm going to answer these through my perspective. I do not necessarily coach on this, right? I'm just going to tell you through my perspective of building my business, either what I did or what I know other people did, or how they handled certain situations.

Take it for what you will. Maybe I might answer something and you might think, oh, I don't know if that's the right answer for me. Great, I'm not trying to give the right answer for you. I'm just trying to give you some

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perspective. And what you can do with it is then take it and say like, how would I approach this? How would I answer this? And find your own answers.

So much of what I teach inside my programs and what I coach on, is really always helping my clients find their own way, find their own answers. And sometimes on the podcast I really just want to empower you to do the same. Okay? So these are just my perspective from a coach who has been building a business since 2015. Who's had quite a bit of success building a coaching business and just talking about the way I handled some of these things or how I approached them.

All right, so let's just dive into the first question. "How do I feel competent as a coach when I'm just starting out and have zero clients? It's really hard for me to talk like I have clients when they're still not here."

So I have two answers to this. My first answer is actually addressing the second part of that question, or like the statement that you made. Why do you have to talk like you have clients? I would just really consider that. You don't have to.

And I see this happen so often. With new coaches or with coaches that think they should have more clients than they do, they get really self conscious about it. And then they start talking about it in a way that makes them maybe sound like they have more clients or like they have more experience than they do.

And I just don't think that's necessary at all. And I think it creates a lot of heartache for you, and maybe confusion, right? I can think of, you know, on my social media and on my wherever, I see lots of coach's content and lots of posts. And, if I'm honest, I can always tell when someone is kind of trying to talk about something like they have more experience than they do.

And I think it's perfectly acceptable to say I'm a new coach, and just have that new coach energy. Some people will love that. Some people will really resonate with that. Some people will be like, I want a very seasoned coach, I want a coach who's been around a while, who knows exactly what they're

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doing. That's totally fine. Those aren't your clients. So that would be my first thing, is just to really question like, why do you think you have to talk about it like you have more clients than you do?

I've talked about this many times. But when I hired my very first coach, I knew I was her first paying client. I knew I was. It did not bother me at all. 0%. I was so excited because she explained so clearly what coaching was, she told me exactly what we were going to be doing on the calls and she just made me feel so comfortable to buy from her and so I did. So just consider that.

But how do you feel confident as a coach when you're starting and have zero clients? A couple of ways to answer that question. One of the ways is to practice coaching, right? Be in the coaching energy as often as possible, when it's appropriate. So not when you're talking to your friends and family when you're not working. But just to really think about how would you be confident doing anything?

Confidence is created by doing something over and over and over, practicing it. Practicing talking about it. Practicing explaining it. Just feeling super comfortable in this is what I do. This is who I am. This is how I'm just going to show up, right? And even maybe thinking you don't have to feel 100% confidence. As in like, not be nervous, not feel doubt, not feel any of those things to show up as an amazing coach.

You can feel those things and still feel confident in what coaching is, or confident in your ability to coach. That is going to outweigh all the doubts on the other side.

Okay, next question. "How do you prevent burnout or losing steam when you're in the beginning stages of launching your business? Putting a shit ton of time and energy into it, but not getting any real action yet. How do you not get discouraged?" And especially when it comes to social media, was the rest of the question.

So first of all, I would get really clear about where the burnout is coming from because I think burnout, and I'm not talking about the medical

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definition of burnout, because I'm not as familiar with that. I just know, in general, we use the term burnout to mean we've overdone it, right? That's what I'm addressing here.

So, for me, that comes in two ways, either over actioning, right? Like being literally physically burnt out, feeling exhausted because you're taking so much action all the time. And you are not taking care of yourself, not resting, not giving yourself what you need. So that's one piece, or one way that burnout happens.

And then there is what I would call more mental burnout, right? Which is maybe you're taking all the actions to run your business, but then also outside of your business you are constantly thinking about your business. You're never setting it down and walking away and saying like, okay, now it's evening time. Now it's my weekend with my family. Now it's vacation. And there's just constant noise in your mind.

