

## Ep #164: How Values Move Your Coaching Forward



### 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 164.

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 happy you're here today. Today I want to talk about one of my very favorite topics. But first, I want to tell you about something. A couple of weeks ago I hosted something called Big Picture 2024. I hosted it live. I know probably a lot of you joined because I talked about it here. And I hosted it inside my spaces.

So I did it inside The Coach Lab as a celebration and also planning. I did it with my mastermind to help them plan for the next year. And then I did one on one. I've been doing some one on one calls with anyone that joins the Advanced Certification. I've been doing this work one on one with them to really help them plan for their coaching for next year.

And first, this has been so fun. I didn't realize how much I love doing this work and how much I love helping you do this work. So that has been amazing. And I just want to say one thing that my OBM and I decided, my business manager and I decided last year, maybe actually at the beginning of this year, at the beginning of 2023 is that we wanted to kind of close down my company for a couple of weeks around the holidays, the end of December, very beginning of January. And this is the first year we're doing this.

So I'm actually recording this episode ahead of time. I feel very proud of myself for doing that. And I already know – So I'm recording it before it has actually happened, right? Podcasting is always a little bit like a time warp because I have to record things before and then you hear them at some point.

But I already know going into this, making that decision and planning it ahead of time, which if you join my planning sessions, this is one thing I

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teach you to do, is kind of make decisions like this and plan them in so that you can spend however much time you need preparing to prepare for it. So while you're listening to this, I'm off. I'm really curious already, like what am I doing with all my time? Who knows, I'll report back. Maybe I'm bored.

Hopefully I'm having fun with my kids. Maybe doing some activities with them. I don't know, I haven't done it yet because, again, this is ahead of time, but I'm going to have them make a list of some things that they would love to do over winter break. They have a couple of weeks off and basically I'll be off the whole time they're off.

And I just want to plant that seed and just let you know that it already feels freeing to have made this decision and to really have planned ahead for it. So knowing, like what that means is I know my clients are taken care of, we've put plans in place, we've let everyone know, we've done all the content ahead of time. And so far, even though it hasn't actually started, it feels really great.

So I just want to encourage you that if there's anything like that, if you've been a coach for a while, or maybe you've worked in corporate for a while and now you're a coach and you're not incorporate anymore, and you're like I would love to have a month off in the summer, or I would love to have a few weeks off around the holidays or whatever that wish is for you, I would encourage you to see if you can plan it and make it happen.

Because the way to do it, it's never just going to accidentally happen, right? You have to decide ahead of time. There were a few people in this first round of my coach certification, the Advanced Certification, there were a couple of people that did some work around this. So one of the coaches, she really wanted to take most of the summer off. She wanted to kind of plan her content ahead, kind of create her coaching relationships so that they had some breaks during the summer.

And she did it and it was so fun to watch and so inspiring. And I've helped a couple other clients with similar things. And so now I am just experiencing this for myself. And, of course, I've done it before where it's like I'm on

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vacation or I'm traveling or whatever. I'm pretty good at taking time off, but I still tend to stay very connected to my business.

This feels a little excessive, which I think is what makes it – I don't know if excessive is the right word, but it feels like there's no just huge reason that I have to have all the time off. There are lots of reasons, but it's not like well I'm going to be somewhere where I can't actually, like I don't have great signal or I'm going to be busy with my family or any of that.

Yes, that will be true for part of the time. I will be busy with my family and holidays. But for the rest of the time, this is where I just get to lean into the importance of resting and maybe having some adventures with my kids and taking care of myself and being with my family and all of that.

All of that to say, I'm just curious if you could do something like that in your coaching business, what would it be? Even if it's just starting with the teensiest little slice of that, what could it look like right now? I'm just curious what your answers are. Share them with me if you feel so inclined.

Okay, so this leads me into what we're going to talk about today, it's actually a little bit related. And what I want to talk to you about today is values and why they are so important. Maybe one of the most important things in your coaching business, in your coaching and your coaching business. And this is work that I do with my clients in the Advanced Certification, which if you're listening in real time, we are currently enrolling.

I'm assuming we're not full by the time you're listening to this. There will be a link in my show notes, so go grab it if you want to book a call with me. Again, my business is closed, so it will be at the beginning of January. But I would love to chat with you, assuming there are still spots open. At the time of recording this there are and this values work is, I believe, some of the most important work you can do. And it's one of the very first things we do in the certification.

