

Ep #234: How Getting Creative Benefits Your Life and Business with Amanda Gold



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 234.

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 have such a fun treat for you today. I am interviewing my friend and client, Amanda Gold, and she brings, no pun intended, so much gold to this conversation. She is so fun, real, and authentic, and you are going to hear not only that shine through, but also hear some of the really fun ways she thinks about bringing creativity into your daily life, how that might help with you, your coaching, you running your business, just in general, all of it, and just having a much more fun, healthier life. So, without any further ado, I want you to listen to this conversation with Amanda. Here we go.

Hello, I am so happy to have you here today. And I can't wait for everybody to hear about the work you're doing. So, first, introduce yourself, tell everybody who you are and what you do.

Amanda: Well, hello. I'm really glad to be here. Thank you. My name is Amanda Gold, Gold like the color. And I'm a life coach and an artist and a podcaster. I'm a general life coach, so I can help anyone with anything, and I love to do that. But I tend to attract a lot of people who are just kind of stuck creatively and kind of living a life that just doesn't feel quite zazzy enough. And I help people just come alive and feel better in all areas of their life.

Lindsay: So many things you just said we're going to touch on today, but one of my favorite things about you, I'll tell you right now, just going to throw it out here on the podcast, is the words that you say, because zazzy is incredible. And before we started recording, you said, I don't even chunder, I think maybe. And it just makes me so happy.

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Amanda: Oh, thank you. Thank you for that affirmation. I'm like, what am I even saying?

Lindsay: No, it's so great. Because it also like sums up perfectly who you are and you just have such a creative spirit and being around you, I always feel that. And so when you use words that are, that I'm like, oh, that's an interesting creative word. It just feels so on brand.

Amanda: Amazing. Thank you.

Lindsay: Let me ask you first, how did you get into coaching? I don't know if I know this.

Amanda: Ooh, so I was definitely a product of coaching. Coaching changed my life. I was working in the social work field and I was working for this amazing organization that was helping folks experiencing chronic homelessness. And I loved the work, but I was getting really burnt out and I was just realizing I had a lot of negative thoughts about my life in general. So I'm a woman in recovery. I'm sober 11 years. And back then, I'm working at this job, I'm getting burnt out, and I was also newly sober. And I just had a lot of thoughts about my money wasn't what I wanted to be, dating was really hard, everything just felt hard.

And I found life coaching through a podcast and just started coaching myself and then hiring coaches. And it just revolutionized my whole world. I was like, oh, I can be in charge of my brain and change my experience and change how I feel. So, and then when I started thinking about, I could do this for others, I realized being a coach for other people would actually have more of an impact than the work I was doing for a nonprofit or, you know, I still have a heart for that community, but coaching gives me so much more agency and power to help people who want the help.

Lindsay: Okay, so first, I forgot. I did know that story because I was with you not too long ago in person and we did talk about that and it's an

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incredible story. And I love your heart. And second, 11 years is a really big deal and I celebrate you for that.

Amanda: Oh, thank you.

Lindsay: Yes, and I love that you talk about it openly and that you're sharing about it because I think it's important for people to hear.

Amanda: Thank you.

Lindsay: Yeah. All right. So, that was like your, your kind of step in. And then when you started helping people, when you were like, I think I could do this. I think I could help people with coaching. Have you always been doing what you do now or has there been an evolution?

Amanda: The evolution has just been in my confidence and in getting more clear on who I help and with what. Like I know I just said I help everyone with everything, but inside I actually do feel clear on who I'm calling in and what they're struggling with. But I started with one-on-one coaching and that's still where I'm at. So there are some new exciting things on the horizon. So there are evolutions in the works, I should say.

Lindsay: Okay. Yes, yes, yes. Oh my gosh. There are and they are so fun. So everybody needs to just stay tuned.

Amanda: You are helping me pursue them.

Lindsay: Okay, so when you, I know one thing that you coach a lot on or that you help your clients with is creativity. And before we started recording, I, I don't actually now remember what question I asked you, but it was, you were just like describing creativity and why it's important in people's lives. Let's dig into that because you had some really good answers. And I remember some of them, so I could, I can help if needed, but I want to hear your answers to that. Why do you think creativity is so important?

Amanda: My gosh. Yeah. So this was actually one of my first loves. Like even getting that job as a social worker, I was very much like, I want to

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bring creativity into this to help heal trauma and to help people feel better about themselves and their lives. So I'm really passionate about this idea of helping people tap into their creativity. Some of the stuff I was saying to you before was just like, I think that it's radical to be reconnected to our creativity. I think it's a human right. I think it's something we're born with and it gets stamped out of us at a really early age.

I've taught creativity workshops and art classes and stuff and almost everybody has an experience where someone crapped on their art or their creativity, their natural self-expression. And when we're young and that happens, we just retreat, right? We learn that it's not safe to be creative. We think people don't want it. And I think we suffer as we grow up without our creative access.

And so I just get really like, everybody's creative. I want to help you. You deserve to be creative, whatever that looks like for you. I'm very clear that it doesn't mean you have to be an artist per se. Like we're not talking about art with a capital A. I'm talking about something more primal and fundamental and that is everybody deserves to have access to it. So I love to help people feel like they have that.

Lindsay: I couldn't agree more. I think it's so important. I shared with you right before we started here that I've been, one of my goals for this year is to just tap into creativity and grow that for myself and what in lots of different ways. But I realized as since I've been kind of on that journey that yeah, like one of the things that happened for me, I have the story like I'm not very creative, but then I started thinking about it and I was like, this is not true actually. I used to dance a lot, like competitively. I loved dancing and I used to be quite good at art, like when I was younger, like exactly like you said. And I think this thing happened though where I was in high school and I took, I was like, oh, art classes, like that. I was a, I was like a huge overachiever, straight A, whatever student.

