

## Ep #256: The Power of Honesty & Transparency in Relationships: Launch Secrets (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 256.

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, as always. And I hope you're in for a treat. I have something planned for you. So last week, I did an entire huge dump of a full launch experience. I shared some fails, I shared some wins, I shared literally every detail. It was an audio recording from a video that I posted inside of Coach Unfiltered, which is where I'm sharing full behind the scenes of everything I'm currently working on. First of all, if you're not in there, there's still plenty of time to join. You should do that. I'll put the link in the show notes. But that's not what this is about today.

So after sharing it, I was thinking about what I am going to share this week. What's the next episode? And what I was thinking through is I shared a lot and now I want to break it down for you. And I'm going to do it over a couple episodes. So this is going to be actually a three-part series about launching, but before you are like, end, not that all of you would, but I just know if you follow a lot of other coaches and you listen to other coach podcasts or business podcasts, you might be like, oh, great, another episode about launching. But here's what I want to say. I think this is going to be different than what you're used to hearing.

First of all, this very first episode is going to be about relationships, relationships with yourself and your own emotions and building that trust and honesty and relationships with your clients. So, this is going to be very different than your typical, here are the exact things I did and here are the tactics and the logistics and the strategies. Some of that will be woven in, but while this is going to be about launching, this is actually a bigger conversation around how to take care of yourself and how to take care of your audience, your clients, your potential clients, whatever you want to call

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them, and how that all plays into the logistics that are often shared in launch episodes of podcasts that I've listened to in the past.

I think some of what I'm going to share today, I'm like, oh, these are some of the things that are sometimes, not always, clearly I haven't heard all of the podcast episodes on launching, but sometimes these are the things that are left out. And here's the other thing I want to say. When I say launching, I just really mean selling your coaching, selling your offer in whatever way you do that. Everything I'm going to share today can be applied no matter what format of selling you have. So this isn't just for coaches that have been doing it for a long time and who have very structured planned out launches. Launching, I'm going to say, I'm using that term lightly because I don't know another word for it, but some of you when you hear launching, you're like, oh, I don't launch. That's not a thing. I just always sell my coaching. And that's totally fine.

But I actually do think there's a benefit into or a benefit from thinking about the way you sell your coaching in launches or at least in time periods, right? So evaluating it or looking at it over the last month or two months or something like that. Even if you don't have any kind of open and closed, okay, doors are open and then doors close in two weeks or whatever. Some of you think that's what launching means. It's a very specific thing with a very specific time period. I think of launching as just you have this offer, you're learning to sell it, whether or not that is over a long period of time or a short period of time, it doesn't really matter. And I actually think there are lots of benefits even if you're a coach that just sells coaching all the time, sells the same offer even maybe, I think there's a huge benefit to breaking that down into smaller chunks.

But I'll come back to that. Probably speak more to that in the next episode of this, so episode two of the launch series. But that's not what we're talking about today. So I digress. Today we are going to talk about something that applies to every coach regardless of your niche, regardless of your launch or selling format. And we're going to think about the quality business decisions you're making and how I think most of those decisions start with

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quality relationships with yourself and with your people or your audience, your clients, your potential clients.

And we're going to look at this. I'll be addressing this from multiple angles. So I know some one of the questions I've had about what I shared last week from someone in Coach Unfiltered was, this is great for you as a business coach and it makes sense to be open and transparent about a launch because you coach coaches. And so most of us are trying to sell coaching and so it makes a lot of sense, but I don't know what this might look like in my niche. And I totally agree. I think this is amazing. I was already thinking about this, but the way my client asked this really got my wheels turning because you're right.

Like if you're a relationship coach, I don't think that even if you're all about transparency and whatever, like I am, it doesn't make sense for you as a relationship coach to be talking about a launch or how many spots you sold in a group or how your selling of your coaching in any form is going, really, right? Or if you're a health coach of some form, the same thing, right? Doesn't really make sense for you to be transparent about your launch. That doesn't make sense. But there are so many other ways that you can be transparent and that you can build those relationships and be open and create that trust with yourself and also with your clients or potential clients.

So let's break this down into two parts. So the first one is going to be, what does it look like to build that honest relationship with yourself? I'm sure some of you are thinking, well, what do you mean? Obviously, I am honest with myself. I have to be, I know what's going on and it just is what it is. But that's often not the case. I see a lot of my clients trying to hide from what I'm about to tell you, right? Trying to hide from the truth of failures, whatever that means for them.