When I think of this type of burnout, I think of just music that's on too loud all the time. Sometimes I love loud music. If I'm at a concert, if I'm in the car with my kids, there are just times when loud music is excellent. And there are times when I'm like, if you don't turn that music off right now, I'm going to lose my mind, right? It's like my brain is full. Maybe I'm tired. It's kind of like that, right? It's like the music just never gets turned down.

So the first thing would be to determine which one of those you're in. So if you're in the burnout where you're just taking action, action, action, action, action, overworking, working past hours, just constant, obsessive kind of action, I would solve that by first saying – Okay, first maybe examining. Maybe getting some coaching on it or examining like, why am I doing this?

But also just reminding yourself that just like anything else, you can put in, like you can have a plan you can put in the hours, and working outside of those hours or overworking, working 12 hour days in your coaching business or whatever it is, isn't going to create better results than just working the time that you plan to work, right? Just like putting the work in and then letting it be.

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The same is true for the other type of burnout, where it's like obsessing over it in your mind. You can do that and it will create lots of mental exhaustion for you. Which mental exhaustion, of course, does not lead to being more clear about what you do, to signing clients, to being a better coach. It leads to feeling exhausted all the time.

And, of course, not like you're probably showing up saying, "I'm just exhausted all the time." I mean, if you are, definitely look into that and don't do that, solve it. But also think about a person who doesn't want to hire a coach, a life coach or whatever kind of coach you are, who's exhausted all the time, right? That's true.

Now, there's a difference between that and just maybe you have a full-time job and you're coaching outside of that and maybe you are working a lot of hours. But even then I would question how do you take care of yourself to show up fully for yourself and for your business?

One thing that makes me question how you're showing up or why you are feeling the burnout is when you say, putting a shit ton of time and energy into it. I would just question as a newer coach, if you really feel this, I'm sure a lot of you do, to really question how much time and energy do I think needs to go into this? And why am I constantly overextending myself, if you are feeling that maybe exhaustion or burnout.

And then the second question, how do you not get discouraged? I would actually say it's okay to be discouraged. It's okay to be disappointed. It's okay to be frustrated. And I don't think that you should ever think that you shouldn't feel that way, right?

Instead, allow yourself to feel that way. You just don't want to stay in that place. Allow yourself to feel it when it comes up. Allow yourself to process it. Allow yourself to move through it. Tell yourself it's okay to feel disappointed. Of course, you're disappointed, right? You're building a business. Building a business isn't easy. You are putting a lot of time and effort into it. And if you aren't creating the results that you want to create, of course, you feel discouraged. Let it be normal, but also don't live in it.

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And then the last piece when it says, especially when it comes to social media, I just think that's an interesting kind of caveat that you added to the end. And I would just question, like really question, what about social media is having you feel this way?

And if you're doing the same things over and over and over, so let's say you're building your business on social media and you're doing the same actions over and over and over. And you're posting. And you're doing this. And then you're checking and nobody's commenting, and nobody's liking your thing, and nobody's interacting and you're getting discouraged.

I might say something that's a little different than what some coaches would tell you, which is, okay, well, how can we just change a little bit the actions that you're taking, right? If you're just taking the same action over and over and over and over and over and over and it's never creating the results that you want, then how do we shift the actions? Or how do we add on some things? Or how do you go into the world and meet people there? How do you change up your strategy besides just posting on social media?

Now, just from this single question, I don't actually know if that's what you're doing. But I just know, I've seen a lot of coaches doing that, right? Like I've posted every day for three months and nothing has happened. All right, well, then let's mix it up a little bit. We have to find another strategy.

"How do you not let the fact that you have unsupportive immediate family discourage you or get under your skin? I can't seem to stop this from getting under my skin. And I know it's not productive. Thanks."

So I can really relate to this. In the beginning of my coaching business, and I've been pretty open about this. I've talked about it before on other podcasts. But in my mind, my family was not very supportive. And looking back now, I can see why. And it really made a lot of sense. And so I would just kind of question, first, what kind of support are you looking for? And have you asked for it? Like, have you been very specific?