And the thought of taking an art class like felt rebellious almost, like I couldn't possibly. And I took two. And the first class I had such a good time.

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And the second class, my teacher was not amazing. I was like, if anyone here that is trying, now I understand if someone's just like not doing the work, but I just had this realization of like, what is, what is happening? How is this a thing? And it did kind of I think stamp out my like, okay, it's just not for me. I'm just not good at art.

Amanda: Interesting. Totally not even true. And it's so interesting. You even had a lot of evidence and history that you were good at it. Oh my god, don't get me started on systems and school systems in particular and just how toxic they can be for that.

Lindsay: We'll do a whole other episode on that.

Amanda: Yeah. Feel like we could. Yeah, we can come back when you're bitch about systems.

Lindsay: Well, and I have two daughters, right? Both teenage daughters. And I see it in them too, right? And I even see it, I think just ingrained in humans, right? Like sometimes my husband will be like, well, why are you doing that? Like draw on paper when one of my daughters is incredible at digital art. And I'm like, no, no. What are you talking about? Like let her do whatever she wants to do. And it's just kind of ingrained in us that there's like a right way to be creative.

Amanda: Yeah, and you make a good point too that sometimes it gets stamped out not maliciously, right? Like an offhand comment or someone trying to be helpful or someone giving criticism. And sometimes if we're young or like highly prone, you're like rejection sensitive, like I was, we can really take that and internalize it. So, yeah, I mean, your husband's not like this malicious like it's gonna mess with her creativity, but you know, just little things like that, we can take those in and it's just interesting. It's a, it can be a fragile thing, right? It's something that needs to be nurtured.

And another context I think that's worth mentioning is the isms that we live in, like oppressive systems and like capitalism and the patriarchy and things like that. They've created this attitude of creativity and art aren't as

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valued. They aren't as important. That that desire for you to create something just for creation's sake is actually really devalued in our culture. And so our art practices or our creativity gets pushed down to once I do my chores, once I take care of the kids, once I do the work. And then it just ends up getting kicked down the road and more and we think we don't have time for it or it's frivolous or we feel guilty when we do engage with it.

Lindsay: Yeah, what do you see with your clients that you work with? How do you see that like kind of when they come to you, like the the before of the doing the work with you? How do you see it affecting them or their lives?

Amanda: Well, usually they're in a lot of pain because they want to be creating and they just can't get to the place where they are. So like one really great example of someone I still work with, she came to me and hadn't made art in five years. And she knew she wanted to make art. Like she used to make art. She felt she had been creative before. And so I developed this patented process, which is called Move One Sock. Because she was talking about how, I'm kidding, it's not patented. It should be though.

Lindsay: Not yet.

Amanda: We were like, why don't you paint, right? And she was like, well, I don't have any space to do it. I don't have anything set up. And so I said, well, what would it, we just broke it down into little baby steps and the easiest strategy of like, what would it take to make some room for you to paint? And she's like, well, I have this pile of laundry, if I moved that. And I said, okay, even moving the pile of laundry was too overwhelming. I said, today your homework is to move one sock. She did. And of course, it ignited this momentum where she cleared the whole place out. But what was also funny, she made a little space for her art and started there.

But she also, it unlocked something where she realized she didn't even need the space. Like she started painting in bed. Just unblocked something

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where she was like, oh, I don't have any more excuses to not make my art or I can just make it anywhere. But now she has designated space for the art and she just does it. It's just become who she is, which is awesome. So, did that answer your question? Or like...

Lindsay: Yeah, no, that absolutely answered the question. And what, so when that happens just with her, with other clients, when they start to incorporate more of that, what changes outside of the actual act of painting? Like what else changes in their life?

Amanda: Oh, it's so exciting. It's like, they come alive, right? Like our creative spirit, it provides us with this life force energy. Like I think it connects us to spirit, like to something divine, something bigger in our lives. And when it's pinched off, it's like we don't have that blood flow to our limbs or something. And so when people get connected back to it, like back to that source, they're just happier, they feel better, they're more confident.

This is one of my favorite transformations to see is that they trust themselves more. They're able to listen to their intuition more. I think those two things are really linked too, your creativity and your intuition. So they listen to that, they follow that more. So then more magical things happen in their lives because they're feeling more confident to go for that thing or to put that idea out there.

Physical pain goes down. Part of what I was studying in school was art therapy and it was fascinating to see what art practices could do for mental health symptoms and physical body chronic pain symptoms. So just basically everything gets better. So.

Lindsay: I love that. And I will share for the listener that I already shared this with you, but I have been, like I said, tapping into this creativity. And one thing I've been doing is painting. And I really, I told you, but I just started with like, just get the paper and just get paint on it. Period. Doesn't matter. It can be just like the paint equivalent of scribbles, right? Just streaks across the page, whatever it is, but just let my hand start moving

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and don't be afraid to like mix the colors and, you know, whatever. And I do it with my daughter, so that also feels really fun. But what I've noticed is I actually have to be a little careful when I do it in the evenings, we put on music and then we just paint. And it's so fun, but it actually really energizes me.

Amanda: You get all excited and can't go to sleep?

Lindsay: Yes. And and I'm like, oh, that's so interesting, right? Because sometimes what I might be doing instead is watching TV or, you know, just relaxing, getting ready for bed and winding my day down. And yeah, I'm like, oh, this creates like it unlocks a store of energy somewhere in my body that I didn't even know was there.