I just want you really to know that you never, I say this all the time, I'm going to keep saying it, you do not have to be perfect, you do not have to have it all figured out. When it comes to your business, but also when it comes to whatever your niche is, right? If you're a health coach, there's

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probably something that you struggle with sometimes when it comes to your own health, right? Maybe even something you teach that sometimes you struggle with that you're like, this part isn't the easiest part for me.

And acknowledging that for yourself and being super honest with yourself and also allowing yourself to feel however you feel when you fail at something is all part of just you owning it and being okay with all the parts. And also owning the celebrations, right? It's not just owning the negative, also owning it on the other side when you have huge wins, big things that are more exciting to share. And for most of you listening, you probably struggle with one or the other of these things. Right?

So some of my clients struggle with showing any imperfections and thinking they should always be perfect and they have to have it all pulled together. And then some of my clients struggle with the opposite, which is owning their big wins, not wanting to feel like they are gloating or owning their accomplishments and huge wins thinking that it'll be too much for their clients. And I just want you to know that both sharing both to a certain extent, let's be clear about that, is beneficial and can really help you own it first for yourself so that you can share it with your clients.

So if you think back to last week's episode, and if you haven't listened to it, it's okay. You're still going to have all the takeaways. It was a long episode, I will say that. It is jam packed full of just a full breakdown of a launch and the fails during the launch and a big pivot that worked really well and a lot of takeaways from that. That's the gist of the episode. But it's okay if you haven't listened, you can either stop right now and go listen if you're like, wait, I missed it, I need to check that out or you can keep listening and I will be sure to fill you in on anything that would be necessary to know as I work through all of this.

So quick recap. I launched my mastermind Reimagine and the launch didn't go well. So I had what I would consider a big fail and I talked about how I processed that and how I really had to work through some

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disappointment, some humiliation and even some anger that was really stuffed down that was deep in there around the launch.

And then I also described how that actually manifested in some physical pain. And just knowing myself and knowing my signs of when things aren't going well, there's a really specific back pain that sometimes I get that when I'm stressed or when I'm really in it and I'm not processing and acknowledging all the things about how I'm feeling even sometimes when I am, it still shows up, but especially when I'm trying to put it to the side and ignore it, I will get a very specific back pain and my body is really telling me, hey, we need to look into this.

So I worked through that and then I also talked about how I had a coaching session, EFT and cried all the tears and really acknowledged and processed all the things I was feeling and I just talked through all of it, right? And then after processing it, I was able to read and process some feedback that I had asked for from my list about the launch that changed everything. So, again, I want to acknowledge this for different types of coaching. Right? So for me, in what I was sharing and my transparency, I was specifically talking about a launch.

But for example, for a health coach, maybe you acknowledge something really specific about your relationship with food, not out of oversharing to create a false transparency or a connection, but really out of something that's happening in the moment when it feels appropriate. Right? Or a relationship coach being really honest about a challenge that has come up for you recently without oversharing and without oversharing someone else's, your partner's details, but just acknowledging, yeah, this is a thing, here's what I've been working on.

Or a career coach, right, recognizing when your own fears about your career are affecting how you coach your clients. Or noticing when you as a coach, maybe as just a general life coach, how you have some shoulds that you think your clients should abide by, right? That you have some rules that come up for you or some discomfort that happens when clients are



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sharing certain things and just being able to first acknowledge these things for yourself. Let's for a minute remove even sharing this with anyone, right? But just really acknowledging it. Instead of saying, oh, I can't think about this.

And I do know there can sometimes be this narrative that's as a coach, we know our thoughts and our mindset do affect our results, right? They influence what we create in the world. They influence how we feel about ourselves, about our lives, about, fill in the blank. But sometimes I think coaches take this too far where they're like, I cannot even acknowledge anything that feels true right now because then I'll just create more of that. But what actually happens when you don't acknowledge it and you just push it away and you pretend it's not happening or pretend you don't care that it's not affecting you is that you're not really able to work through and process all of the underlying emotions that come with it. Right? You're not able to work through it and be on the other side of it.

So, practically, here's what this might look like. Doing a physical check-in with yourself, noticing any tension or fatigue or physical stress or physical pain and using this as data, using this as, is this something that often happens when I'm in this situation? For me, I've owned my business long enough. I've been through so many ups and downs that I just notice. I've learned over the years when there are times of higher stress or there are things that just aren't going the way I want them to go, it is pretty common for me to get a physical pain in my back. And I've just learned over time that it's really important that I take note of that immediately when I notice it and just check in with myself, where's this coming from? What haven't I acknowledged? What am I feeling really that I'm trying to hide? Right? What are the things that I am not noticing so that I can just pretend everything is fine?