And so what I'm going to do in this podcast is I'm going to tell you what that means. I'm going to tell you what values really are and how sometimes some of you get it wrong. And then I'm going to tell you why they're so

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important and all of the things that they help you with inside your coaching and inside your coaching business.

So, first of all, I know that many of you listening probably, like you might have already rolled your eyes because you're like, "Oh great, values," like you've done this before, right? Especially if maybe you did it in school at some point, maybe you've done it if you worked in the corporate world, maybe you've done values exercises there.

There are lots of different places where values show up and people teach values exercises. But what I want to say is, I think a lot of you are doing it wrong and or you don't know what to do with them after you have them and you don't understand why they're so important.

But especially if you're running your own business, and especially if you're running a business that you want to grow and you want to have a team and you want to have people working with you, I really think spending some time thinking about this is one of the most important assets you can create for yourself.

So the two ways I see most people get values wrong is they do them in a way that is a little bit performative. Mostly performative for yourselves. Not necessarily performative for other people, although it can turn into, I believe, performative for others.

What I mean by that is a lot of times, and I see this even in my spaces when we do this work. A lot of times the first run at it, I'll see people's values and they'll include things like perseverance or ones like that, that are very, if I make this my value – Try to use them to motivate yourself, right?

Like my value is perseverance. I can persevere through anything. That has a value in my life, and it creates all these amazing results. That's not true. Rarely, rarely, is that true. Now, maybe for some of you, that is a real value. But for some of you, I guarantee it is not. It is just a word that creates a certain feeling in your body. Or you might choose values like diversity, which is a great one by the way, but you do it in a way that is a little bit

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performative in a way that you don't fully understand or embrace what it means.

The other way I see people getting it wrong is that they pick values that feel very aspirational. So like, if I pick this value, it's going to help me be this thing. So for example, I don't know that this specific one is one that people pick a lot, but just for example. If you are like my value is organized, or organization or whatever.

Now, maybe for some of you, maybe there are some of you that run organization coaching companies, I know that's a thing or like decluttering, that might be a real true value for you. But for most of you, that's more like I'm picking this in the hopes that it's going to motivate me to be more organized, right?

Or simplicity. Now, simplicity is actually a value of mine, but I know that sometimes I'll share my values when I'm doing this work with my clients and they love that value, right? And they're like, "Oh, I love that. That should be one of mine." And then when we explore it a little bit, sometimes it just becomes obvious that they just want to pick that up because they love the idea of it, but it doesn't actually come natural to them, which to me means it's not a value.

Or, and this is the last way I see people kind of getting it wrong, they do them, they do them once, they maybe write them in a notebook because they were assigned it. Let's say like we do this work in my certification, right? So it's like an assignment, we do it together. And then they never look at it again, right?

Like the notebook goes in the drawer and you never remember, right? Until the next time someone asks you to do this work, and then you're like, "Oh, yeah, I feel like I did that before." Or you do it once, this is kind of the same, like a different version of the same thing, you do it once and then you never revisit or change, like consider changing your values.

The way I think about values is that values are things that feel natural to you. They are ways that you naturally work in the world. They don't feel

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hard. They don't feel like it's something that you wish that you were. They don't feel – They're just like, this is me at my natural state, and maybe in like my best natural state, right? And they can be very personal.

So the way I teach values work, obviously I'm not going to take you through the whole exercise here, you have to join the certification in order to do that. But the way I do values work is I really encourage my clients to think outside the box to come up with words or concepts or things that really resonate with them, that speak to them, that they already live by in their life.

So you've actually heard me talk to a couple of my clients about this on the podcast. If you remember, I did an interview with Christine Stuart where she talks about her value of nature and how that was something that came up in the certification. And she was like, I mean, I don't know, that doesn't really seem like it would be a value for my business, though. That's like a personal value, but it doesn't really feel like, you know, like what does that have to do with my business?

But what I convinced her is actually, let's lean into it and explore what it could have to do with your business. And now if you go find her on Instagram – I love following her on Instagram – she's a business coach, but she talks about business in a way that I have never seen anyone else do it. She talks about it using nature, the value of nature as like a lens that she's talking about her business. It's incredible.

Another one of my clients who did something equally as amazing, and by the way, they all did. These are just some standout ones for me because they were very kind of like, this feels like I learned something from these clients from them choosing these values and showing me what's possible when they do it.