Second, are they really not supportive? Or are you creating that in your mind? Which is what I was doing, that's the only reason I say that. And by

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that what I mean is, my husband, I was like, why aren't you telling your friends about this? And why aren't you as excited about this as I am? There were just lots of like, why aren't you...? Like fill in the blank.

And looking back now, I just know it's because he was confused. He didn't really understand what I was doing. I didn't have lots of open communication with him about it because underneath it all, I had a lot of fears and insecurities. So I wasn't sharing those with him.

It truly wasn't that he wasn't supportive, he was just like what's going on here? I already owned another business at the time and in his mind, he really understood that business and was just very confused by this pivot. So I would just question some of that. Like how really unsupportive are they? What do you mean by that?

And then if really they are unsupportive, and by that I mean if they have said words to you like, I don't like that you're running this business or I don't think it's a good idea, or anything along those lines, I think just having a really open, honest conversation and communication asking for what you need. Being as confident as you can be in yourself and in what you're doing, and just showing up for the conversation as like, I am running this business. This is what I'm doing. Here's my plan just so you know.

When I started doing this part with my husband, he totally changed his tune. But I was like, just so you know, here's my plan. Here is exactly what I'm investing in coaching right now. I was just open. I laid it all on the table. So hopefully that was helpful. If I had more specifics, I could answer it differently. But just from your question, those would be my main things.

“What are some tips when you're trying to get some momentum in your new coaching business, but also have a full-time job?” Excellent question. So my biggest tips would be, one, determine when you're working on your business. Be very intentional and specific about it. If you have a full-time job, you don't have the luxury or the privilege of just, oh, I'll work when I want to or not or whatever.



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If you're going to a full-time job and you're working full-time, and then you're coaching outside of that, you have less time, right? So you're just going to want to be very specific about when am I working on my coaching business? What hours can I set aside? When can I do coaching sessions? Just really get specific, maybe get creative.

I've had colleagues in the past who would do coaching calls on their lunch hour in their cars, right? Or go to their own coaching call to get some coaching or to watch a training or to just consume material while eating lunch in their car at their job. Or just being really open to like, how can I get time in? How can I consume what I want to consume, get the coaching I need, and also run my business in X amount of time?

And be really honest with yourself, right? Answer exactly how many hours do I have to work on this business? And what can I fit into those hours? And really, truly, I think just making a plan will help you visualize it.

I talked with a lot of coaches about this. And what I see some of them do is just really hope that somehow they're going to be able to leave their job and their coaching business is going to take off.

But when we really get into the numbers of it I'll say, how many hours do you have to coach? And they'll say, five. I'm like, how much do you want to make before you can leave your job? How many clients is that, right? And they'll say like 20. I'm like, okay, well, that doesn't add up. That math doesn't check out. So you need a new plan, right?

Like really being clear about what the plan is, about how you can make it work, about the hours that you have, about the absolute blocked off time, especially if you have a family or if you have just other people relying on you besides yourself, right, and besides your job.

"How do you balance being a mom, wife, business owner, homeowner, coach, et cetera without feeling like you're neglecting some areas? How do you do it all in what feels like such limited time because of all the things life demands?" So the simple answer to this is I don't.

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And I'll be very open and honest about this, I just don't. I have never felt like I've had an amazing balance of all of those things. And I'll address how I do it now, but first I want to go back to the beginning of my business because I am a mom.

I had two young kids at the time. One who was in preschool for a few hours a day. And I think when I started my business she was maybe in kindergarten or first grade or something along those lines.

And I didn't try to do it all. And I'm not saying that I hired a bunch of people and I hired people to do the things because I didn't. I did not have the money to do that then. Absolutely, we did not have the money to do that.

And so I figured out, again, to go back to kind of what I was saying when you have a full time job, right? I got very, very clear with myself about what my work hours were. When I wasn't working I just had to be very on top of it and very kind of organized around it so that I could be clear.