Amanda: And what's so funny, first of all, y'all, audience listeners, I have to say Lindsay has the coolest poker face. Like I'm telling her about why I think creativity is so important and then she just says, yes, I've been painting and experiencing all these things and it's awesome. It was just like, I'm still so excited to hear that you're doing that. And I also feel so excited for your daughter, like to watch you. Think about what we learn, right? We hear the adults around us saying stuff about their creativity or I'm not an artist. And then so I love that you're pushing back on that and you guys are exploring that together. It's so cool. I just want to celebrate that.

But the thing I was going to say too is like, that's a big excuse that people use why not to be creative is I don't have the energy. I don't have the time. And it's like, you know, you and I are both coaches so we know that thing about like often the thing that's the objection for why you're not going to hire your coach is the exact reason you need to hire your coach. It's the same thing. Whatever you're telling yourself about why you can't do it is your creativity as a practice or as an unlocked place inside of you would actually help you in those areas.

Lindsay: Yeah. I mean, I will say, I've been experiencing it. And I also for anybody listening, just so you know, this is where I started is when I had

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surgery in December, I was like, painting is going to be part of my healing. It's something I can do, you know, laying in bed or whatever. And so I bought some of those like paint by number canvas things. And I realized pretty quickly that it just wasn't very, it's kind of enjoyable in a way, but it really triggers my perfectionism. You know, because it's there are lines and you paint within them and you paint this one specific color in the line.

And I could just feel that it did not have the same effect as just allowing myself to just kind of freely do whatever I want and be like it didn't really feel honestly very creative. It felt more like, I don't know what a comparison would be. Almost more like writing sales emails or doing things that are like, here's like a strategy, here's how I'm going to get it done. It just felt a lot different.

Amanda: Yeah. I like that kind of stuff for regulating my nervous system. Like I love a color by number. It's a pixel thing. That feels more like it calms my brain down and distracts me. So it for sure has value and I'm not trying to crap on it, but it is interesting and I'm glad you notice like this isn't quite, that's not the same thing as taking that leap and letting yourself just explore color and gesture and medium and all that. Yeah. I'm glad you figured that out.

Lindsay: Thank you. I'm having a lot of fun with it. So I love talking to you about this too, because I am just kind of in the middle of all of it myself. What do you think when your clients or for you, I know you do a lot of art. How do you use it in your life? How do you think about creativity and what do you use it for?

Amanda: Oh, wow. Well, when you ask that, the first thing that comes to mind is how much it supported me in early sobriety. When I first hit recovery, I had been drinking and using for 17 years. And so taking that away, I had a lot of stuff coming up. And, you know, old trauma and the things that I drank over and the stuff I was trying to numb, I could suddenly feel. And so making art, I threw myself into the series of charcoal portraits that were connected to mythology. Like they were based on this book,

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Women Who Run with the Wolves. And making that art and getting messy and putting this stuff on the page really supported me through these hard times in my recovery when everything was so raw and emotional.

I still return to it for that to this day. Like one of the hardest things I've lived through happened a couple years ago. I'm still grieving it. It's kind of an ongoing painful thing. And I love knowing that I can turn to my creative practice and there's so many different ways to engage with it, right? I love encouraging people to explore lots of different mediums and stuff because what you need can only be reflected in a certain medium, right? Like painting might not feel good if your life already feels really messy. So maybe you want to come to a fabric thing or sewing or clay or I don't know. There's just, but I'm really grateful. Art really holds me or the creative process and creativity really holds me and gives me a place to process big emotions.

I also use it to celebrate and just burn energy. And if I'm brainstorming, this is awesome if you're a coach running a business to have some kind of creative practice that you can go to that isn't technically connected to your business, but you can go like think about your business while you're working on some art or being creative somehow. And it can really loosen things up, help you make new connections. It's just so supportive in every single way that I could think of. But I hope those are some good clear examples.

Lindsay: Oh my gosh. Yeah, that's exactly what I was wondering. I often say that I get my best ideas when I'm moving in some way. Like I'm showering, I'm it's like my hands are kind of busy, right? I'm doing something or even just walking around the block, walking my dog, whatever. I get so many more ideas and even if it's like something that I'm feeling stressed about or feeling stuck, thinking through it while doing something like that is so useful for me that I've been considering like, oh, do I get an, you know, easel or something in my office that's like just allows me to just kind of do that throughout the day when I am just like sitting at the computer thinking about it just isn't the answer, right? Which sometimes

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that feels pretty true. Like I'm never going to come to the answer just sitting here forcing myself to work on this thing.

Amanda: Well, I think that's always true, right? And that's something that's really helpful about the creative process is it taps you back into something fun and light and natural about you, which is I think where we always have our best ideas when we're not under pressure, when we're not overthinking things or crapping on ourselves or worrying about the future, right? Like our creative selves are just free and connected to life in such this beautiful way. It always has answers and solutions and ideas.

Lindsay: Yeah. Yeah, sometimes I feel like when I'm doing things like that or not even purposefully like maybe I'm like, okay, I'm going to think through this while I'm working on this thing, but usually it's a little more loose than that. It's a little like, let me just kind of paint or take a shower or, you know, whatever. I'm not specifically like, I'm and I'm going to strategize this thing while I do it. It really feels more like, you know, when people describe an idea that just like drops in or that it just like pops out of nowhere. That's usually the experience I have when I'm doing something with my hands, being a little more creative. Then I'm like, oh, wait, I can't not stop and like write this down or like capture this. Which is very different experience than forcing it.

Amanda: Yes. And the results that you get, like the answers you get that pop up because you're connected to something, like call it your creativity or your authentic self or spirit or whatever. Those feel better as the solutions than like you can create stuff. We can use our brains and like we can force it and effort it and like really strategize some shit. Like, and it'll work, but it never feels as good as like, I'm just kind of letting things come through and supporting that process. I think it's good to know how to do both.