Another one that I also interviewed here on the podcast is Teresa Haag. And one value that she picked for her business, she's an artist, she coaches artists. And one of her values is sparkle. And one of the things that I have them do, so you don't just pick a list of words, you pick the words, up to five, and then you define them for yourself. What do they mean to you?

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What does that concept mean to you? What does that idea of sparkle mean to you, right?

And her definition was so clear and amazing and so representative of her work, what she helped her clients do. It's like she really helps her clients do the work that they love and find that sparkle, put it out into the world. And it just made so much sense the way she described it.

So those are just a couple examples. All my clients have created incredible values, but I just wanted to give you a couple tangible examples. So from there what you do, so you choose your values, you choose your words, you create your specific definition. So it doesn't have to be like the Webster dictionary definition of whatever the word is. It can be your definition.

And then you want to keep them someplace so that you can constantly be reminded of them, that you can constantly lean on them and use them. I'm going to give you lots of examples of how to do this. But if you do that and if you keep them kind of at the forefront of your mind, of your desk, or wherever you want to keep them, they can be the guide for most things that you do in your business.

So here are some examples of how you can use values and why they're so important. So, first of all, your values are going to help differentiate you in the coaching industry and help you stand out. What? Yes, your values heavily influence your marketing and your selling and your coaching, but we'll get to that in a second.

I'll give you an example of this. When I say they help you stand out, let's say you are a marriage coach. Actually, let's say we have two different marriage coaches, right? For one of them, their value, let's say there's one marriage coach, her value is faithfulness or loyalty, right? Like that is a value of hers. There is another marriage coach whose value is, maybe they have a value of autonomy or freedom, or something along those lines. Or independence.

Those two marriage coaches, even though they are both marriage coaches, both relationship coaches, they use those values. If they talk



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about them in their marketing and in they're selling, they're going to come across as very different and they're going to be for two very different people, right?

So the marriage coach whose value is faithfulness might prioritize couples staying together, couples being faithful, couples saying like, how can we work this out? Like that's the highest priority. Whereas the other one, the marriage coach whose value is autonomy and independence in relationships, that might look a little different. Their teaching might be, I help you choose the healthiest relationship for you, even if that means you being alone, like not being with this person, right? Not prioritizing faithfulness.

As you can see, just in that one example, those are two very different coaches. They're going to talk about their coaching in different ways. They're going to be for very different people, two different people. Like some clients are going to relate to the first coach's values and say like, yes, that is exactly what I want. I'm having troubles in my marriage and I want to work with this coach because I know this coach is going to prioritize me being in this marriage over everything else.

Whereas someone else might see that first coach and say like, oh my gosh, that's totally not for me, right? Like, even if I have decided to stay in this marriage for now, that does not align with my values. I want to really be sure that I have my own independence and autonomy in my relationship, right? They are going to relate a lot more to the second coach. So that's one way, it's going to help you stand out and differentiate yourself.

Then when it comes to your coaching, it's going to help you make decisions and create your processes. So, for example, if you use those same two examples of the two marriage coaches, think about the different processes that they might have for their clients, the things that they might teach their clients. The tools that they might use, the way that they coach, all of that, those values are going to shape those things.

And the more your values are clear to you, because they're operating in the background, no matter what, right? If you think about those two coaches, if

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one of them really believes that no matter what, their client's marriage is whatever, like a sacred vow that should not be broken, blah, blah, blah. If that's their thoughts about marriage, that's always going to be in the background, right? So then if they have a client who wants to hire them and they're like, "Well, I'm considering leaving the relationship," it's not going to be the best fit.

Whereas on the other side, those thoughts are going to be playing in the background, right? Women should be independent. You should have your own voice in every relationship. You should always feel free to leave the relationship, whatever that is. Whatever their beliefs are, those are going to be playing in the background no matter what.

And so the more you can own those things about yourself and lean into them, the more you're going to call in and find the people who resonate with your marketing, resonate with the way you talk about whatever it is that you're talking about, and love the way you coach and the processes you've created for your clients.

Nothing is worse, as the coach or as the client, when your values don't – Now, I'm not saying you have to have the exact same values as every single client or coach, right? Not at all. But when your values vastly differ.

So, for example, if the relationship coach that prioritizes staying together, if they're not clear about that, if that coach isn't clear about that in their marketing and the way they talk about what they do and in their processes and the way they talk about their processes, they might end up with a bunch of clients who don't align with that.