And then there's the emotional honesty piece that really is telling myself, if I'm honest, here's how I feel. This feels really scary. I feel super disappointed. The opposite of bypassing everything with it's fine. Everything's fine. Which I know can be my go to. Your voice might sound

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different than that. Your voice might sound different than it's fine or everything's fine. Those are just my automatic thoughts. Anytime that thought pops up, everything's fine, and it's in a very specific tone, right? Notice every time I say it, I say it in a certain way. That's how it sounds to me. Whenever I notice that coming up, it's time to check in. What's happening here?

Then you also want to check in with what's the reality versus what are you telling yourself and what are you making it mean? What's actually happening and how are you feeling about that? Versus what are you making it mean that may not actually be true, right? What are you adding to the story that isn't necessarily there? So for an example, using my launch example, it would be reality is X number of clients have filled out an application. That's just true. I can feel disappointed about that. I can feel, I could also feel motivated, right? This doesn't all have to be bad. That could also be, okay, I feel super motivated to figure this out and turn it around.

But let's say we've come to the end of the launch and I have two out of however many people that have said yes and my goal was obviously more than two and I feel very disappointed. That's just true, right? The reality is two out of 10 people, 12 people, whatever, 20 people, however many people you want in a launch, that's just the facts. And then there's what am I making it mean? What am I making it mean could be so everybody hates me and my business is completely going to fail from here. Any of those things that are extra that you have actually no facts to show you. So it's really important to see the difference between those two things.

And then know when to take a pause. Right? Notice that when you're really spiraling and you really can't think clearly, it might be time and really important to take a pause to check in with yourself, to address the emotional or physical symptoms coming up. I don't know if symptoms is the right word, right? But just noticing those things without pushing them all to the side. Because when you don't do all of those things that I just said, it's really hard to make clear strategic business decisions or whatever types of decisions.



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When you're avoiding all the other stuff. Right? Your unprocessed emotions and physical discomfort will show up everywhere even if you don't think it does. It'll show up in your messaging, in your pricing, in every interaction you have with clients or potential clients. And your clients can sense when you aren't being honest with yourself. Even if it's subtle, they might not know why, they can just sense something's off, usually. Right? They can just sense something is weird.

It can also show up, this isn't just about launching. This can show up in coaching sessions as well. Right? It can show up in when you aren't being honest with yourself, and then your client says something that really triggers a thought about your, if you're a business coach and you have a launch that isn't going well and your client says something, and most of us have been in this situation in some form, by the way, so it's no problem, your client says something that's like, oh, I don't know how to fix that. I can't fix that either. Right? It can just start to show up in every part of your coaching, your marketing, your selling, all of it.

That is what that open honest honesty looks like with yourself. Now let's talk about what that looks like with your audience or with your potential clients or your current clients. So, again, this is going to look different for different coaches. Right? So for a business coach might look like sharing launch struggles, business challenges or some behind the scenes stuff. sharing, this thing feels hard or even sharing huge wins and sharing, here's how I feel about that or here's why even a big win feels hard. I think to this date, one of my most popular episodes of this podcast is when I talked about the coach lab launch, which was years ago and it went amazing. I blew it out of the water and I was so scared and terrified by all the results rolling in that I was in bed with covers over my face. That really resonated with some people. Right? Sharing stuff like that can sometimes be really important.

But also, if you're a relationship coach, sharing your own growth moments with your clients or potential clients can be huge. can just help develop that trust. Or sharing your huge wins and talking about those in a way that

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makes it feel possible for your clients. Or sharing being in the messy middle of relationship work and how it's always something you're working on. Or if you're a health coach, right, showing that healthy living isn't about being perfect all the time or making the perfect decision with every, workout or food choice or whatever it is. Or acknowledging things that you have tried that maybe you know work for other people that didn't work for you, that felt disappointing. Or things that you've tried that you didn't think would work for you, but that ended up working really well and talking about that.

And I could just keep going, right? Whatever your niche is, think about the thing that is sometimes hard for you to talk about or share with your people because you sometimes have struggles with it yourself. But here's where these trust building elements come in. This is where you have an opportunity to use these things as a way to really connect with your audience and with your clients. Not in a way that is manufactured or manipulative, but in a way that's just really true and honest. Right? So let's talk about appropriate vulnerability. So what that would look like is sharing your process, sharing some things that you're going through. But not sharing your trauma, right? Not trauma dumping. That is something very different. And not manufacturing false vulnerability because you think you need to in order to connect. If things are going really well, amazing, talk about the things, share what you're learning from it.