Lindsay: So, for people that are listening that are like, oh, I'm intrigued by this. How could I, you know, weave more creativity into my days, nights, whatever. Do you have any suggestions of like where to start or either either that or other examples because we've been talking mostly about

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painting, but doesn't have to be that. And I'm just curious, like what else do you have? What could help them?

Amanda: Well, I think one of the biggest roadblocks or myths that people have is that they need to have a lot of time set aside to do this, right? So the first thing I would say is like, trust that five or 10 minutes is enough. Like one of the things I have going on right now is a paper tube from wrapping paper. We used all the wrapping paper and all that was left was like this brown paper underneath. I taped that to my walls and I just go, I make these big gestures with a pastel thing like from my desk on the way to the bathroom. I can just make some marks, right?

Lindsay: That's very different than what we do with wrapping paper tubes, which is talk through one end at my dog and it totally freaks her out and she runs away.

Amanda: Depending on the tube. My cats hate it, but I think it's adorable.

Lindsay: Yes. Yeah, pretty much. Okay, good. I was going to say I torture my dog, but then I was like, you might not like that. So to be fair, that is kind of what we do. Cuz she doesn't love it. But then she kind of like gets frisky and it's funny. Whatever.

Amanda: What enrichment. I like to drop a treat down the tube and then it goes.

Lindsay: Oh yeah. good one.

Amanda: Got you. I love that you said that. We get side tracked.

Lindsay: That's creative too. Let's give that a shout out.

Amanda: It is. Yes. It actually is a perfect segue into the other thing I would say, which is don't put so much pressure on it. Like one of the things you shared about your painting, if I may say, is you notice the thought was there that this isn't very good, right? If you just think about thinking that thought to yourself, it just sucks your energy. Of course, why would you

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stay with it? But having some sort of response about like, this is just for me, the act of creating is so valuable. It doesn't have to be good. It's not for anybody else. It's for me.

And that's the thing I would say too is the action of being creative, whatever that means to you, it is nourishing all by itself. So try not to get hung up on what it looks like or what other people are doing or is this art or not? Like let that go and just let yourself be creative and try. Just try some shit, right? You could have a sketchbook at your desk that you just make marks in. Tack things up on your wall so you can walk by and just make a swipe at it every time you walk by. That's really fun.

Lindsay: What are you swiping it with? Did you say?

Amanda: I have a pastel crayon.

Lindsay: Okay. Okay.

Amanda: They're really fun because they're soft and chalky. I also hung up a big canvas in my kitchen one time and I could paint on that and it was thick enough that it didn't go on the walls. And because creativity is our human right, there is no reason why you can't engage with it. I don't care what size house you're living in. I don't care how busy you are. I don't care if you're broke. There's always a way to be creative. Like when I taught this art workshop for folks in recovery and we didn't have any formal art supplies. One of the assignments was to go outside, find some things, whether it's trash in the alley or an interesting stick or a rock, and come back and we'll work with that. So there's no excuse not to be creative. It's your birthright. So keeping that in mind, I think is helpful too.

Lindsay: This actually reminded me, I don't know if I've talked about this on here before or not, but this same concept and it felt so powerful when I was first coaching, I don't know, in the first couple years of my business, I would go to, I knew a woman who ran a women's shelter kind of near me. And kind of knowing I had coaching tools and like maybe those could be useful, but I was by no means trying to sell coaching or, you know, it was just like, I

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just want to help. Is there anything I can do? And one day I had just happened to have a bunch of like random art. My kids were little at the time. I'm talking like Crayola markers and like construction paper or something. At the last minute I was like, you know what? I should just bring this in.

And then that was like a thing I did every time I went is I would bring some type of art supplies and they just watching them, like just even there were a couple women that would just come and sit with us and not really talk much, right? But when I started bringing art supplies, they would just immediately they were like, yep, I'm in. And they would just pick it up and just start doing whatever. Like some of them would draw specific things. Some of them were actually incredible at some of it, but it just seemed to help them so much.

Amanda: I used that in my social work. Like I would, we had a clubhouse and I also facilitated groups and I would bring in art supplies and it just makes my heart so full just to think about how healing that can be for folks and how accessible, right? You don't have to talk, you don't have to participate. It meets everyone where they're at with any levels of trauma they might have or just comfort levels. And what I did notice, I'd be curious if you notice this too, is did they open up more while they were making art? Like sometimes that act of creating can spur them to talk more or to share more. Did you notice that?

Lindsay: Definitely. And at least opened up more to me, right? Because I wasn't there as a therapist. I didn't have like a like, here's what we're trying to do today, right? It was really just me hanging out with them, talking to them, kind of giving them like human moments in between some of the stuff that they were, you know, dealing with in their life at the time.

And yeah, it just, it definitely made them more open and vulnerable and able to even maybe like laugh a little and just be who they I think probably really are versus just like them in a shit situation, whatever it was that they

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were dealing with at the time and like that being their identity. It was more of like, oh yeah, like this is just me sitting here having a conversation.

Amanda: Yeah. Oh, I love that you did that. It's so cool.

Lindsay: And I did weave in. I never was like, and here's a coaching thing you can, but I did weave in, right? Like I would, they knew what I did. And so I could talk about it, but I was never like, get out my whiteboard and like, let me show you how to, you know, I don't know, let me a thought download or something. But I would just weave in little tiny tips and I just always think like, hopefully they took some of that with them.