And it will feel bad to them. They'll think they're doing something very wrong because these people are not staying together. They're not staying with their partners. It will feel bad to the clients because it's not the coaching they're looking for, not the teaching they're looking for. We could keep going, right? You can see where that would go and where it might turn into a bad situation.

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And that's an extreme example. Normally it's not going to be that extreme, but even in the smallest ways that you talk about your values in the world and that you share them, you're going to attract different people.

The next thing that they help with is they help you really run your team and communicate with your team or your business manager or anyone who's working for you, especially when those people are interacting with your clients.

So, for example, with my business manager, this is something we talk about. The values, like my values in my business. She understands them. First, we relate a lot to each other. At this point, I only have one full-time employee and it's fairly simple. But when we have this conversation, here are my values, here's how they show up in my business, here's my definition of them, then when she's interacting with my clients, hopefully she's taking those into consideration.

And you can do this with your team too. It'll help create a culture in your company. It will help anyone that works for you communicate with your clients, if you're building a team. It will also help you know, like do I align with certain contractors or certain people that I'm hiring in my business.

And again, let's be very clear, you don't have to have, like if we list out your top five values, they're not going to be the same for really any two people, mostly. But to just know, like, are we kind of on the same page here?

One thing that I think is really important about values work, and this is just for all humans not just coaches, I think it really helps us understand others. Now, one of my very top values is connection. So, of course, it makes a lot of sense when I say this. This is an example of one of my values just like really showing in the way I talk about something.

I think understanding someone else's values, especially when you have a different opinion from them, can really help you understand them and even maybe connect to what it is that they're saying. So I'll give you an example of this. So one of my values is excellence. The way I define excellence, for

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me, is we do the best we can with what we have, always striving to be great.

For me, it's just like I've grown up with that. If I'm going to do something, I want to be good at it. I don't love doing things – I'm really good at learning things but if over time I'm not improving and I'm not good at things, I just don't love to do them. It's just not my favorite.

So when I do commit to something, when I do something, I go all in, right? Like, I'm here for excellence. Not perfection, but excellence. Excellence in delivery, in coaching, in all of that, which is why, probably, this shows up in all of my work, right? It's why I teach being a great coach, because this is one of my highest values.

So I have that value and I talk about why being a great coach is the most important piece of your business. There might be another coach who – And I don't have anyone in mind, I'm sure that you can all think of someone though, who is maybe a business coach and you hear them talk a lot about money. And maybe their value is like female empowerment.

And so I'm talking about coaching and I'm like, obviously, the most important part of coaching is that you are great at what you do, that your clients are getting results, that you know your clients are getting results, you know your process forwards and backwards, all of that, right?

And their message might look like I'm here to help all the women make money. I want to help you make money as a coach. I want to help you do this. I want to help you do this. Or help you make money in your industry. Or help you make money as a business owner. Help you get raises as an employee, like whatever it is, right? Like they talk a lot about money.

Sometimes those can sound opposite, but they're not necessarily. The focus is just somewhere else, like in different places. But if I have a conversation with that person and I'm like, here's why I talk about coaching the way I do, here's why I think it's so important that we're great, excellent coaches.

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And then they are like, well, here's why I think female empowerment, like here's why I love to teach people how to ask for raises at their company, because the more money in the hands of women, the more empowered females are and that's really important to me, right? I'm obviously making this up as I go.

But that becomes a very different conversation. That doesn't have to be the two of us just like, okay, well what we believe is just totally different, so obviously we're never going to see eye to eye. I could hear that and say, oh, yeah, I get that. It might not be my highest value, but I don't disagree with what you're saying. Or even if I do slightly disagree, in some cases I've had this happen with colleagues before where I'm like, I don't know if I totally agree with that, but I understand what you're saying. It helps create understanding.

Think about this, think about recently if you've had a disagreement with someone, maybe it's a family member, it's around holiday time, right? I happen to really enjoy most of my family members, but I know that's not true for a lot of people. I think I'm very lucky when it comes to this. I also think that there are parts of my family that I just don't talk to as often, so that just helps the cause.

So if you consider a disagreement you've had with someone recently, and if you could have had, even if it was in the comment section online somewhere, on social media, wherever it is. If you had the chance to sit down with that person and to say, can you really just explain to me, like without arguing, like before the argument has happened, can you just really explain to me like, why does this feel important for you? Tell me your thought process.