I would coach a couple hours into the evening. So I would choose a couple of days because I was a general life coach. So some of my clients were entrepreneurs with all different types of businesses, but some of them worked all day. And so they would want to do coaching calls in the evenings or they would want to do coaching calls on their lunch breaks.

And I would just get very clear about when I was doing each thing. And I just, honestly, this is probably one of the biggest things, I stopped holding myself to the highest standard in each of those roles. I delegated when it was available. I asked for help, which I laugh about this because I'm like, oh, I'm still not amazing at that. It's still sometimes a work in progress for me to ask for help, although I'm getting a lot better at it.

But I just knew, I didn't go in with the expectation of being perfect at all of these. I think sometimes we forget as coaches when we are entrepreneurs that starting a business is legit. Like it's not just, I think I said this in one of my other podcasts, but it's not just signing up for a coach certification and learning to coach and then ta-da, you have a business.

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There's a whole side of running a business that can be hard and time consuming sometimes and that takes a little bit of hustle and grit. And I think you have to find the space where you're like, I want this more than I want to be the perfect mom, or the perfect wife, or the perfect – Homeowner is low on my list.

But I do understand what you're asking, right? Which is like, how do I balance all of these things? And for me, the biggest learning in all of it was just knowing I couldn't balance all of the things. But I would look at, okay, but what are my priorities?

And sometimes it was like, what are my priorities on certain days? So it wouldn't even be, okay, overall 100% of the time my priority is my family, which would mean I will drop anything. And, of course, this is still true if there's an emergency, if there's whatever. Yes, I will drop anything, for sure. Overall, family is my priority.

But when it comes to cooking dinner, or doing the dishes, or making sure everybody has clean clothes, or any other things that we think, if we don't do this. Like sometimes as moms and as women we think if we don't do this, who's going to do it? Who's going to take care of all of it? I will tell you now, years later, my husband does most of the cooking. He's really good at it, he likes to do it. And it's something that I just kind of allowed him to take over.

And it's really funny because I used to have the thought like, he doesn't want to do that, or he doesn't support me or thoughts like that, right? That was never true. All I had to do was ask him. Like tell him, hey, I'm trying to make this thing happen. I need your help. What are things that you could help with? He had so many ideas, all I had to do was ask. So that may or may not be your situation, but just take that and form it into your situation.

Now I'll answer the question again from the perspective of now that my business has grown, I make money in my business, I have more money to allow for a little more flexibility. I look at the things that are like, what can I

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hire someone to do? And I think of it as like a trade-off. I don't know how else to say this, but like what's the biggest bang for my buck, right?

Like what are the things that I do not like to do that if someone does this for me, it's going to create much more time and space for me, but also more joy, right? So I'm not going to hire someone, for example, to come hang with my kids in the evenings because I love that, it's one of my favorite things. I'm not going to give up vacation or family time on the weekends or when we're on vacation, right?

But what I am going to do, now that I have the money to do it, is I'm going to hire someone to clean my house. That has been the biggest lifesaver. It's one of the first things that we decided, kind of as a family honestly, we decided that we wanted to spend money on that. And it's just been like a weight off of everyone's shoulders.

And I totally realize how privileged that sounds because it is, like that's just true. And five years ago if you had said to me, or I don't know. I don't know what the math is. I don't know if it would be five years. But five years ago, seven years ago, however long ago, if you had said, oh, just hire someone to clean your house, I probably would have wanted to punch you in your face? Because it was just like, no, that's not an option right now. That's not an answer.

So I think the real answer is in the beginning you just have to let go of the idea that it is going to be perfectly balanced. There are things that come with just being an entrepreneur that are parts of it that you just have to figure out along the way. And you can really have, no matter how much money you're making, no matter how much money you have to spend on hiring people, you can really just ask yourself, what are the non-negotiables? That's where I would start.