Amanda: As someone who's been on both sides of like healer and someone being healed, which it's always the same anyways. It's not like I always. But I know that stuff matters. And in especially like you said, coming in at an angle that's not so like the system, the courts, the paperwork, the whatever, right? And that's why we all thrive under that sort of care, even when we're just giving it to ourselves. There's something in us that's fundamental that perks up when it sees, wait, I have permission to just be myself? Because that's essentially what we're talking about. Creativity is like what links you to your authentic self, like your authentic self-expression. And we have to be able to do that or it messes with us.

Lindsay: So I know I asked a version of this, but I'm going to ask it maybe in a different way. Do you use creativity or art? Do you use it strategically in your life? Like do when you feel, for example, if you're sitting at your desk and you're like, I'm going to write a Facebook post or whatever it is you might be doing, and you're feeling stuck. Do you think in that moment, I should do some art? I should go, you know, whatever the thing is, I should make marks on my thing on my wall? Or is it a little more organic and natural?

Amanda: I do use it strategically, not as often as I would like. Like, it's good that I'm talking about this because it reminds me of just how much it does help and how easy it is even for me who's so passionate about this and

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teaches it and coaches on it, I can still fall away from it. Like you really have to advocate for yourself when it comes to this practice, right? But one of my favorite ways to use it is I have made collages when I'm calling in a new client. I have spent time with color and just images thinking about how I want the new relationship to feel. What does my ideal client, what is she like in artistic terms?

Lindsay: Oh, I love that. Oh my gosh.

Amanda: Making these collages. Okay. And like signed a client the next day. And I think it's really special to show them later. Like I attract clients who are down with that. Like we pull tarot cards, like we... But I'll show them sometimes. I'll be like, look, this was the collage I made before I even knew who you were, right? And it's kind of I've thought about actually making postcards out of them and sending them to my clients like as a welcome. Wouldn't that be sweet?

Lindsay: You must. That would be amazing. Yes. Oh my goodness. I'm so glad I asked this question. I almost pivoted because I was like, how do I ask it? But this is the coolest thing I've ever heard. I love it.

Amanda: Well, it really gets me in a space of like kind of what you were talking about where I can sit at my desk and like really try to figure out what to say to attract a client or, you know, how to get her to know that I'm here to help. It gets me back in that right energy of just relax, all is well. I mean, think about how much it helps your nervous system. If you can sit down and make some art, your nervous system, the little lizard brain goes, oh, we must be okay.

And I think sitting at our computer and forcing ourselves to work can feel very much like running from the lion. And when you sit and make art, you calm yourself down. Then I'm not only more connected to just allowing good things to happen and being the coach that people want to hire, but then I also have this cool piece of artwork that I can look at and remember

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the energy that I want to be in and why I do what I do and it's all infused in that thing and yeah, it's fun.

Lindsay: One thing I've noticed when I think about like the paint by number versus just watercolor is what I've been mostly doing. And I think the reason I love that is because when I'm watercoloring, there's always the option to just like add more water and let it be very flowy on the page and just kind of cover the whole page. And it literally sometimes feels like because I can be overthinker. I can get a I can have a little anxiety. And it feels like when my starting with my hand is forced to just like loosen up and like go with the flow, then it's like it infects the rest of my body, right?

Versus the paint by number is kind of the opposite. I think that's why I had that reaction to it was like stay in the line and obviously because of the way I was thinking about it, but also like those are the technically those are the instructions. I guess I could not if I wanted to. But it just has a different feel. It's more rigid versus just really letting my hand do what it wants and then like my body follow.

Amanda: Yeah. I love that you chose watercolor because that's one of the mediums that a lot of people hate because you have the least amount of control is what it said a lot about watercolor. And so that's really interesting that you if you're trying to get off of that over control or overthinking or the anxiety stuff, that's cool that you gravitated towards watercolor because there really is, you've probably experienced it can be just kind of does whatever it's going to do and it's really hard to replicate the same mark twice and if not.

Lindsay: That's my favorite part about it, right? I love that I can just like add a ton of water or then like take a brush just in the paint and just put like a dot and then it'll like spread. I am obsessed with that. I'm like, yes, this is what I love.

Amanda: I love the to hear you talking about it. I think it's going to help so many people that want to be more creative but are kind of afraid to let

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themselves cut loose that way because there is this sort of humbling thing about like, I am not good at this and this sucks and I'm judging it and I and I don't like how that feels, right? And I love that you're sharing like, no, on the other side, there is just so much enjoyment and satisfaction.

Lindsay: I'll have to show you pictures. Maybe if I'm really brave, maybe I'll show them to everybody. But my daughter who's actually really incredible and she's like, here's a wheelbarrow full of flowers and it has all these intricate designs. And then mine is like a very abstract, I don't know. I don't even know how to describe it. But she's always like, oh, what is that? And I'm like, I don't know. And she's like, okay.

Amanda: Amazing.

Lindsay: She always says it's so beautiful. I'm like, thank you. It's okay. It's just we couldn't be doing. We're using the same exact same medium and couldn't be doing more opposite things with it, which I think is really fun.

Amanda: Yeah. And if you're interested in the brain science of that, like the watercolor thing where you're picking your own color, you're picking your own brush, there are no instructions, there are no rules. That freaks a lot of people out, but it's that not having control, but it connects you to a part of your brain that is that creative self, right? Like the possibilities are endless and I can do it however I want, right? Versus like a paint by number or something, it's like, these are the rules, these are the instructions. And you're going to stay in that right brain. No, left brain. Anyways, we use both parts, but it makes sense why you would feel a different effect going through there.

Lindsay: Yeah. I always get confused right and left brain. I don't know why I'm always get it wrong.

Amanda: The right side is the creative, nonverbal.

Lindsay: For some reason, it seems like it should be the other way.