Now, sometimes there's going to be times when you're like, nope, totally disagree. I think you're a terrible person, whatever, right? Like, you're just going to have thoughts. But sometimes if we could really facilitate these conversations between humans when they disagree, there would be so much more understanding, right? There's always more context to

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disagreements than we have, especially when it comes to social media or any other form of disagreement that looks like that.

There's always understanding that we're missing. And, to me, values and communicating our values is where this understanding can come from. Now I know it's certainly not available in every situation. But how this could show up for you as a coach is it could help you with understanding of your clients. It could help you, like if you know that one of your client's values is family and let's say, I don't know, I'm making something up. Let's say you're a business coach and they have this opportunity to go abroad for like two weeks and do these speaking engagements.

And in your mind, as the coach, you're like, this is the best opportunity you could ever have. The decision is so clear, you obviously have to go, right? But you're asking them like, well what do you want to do and whatever. And they're like, well, I honestly don't want to go. And you're like, what? But then maybe you ask more questions, and they say – And they're not going to say, probably, like my value is family.

But they might say something like the most important thing to me is that I'm around for my kids when they have important things happening. And it just happens to be my daughter's first recital that week or whatever. That's going to help you really understand they're making that decision from a different place. Like they're taking something else into consideration that wouldn't have even maybe come up for you.

It can also help you understand when you're watching other coaches, right? Sometimes in the coaching industry there are some disagreements between coaches about how we should be doing things. But if you can look at what other people are doing and just maybe consider, I actually really like to do this, like, what do I think this person's value is? Like what are their top values?

And sometimes my assumption is that there are things that I still would totally disagree with and not use to run my business. But at least I'm like, okay, well, of course, then it makes sense that their message is this.

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The next thing it does is it helps you see, it helps you catch – And this is one of the reasons I think that it's very important to keep them someplace where you remember, where you can see them. It helps you notice when you have gone kind of out of alignment with your values.

So, for example, when you are creating a new process, when you are creating a new coaching container, when you are just creating things for your clients or you're making decisions for your business and something just feels off, the number one thing you can do, in my opinion, is look at your values. Pull them out and say, okay, something is really feeling off.

I will almost always guarantee the answer for why that's happening is in your list of values. Like there's something that is out of alignment with your values. I don't use the word alignment a ton, although it's funny, I don't use it the way some people do, like a more woo or spiritual like living in alignment. But I have been using it a lot lately because, to me, living in alignment just means living in accordance with your values.

When your business feels in alignment, I don't mean like some outside of the box like spiritual practice. I mean is it actually aligned with your truest sense of who you are? With your values? You can feel when it's not, right? You can feel when you make decisions and you're like, oh, something feels off about this.

Let's say you – This feels like a tricky example because some of you maybe have done this and you're going to be like, "Oh, I knew it. That's why," but I'm going to use it anyway. Let's say you raise your prices and there's just something about it that feels really bad. Now, I don't mean, just money drama, or you know. Sometimes we can, some of you, and I've totally been there, where it's like you just have to learn to charge people money, right? If you're a new coach, that might be a thing for you.

But let's say you've been a coach for a while. You've created a new program and you priced it at a point where it just keeps coming up for you like something is not right. Something feels off. Something feels like this is not what I want to do. I would be curious then, if you go to your values and

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see what's there. Like what do you see? What do you find there that might give you clues about why something feels not great?

Hopefully, this was really helpful for you. I love talking about values. I love helping people create their values. I think it is some of the most powerful work you can do, which is why I wanted to do it for this call. I think this will come out like the second to last Tuesday of the year. So if you're listening in real time, happy holidays if you celebrate any of the winter holidays. And Happy New Year coming up.

I'm so glad you're here. I am so, so grateful for you. I want to say that. Again, one of my values is connection, right? I really do feel super connected to you through this podcast. I love it when you tell me your takeaways, when you share things with me, when you're like thank you for recording that. Thank you for saying that. I mean, I kind of love it too when you're like, I disagree, I guess. But I really do love it when you reach out, when you tell me your thoughts, when you share the things, when you share how helpful it is.

So if that's something you would love to do, find me on Instagram at Lindsay Dotzlaf. If you want to do this values work with me and you're in a place where an Advanced Certification makes sense for you, it's something you want to do, it's in your plan for next year, reach out and let me know. We'll put the link in the show notes so that you can book a call with me if that's what you want to do. And otherwise, I will talk to you next week. All right. Goodbye.

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