What's the baseline, non negotiable, everything that I am showing up for that I'm putting my time and energy into? And then just examine everything that's outside of that and just question it. Do I need to be doing these things? Is there anyone that could help me with these things? Is there

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anyone that's fully capable in my house that can do these things and I just haven't asked? And then maybe eventually, are any of these things, things that I can hire someone to help me with?

Okay, so this question I actually already answered in a podcast, but I'm going to answer in a different way in this one because this is just the Q&A, I'm not necessarily going to do a whole teaching on it. But if you go back a couple podcasts you will hear an extended answer to part of this. And it is, "With so many new coaches and during the coaching industry every day, what is one thing you can do to gain and maintain clients?"

So what I address in the other podcast is that thought like, "with so many new coaches entering the industry." I address that in a different podcast. But in this I want to answer what's the one thing you can do to gain and maintain clients?

For me that answer has always been to be excellent at coaching, right? Like, even if we assume it's true that there are so many coaches entering the industry every day, how do you stand out? You be great at coaching. Excellent. If you are an excellent coach, I don't care if you're terrible at everything else, people will hire you. People will refer you. If you can just find a couple of clients, that snowball will start, right? Once people know about you, and if you're excellent at what you do, that will be a huge differentiator between you and other coaches in the industry.

The same is true for maintaining clients, right? So, for me, that answer 1,000% is to be excellent at coaching. And, over time maybe, like how do you maintain it? How does that stay sustainable is you figure out kind of what your differentiator is in the industry. It can be something about you as a human, about your personality. It doesn't have to be, like a lot of times when I say that people think, oh, it's specifically a niche thing. Like I have to stand out because my niche is very distinct. No.

For me, it is what about you is distinct? What about the way you coach? What about the way you show up for your clients? What about the way that

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you are an excellent coach? Those are the things that are going to help you gain and maintain clients.

“How do I stop trying to convince clients of my value? When I think about it this way, I get a little pissy and I think, why can’t they just see what they’re missing out on?” Okay, step one, allow yourself to just be a little pissy, right? To just be in it, like don’t fight it. Just allow, whatever that feeling is, allow it. Allow it to come up. See it for what it is.

Of course it’s irritating. Of course, when you feel like, this goes back to what I said a little bit ago, when you feel like you’re putting a lot of time and energy into something, of course you feel that way when it’s not working.

But then step two, answer the question. Why can’t they see what they’re missing out on? Now we’re going to let go of the judgment, let go of the pissiness and just answer that question. Why can’t they? Is it because you haven’t said it enough? Is it because you aren’t clear? Is it because you haven’t explained, like truly explained to them what they’re missing out on?

Is it because you haven’t explained the value of coaching? Is it because you get in your head every time you talk about it? Like really think about the answers to that question. That’s going to be much more useful, right?

First, feel the feelings. That’s fine, they don’t have to go away. But then step outside of that and say, okay, why can’t they? Have I not told them enough? What am I missing? How can I say it again? How can I say it in a different way, right? Just really exploring that is going to be, like it’s going to be a lot more useful than just being irritated, right? It’s going to be a lot more useful and give you some answers that you can start taking action on.

“If you would have to start your coaching business from scratch, what would you do differently?” So I saw this question and I thought about it for a while. And my first answer, which is so lame, of course, and not what you’re asking, is nothing. I would do nothing differently because I wouldn’t be right where I am.

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But if I really think back through some decisions I made, just the way I showed up for my business when I was a new coach. Again, I don't think I would actually change anything. But if I can really think through some of the things that I did and go back, like in ways that maybe made other people uncomfortable or I just didn't handle things the best.

I would say I would have a much more open and honest conversation with my family, particularly my husband about, I'm starting a business. Here's what it's going to look like. Here's the money I'm going to invest because I'm starting a business. And my husband used to own a business also, when I met him. So he knows, like he knows it takes money to invest in businesses. He never had an issue with that.

But the way I did it was almost a little sneaky. Like he was fully on board with me hiring a coach. He loved it. He saw all the changes I was making, all the value I got out of it, like how much I grew and changed as a human. He loved that. And then one day, it was just kind of like, oh, now I'm going to be a coach.