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Amanda: Right? I don't know. I like that's why it hangs me up too because I'm like left.

Lindsay: Every time I'm like, that's not right. That can't be right. Even though I know it's true. Okay. Let's diverge just a bit from this because you are in my mastermind, Reimagine. And you said something one day that I was like, wait, back up. Say that again. And that's when I was like, you have to be on the podcast. This we have to talk about this. And then of course I thought about all this amazing stuff that you do that we of course needed to talk about. But this...

Amanda: It wasn't even the original thing.

Lindsay: Just this just like caught me in a way that I was like, I've literally never heard someone say this and we must talk about it. Do you remember the context? Why were you talking about it?

Amanda: So we're talking about a celebration drawer that I have. And it's basically what it sounds like. It's a drawer full of delightful treats and treasures that I stock for myself when I need a boost. And I think we were talking about it, it came up because I reached into it. Like I was like, ooh, I need something out of my treat drawer. Like I think I had just gotten coached or I was like getting ready to start something and I was like, I'll do this thing. We were kind of doing accountability stuff like what's the next step? And I was like, oh, and when I do that step, I'll take something out of my treat drawer. And you were like, whoa, what? What is going on over there?

Lindsay: Yes. Okay. So celebration drawer, is that what you call it?

Amanda: I call it many things, celebration drawer or a treat drawer or yeah.

Lindsay: Okay. Describe it. What it's actually a drawer in your desk?

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Amanda: Yeah. I have one of those filing cabinets where it's got three thin drawers for pens and stuff. And then the bottom one is supposed to have files.

Lindsay: And you're like, that's boring.

Amanda: No thank you.

Lindsay: Okay. And so instead, it's full of what?

Amanda: It's full of toys and treats and things that bring me joy. I'd be happy to give you like we could open it and I could just tell you like here's what's in it.

Lindsay: Yeah, show me a couple things.

Amanda: Okay, let's see. There's a string of LED lights that I think will be really fun in my office to make it kind of more magical at night. There's cookies from Hawaii when we went. I loved their shortbread so I saved some there. And there's some glitter body spray. It's just shimmery. just going to make me feel real judged up and special and sassy. There's like some gourmet hot chocolate packets. There are stickers. There's Play-Doh. There's just like a bunch of different stuff.

And I try to include stuff for all the senses. So it's not just for a reward, but it's also for nervous system calming and emotional regulation. When I was a social worker, I learned about wrap plans, W R A P, which is like wellness and recovery action plan. And one of the things we learned for that was using your senses to regulate and calm and soothe yourself. So there's like a fuzzy alpaca swatch of fur that we had gotten for the cats. The cats want nothing to do with it, but I'm like, this is the softest thing I've ever touched. So it made it into the drawer.

So it's cool because when I'm out and about, I'm always looking for things to put in the drawer. And I don't spend a ton of money. I just buy a truffle here, a sticker pack there, right? So its fun factor really expands way

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beyond when I open the drawer and use something. There's the anticipation of, ooh, I'm going to open up that drawer soon. And then there's also like, today sucked. I'm going to go dig in that drawer and pull out a few things.

Lindsay: I love it. So you really use it for lots of different...

Amanda: Lots of things. Yeah.

Lindsay: Which I actually really love that even more so than just like, oh, I did the thing and now I get a treat, right? Like just like the only you only get a reward when you have hit the goal or when you've done the whole thing or, you know, whatever.

Amanda: I wanted it to not be just for that, right? Like I want it to be like, hey, you're awesome. Here's a thing from the drawer.

Lindsay: Yeah. Or like you're working on something and maybe you need to feel the fuzzy Alpaca thing to get yourself through it. Okay. For the listener, it looks a little like a dead...

Amanda: It doesn't look dead.

Lindsay: Rodent? I don't know. But it does look very soft.

Amanda: It was going so well until people hear that my drawer is full of weird shit that looks like dead animals.

Lindsay: No, it looks so soft. And actually Alpaca fur is so soft. So I can only imagine what it looks like. But just the way you held it and dangled it by the top just looked a little like you were pulling a road.

Amanda: Yeah, I sort of dangled it in front of the camera. I also have some glitter glue that is also scented. Oh, and I told you this, I think this is helpful for listeners because we talk about, oh, I don't have time to be creative or to do a nice thing for myself. That's such a myth. So, like I put in a pack of really fun glue sticks because I like to collage. But I also attached a post-it

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note that said, you also get 15 minutes to play with this. So it's tempting as you'll pull something out and be like, cool, I'll do that later and then you never do it. So if it's an activity, really awesome to actually gift yourself some time and honor that time and go play.

Lindsay: And how do you choose what... Do you like close your eyes and just like grab something? Do you look in there strategically? Like how does that part work?

Amanda: Yeah, sometimes I like know what kind of sense needs a boost, right? Like I had put in a vanilla roller, you know, bougie scented oils in there. So I was like, I'm going for that. But yeah, I've also done the just hand in, let myself be surprised and delighted, which is fun. And it's funny that we're talking about this, how much it does connect to creativity because play and fun and delight are very intricately woven into creativity. Like the more creativity we have, the more access we have to our playful childlike side. And so tending to that with little treats and, you know, never being too sophisticated or professional to have alpaca fur in your drawer or whatever. It really helps you keep that alive.

Lindsay: I think I'm going to need to find some. I love it. Okay. I really love the idea for this. I think everybody listening should figure out like what is there? Doesn't have to be a whole drawer. Do you have other suggestions of like, do you help your clients do this? Do they have?

Amanda: Oh yeah. Every single client I've ever worked with benefits from learning how to celebrate themselves and to be their own cheerleader, right? We're trained in this world, like here's why we need life coaching is because we're trained to get it from other people. Like my dad would be proud of me, then I could be happy. If my clients would hire me, then I'll feel successful. If if if if if, if my boss gives me a raise, then I know I'm doing a good job. We need to learn how to love on ourselves, believe we're doing a good job, tell ourselves good shit. And the other thing is we need to know how to celebrate ourselves so that when other people are validating us or celebrating us, we can actually take it in.

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Lindsay: Yes. Oh, that's so good. Mhm.

Amanda: Yeah. So this goes I do teach clients to have some version of either a file of fab, you might have heard it called like I didn't invent that idea. I didn't even invent the celebration drawer either. I heard it called a comfort drawer and it was meant to be filled with just things that bring you comfort on a hard day. But yeah, I've given it my own twist and I do teach people to do some version of it in their own lives. Yes.

Lindsay: Are there other ways that you've seen it implemented?

Amanda: Yes. Another thing I do is I'll write down six things that I wish I had time for, like that I would be doing if I wasn't working so hard. Like reading, sitting outside in the sun, just real simple things, right? And then I roll a dice.

Lindsay: Going to Hawaii. You know, simple things.

Amanda: Yeah. Oh my god. I can't wait to be that fabulously rich that I'm just like put that on the thing of things to just do when I'm feeling a little peckish or tired. Jump off to Hawaii. No, a couple little treats, right? Like time treats or like self care kind of treats. And then I'll roll a dice, a D6. I love dice. Ask I should have a button that's like ask me about dice. I have a million ways to use them. But I'll roll it and it'll, you know, number two is read for 15 minutes. I just do that. And so that's just kind of a fun way to inject some, you know, you do 30 minutes on your podcast and then you roll the dice and you get 15 minutes of fun. And it kind of gamifies it, it makes it playful. It randomly picks something which my brain loves.

Lindsay: Okay, listen, I'm obsessed with all of these. Everybody needs to hire Amanda. Period. This podcast is over. Thank you for being here.

Amanda: I just had to find ways that work for me. And so, yeah, it ends up being a good time and I love teaching this stuff and talking about it and helping people just find different fun ways to do things and make it workable.

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Lindsay: And one thing I'm guessing and please correct me if I'm wrong, but it, you know, sometimes like maybe because you are sober, you've had to be a little more creative with some, I think as a society, we can be a little lazy with celebration, right? Where it's like, oh, food or wine or champagne or whatever, which all great and for me, I love all those things. And also, these are just so much more creative and really get more of your senses, right? Get more of your senses involved than just like the one off like a glass of champagne or a which you can, of course, enjoy that with many senses.

Amanda: They make mini champagne, which I think are adorable and you should totally put it in your drawer. I think I first saw that on the office, right? Jim got himself a little bottle of champagne in his desk drawer. But it's true, speaking of creativity, I had to get creative because after I put down the alcohol and the drugs, I couldn't go to that for treats and celebration, which was definitely my go-to for everything. But then it became food. And then all I knew how to celebrate or give myself a treat was, ooh, a cookie, ooh, a cupcake. And I still love a celebratory... Do you know Chuao chocolates? Do they have those in Indiana? Chuao? They make like potato chip or they make one with pop rocks in it.

Lindsay: Oh, yes, I do know these. Yes, yes, yes.

Amanda: Yeah. So I love to have some stuff like that. But what I try to do is not have that be my go-to or the only way I knew how to celebrate. So this has been a good way to get creative about like, what do I actually long for? And how could I interject more of that into my life? And that's why it feels so nourishing is drinking or or food is kind of low hanging fruit or like scrolling, you know, a treat sometimes can be, I'm just going to lay down and play my phone game or scroll on social media. You know, use discernment, that could be helpful, right? Listeners.

But sometimes not really like touching the thing that we really need nourishing, right? So that's what I try to think of in the celebration drawer is

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just like, what do you really need to feel seen and loved and cared for. And that's been that's been really nice to focus on that.

Lindsay: I really do love that. And I think hopefully this is relatable for most people listening or they're going to be like, okay, she's a mess. What's happening? But when I am feeling quite stressed, I do love a game like those stupid merge games that like no brain cells. It takes zero brain cells to play them. And you just like merge the food or whatever. But what I notice is that how I feel after, right? Which it first of all, maybe is just like numbing out, right? There's no and I'm not saying that I shouldn't ever be doing that. I think it's totally fine, especially if I'm like waiting at the airport. Like I get super bored sometimes. Get through. Yeah. And I just can't work at the airport. So that's sometimes that's just what I do.

But there's a difference between that and then just doing it consistently to where when I think I heard you say, especially thinking about the list of the six things, like if I wasn't doing this, what would I be doing? Like that's not something that would ever be on the list, right? Like that's just like a filler activity that I'm not really getting much joy or really anything from whereas reading for 15 minutes, walking around the block, like whatever those things would be, like what the things I would be doing if I wasn't, you know, working, if I wasn't doing this, would never be that ever.

Amanda: That's such a good point. Yeah, and it's not too, like one of the things I coach my clients on a lot, like one of the things that comes up is if they do try to take this time off, they're guilting themselves about what they're doing, right? Like I have one client who her guilty pleasure, quote unquote guilty, it's not nothing to be guilty about, but brain says she likes romance novels, right? But she's also a very intelligent, socially justice minded person.

So her brain kind of goes, oh, you're reading this trashy stuff. You shouldn't be doing it. So that doesn't feel restful because she hasn't given herself permission to do it. So there's that too. You've got to give yourself permission. And the the best thought I have for that is to just tell yourself

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this is what this time is for. But I love how you said like, pay attention to how you feel after because it's a whole learning process, right? And some days that does feel so nourishing to just zone out on the couch to a game for 15 minutes. But some days it's just the easy thing and you don't actually feel better after and we want to pay attention to that.