And I think he was like, wait, what? I think it was a little bit of a shock maybe. And I think starting a business is a bigger deal than we make it. It is a big decision. It is not just like, I don't know, maybe I'll coach a couple of people and then whatever.

If you think back through all the answers I've given to all of these questions, it takes time. It takes effort. It takes real commitment, right? And I think when we don't really look at that and address like, what is this going to look like, which I didn't.

Actually I did, maybe mentally, but I never got anyone else's buy in. I didn't tell him like, hey, I'm starting a business. Here's what it's going to look like. Maybe on Tuesdays and Thursdays I'm going to be coaching until 9pm. And here's my schedule and I'm going to need you to help a little more with dinners or whatever the conversation is. I'm going to be investing some of our money to learn how to do this.

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All of that I would have just been a lot more open. I think it would have caused a lot less heartache for him and for myself. I wasn't doing it on purpose in the moment, and I don't think any coaches do. I mean, maybe some of them do, but not necessarily. I've had so many conversations with people around this where coaches are in similar situations, right? And they're like, now, I've invested all this money, and they get really weird about it. And they're like, I don't want to tell my husband or my partner.

Now, luckily for me, I was very open about that. And I was just like, yep, here's what I invested. But I never gave him a say, which if you go back to why do I think my family isn't supporting me? Sometimes, you might just examine that. Sometimes there's an overlap between how open and honest are we being, versus how much are they supporting us? Because sometimes it just starts with us, right?

When we're not being totally transparent, it can create some weirdness or something like, what are you doing? Why are you doing this? What's happening? Like, tell me what's happening. So that would be one thing.

And then the other thing would be, I think I would be a little more constrained in the beginning on what I invested in and what I spent money on. I would have more of a plan. I would buy less from maybe FOMO, and more through truly thinking through is this the thing that I need right now? How is it going to move me forward? Like what are the very specific things that right now, today, I need in my business?

I'm so much better about it now. It's so funny, I think I probably spend less money investing now than I did, let's say I spend way less percentage of money investing now than I did in the beginning of my business. And sometimes even actually financially less, because I was just buying a lot from FOMO instead of really thinking about it. And so what would happen is I would end up with a lot of overlapping things, right?

Like, I would be working on this thing over here. And then, oh my gosh, this person who I know and I love them, they just launched this new program. And okay, I should probably buy that too. But then it would overlap with the



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first thing and then it would just create some confusion. And I think that I would just maybe go back and return some of that money that could be used for other things, or even to pay myself.

That might be another thing I would answer differently, is I would be more strategic about how to pay myself in my business. I think that I've talked about this on the podcast before. I think it's really important to learn to pay yourself and get used to paying yourself. Even if it's such a small amount, but making that be one of the top priorities in your business so that it feels like a real business.

So that you see, oh yeah, there is actually a return here. I'm not just working as a volunteer coach for years and years, not paying myself anything, investing everything back into the business. At some point, there has to be a breaking point there, right? There has to be a like, okay, I've been doing this for a while. It's time that I make money doing it.

Again, it does not have to be a lot of money. I'm not suggesting not to invest in your business. I fully support that, of course. What I am suggesting is that it's really important to also just get used to paying yourself, get used to every month or every week or every two weeks or whatever schedule you decide to use, that you just get used to it. It's just like this is the routine.

That way, if you can't for some reason it really helps you, first it helps you get used to just doing it. But it also helps you question, why can't I? Where's that money going instead? What do I need to do in order to create this? What do I need to do in order to be sure that that money is always coming in? It just creates a different kind of way of thinking about it and some different thought patterns.

Okay, that's where I'm going to leave it today. Those were all of the main business questions. They were all kind of similar. Hopefully, they felt really useful for you. Hopefully you found some goodness in some of those. And I'll be back here next week for part two of Q&A. All right. Good bye.

## **Ep #150: Your Business Questions Answered: Q&A Part 1**

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