Lindsay: Yes. Okay. This has all been so amazing. So let's wrap it up just a little bit, bring it home. First, I want you to talk about if people are listening and they're intrigued by everything that you're saying, they should come join you for a workshop you have coming up.

Amanda: We can thank or blame Lindsay for this, depending on how it turns out.

Lindsay: Great. I'll take it.

Amanda: But she gave me this beautiful kick in the butt that I was so ready for. It was to just go ahead and throw another workshop out there. So on the 28th of April, which as of this recording, it's two weeks from today, but it'll be a week from whenever, I think. Anyways, the 28th, I'm just going to go ahead and teach a creativity workshop. And it's not an art workshop, it's about how to unblock your creativity, how to have more fun with your creativity, how to identify more as a creative and see your life improve for doing that.

Lindsay: Yes. Amazing. And we will put that link in the show notes so they can sign up. Listen, everybody should sign up. Amanda is incredible. She will teach you some things. And go to the show notes. We will, we will definitely put it there. And you also have a podcast.

Amanda: I do have a podcast. I think so much thanks to you because I had been wanting to do a podcast for years and then I was in Lindsay's mastermind and low, it exists and I'll be publishing episode eight, I think this week. So yeah, I have a podcast.

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Lindsay: Which is a really big, huge celebration. Big number for someone. Everybody, that's listening, you need to just like pause for a second and celebrate Amanda. This has been a huge work of just passion, but also has come with some bumps that you have gotten through beautifully.

Amanda: Oh, thank you. Well, you helped me so much. So yeah, I love doing it now. Like just a shout out too, if you're sitting on something and you're scared to do it or you think it's going to suck or whatever, just do it anyways if you feel called to do it because I will tell you the the feeling that I'm getting just from getting it out there and creating it feels so good. Even if nobody ever listens to it, even if nothing comes of it, I just feel so pleased for making it, right? So thank you for helping me do that.

Lindsay: Okay, I'm just going to ask you right on the spot. I'm going to put you on the spot here live on the podcast. Live? It's not live, but they, you know what I mean. Will you record a second episode with me? Because I actually think we should talk all about that.

Amanda: Everybody, you can't see, but my cheeks are glowing with blushing delight. I'm like, Lindsay is a treasure and I can't believe I feel like this whole podcast I've been kind of floating outside of my body to get to talk to you like this. It's such an honor. So heck yes, I would absolutely love to do another podcast and talk about this because it's been coming up a lot like, oh, everybody needs to know. I mean, that's part of why I'm a coach, like what I like to encourage people to do is like, do the thing.

But I get stuck too, but every time I push myself, you know, with love to actually do the thing, it's so rewarding just in that act of creation. So people don't know what they're missing out on. Like we think we're guarding ourselves from rejection and embarrassment and failure, but really we're blocking ourselves from so much joy and satisfaction and fun. So yeah, we should totally have an episode and talk about that.

Lindsay: I think it it's going to be so good.

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Amanda: Yes. We be guests on my podcast and we'll just talk. We'll just talk. Okay. Yes. That's all we do now, actually. It's be on each other's podcast. Okay. I what it's called because I didn't say that yet. I just got too excited that it exists.

Lindsay: Oh, yeah. Yes. Tell them what it is. What is the podcast? Where can they find it?

Amanda: It's called Unlightened.

Lindsay: And where did you get the idea for that? Like to what is the podcast about? What's the why should they listen?

Amanda: Well, I'm a big spiritual seeker, right? Like I believe in a higher power. I lean on the divine and spirit for everything in my life. And also, I have seen a lot of spiritual communities or spirituality can go in a way where it's like trying to transcend your humanity or trying to like love and light your way past it. And so it's called unlightened because I really believe like the way to feeling how we want to feel and being as connected as we want to be is actually to sink deeper into the mud and the mess of being human and all of our faults and imperfections and like there's divinity in that.

And so that's kind of what it where it came from and what it's about. And there's three pillars that I kind of talk about all through it, which is spirituality, creativity, and recovery. So even if you've never done any drugs or had a problem with alcohol, I think we're all in recovery on some level from oppressive systems, from corporate bullshit, you know, if we're coming out of corporate workplaces, starting our own businesses, our own negative thinking, we can be addicted to. So, yeah, that's what I'm trying to help people with is those things.

Lindsay: I love it. They should definitely listen. And where can they find it? Just anywhere podcasts are available?

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Amanda: Yeah. And if you don't find it somewhere that you want it, let me know because I'd love to figure out how to put it out there.

Lindsay: Perfect. All right. And if they're listening and they just love you, want to find you, follow you, see what you're working on, see what you're doing, point them in the right direction.

Amanda: Well, first just picture me giving you a digital hug. I'm so excited to meet new people and I'm so excited to it's just such a treat to welcome new people in. So thank you if any of this was interesting and you want to hang out, I would love to have you. I just built a little website that I like, so you can find me at amandagoldlifecoach.com. And you can access the podcast through the website. I have connected little buttons. You can sign up for an email list through my website. You can find me on Facebook. I'm still there, rocking it out. Yeah, I would love to know you. I would love to meet you and hear how I can help or just give you a high five virtually.

Lindsay: All right. This was really great. I'm so grateful that you came on and wanted to talk about all of this and that you're going to be on again. We're just going to do it again, talk about something different. Thank you for having me. I feel amazing. I love talking about this. Thank you so much.

Amanda: Of course.

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.