But also, if things aren't, that's okay too. There is so much learning in things not going well and maybe as much or more than when things are just going well. Second trust building element is just consistency over perfection, right, which by that I mean just showing up regularly as yourself. Not showing up as someone who's perfect or someone that you aren't. Also, just being honest, the third trust building element is honest communication, again, with yourself but also with your people. Being willing to say, I don't know when you really don't know. You probably heard me talk about this before. I say this all the time. Sometimes people ask me questions in my coaching containers, I don't know, let me get back to you on that. Or I don't

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know, let me think about it for a second and I'll say, here's my best answer right now, but I might have more to add to this later.

And then the fourth trust building element is the just behind the scenes process, letting your people see a little bit at least pieces of how you think and how you work. How you, not necessarily about your business, remember if you're not a business coach, how you think about your relationships, how you build trust with your partner, how you grow the love that you have. How you feel super vulnerable when you yourself are dating. Whatever it is, whatever the things are that are happening for you, sharing them but sharing them in a way, like yes, letting people behind the scenes, but again, not trauma dumping, not pretending to be perfect. But just being willing to say here's what's really happening. And you don't always have to share it when you're really deep in it. If you can't see out of it, right? If you're not like, oh, here's what I'm learning from this, then sometimes that can be a hard place to share from.

So let's talk about some specific ways that I've done this with my clients, which I think is eventually what created me being willing to own everything that was going on and then them being willing to really share with me and give me such incredible feedback that really helped me pivot and transform my launch. Okay. And I want to be clear, I've been doing this for 10 years. So your story might not sound like this. But I want you to think about, what would my version of this be? Or if you're brand new and you're just entering the industry, think about, what do I want this to look like? How do I know that what I'm doing now will create some of this?

So, when it comes to why I think it went well for me and why my list and people on my list were so willing to be so open and honest and give me feedback, I've been sending years of transparent emails. I've been for years building trust and being very open and honest. And especially with clients inside of my containers. Pretty sure if you're listening to this, if you're a client who's inside of my containers, you've seen me do this, right? where I will lay it all out. Maybe even sometimes too much, but I will lay it all out. I will let you learn from me. I would rather do that than keep it to myself and

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have you think, nobody's going through what I'm going through. No, I want my clients to know, yes, owning my own business is incredible. It's one of my favorite things. There are huge wins. I love to celebrate and also sometimes it's really hard, period. Right?

I think that's just the honest truth of owning a business. If you show me a business owner where it's just going perfect all the time, only win after win after win, I'm going to say that's not the whole story. Even if some factors might be going great all the time, right? whether it's that appears at least like they're consistently making money or consistently growing in certain ways, great, there's probably something hard happening somewhere that they're just not sharing.

So, when I sent an email, right, my launch happened, it ended. I'll talk more about that in the next episode, that's important. I went all the way through the launch. And then I sent an email that basically asked, why didn't you join? Give tell me everything. Like if you were on the fence or this was kind of for you and I only sent this to people who had clicked multiple times or who seemed interested in some way. because I am so open and honest and transparent, I think that created a lot of safety for many people to tell me all the reasons. Right? It just really allowed them to be like, oh, you are so transparent and honest. I'm going to give you that back in return. And they told me everything. Some emails, I mean, I was blown away, truly, by some of the emails that I received.

I think it was a direct relationship or it was directly related to the relationships I have built with my audience over time. And again, if you're new, yes, of course, this is going to take some time to build this, but it's a perfect time actually for you to start questioning what do you want that to look like for you as you grow. And if you've been doing this for a while and you feel like, oh my gosh, I don't do this, it's okay, start today in whatever ways feel good to you. You don't have to be as open and honest as I am. You don't have to be as transparent. You don't have to share every single thing. But you might question, where am I not being honest with myself or with my audience? Don't shame yourself over it. Just like, what are the tiny

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ways? What are the tiny coverups that I'm using when I'm talking about my niche, when I'm talking about the successes, am I also sharing at least some humanness behind that? Because that is what will build up that trust and connection.

Now let's talk about how just quickly how they're related, right? how you can't really have one of these things without the other. So we're going to call this the relationship loop, right? You have to be authentic with your audience and with yourself. And if you're not, it's really hard to do the other one. So, if you're not honest with yourself, then obviously you can't share and be open and honest with your audience. And the other way around. If you're not open and honest with your audience, you might be able to be honest with yourself, but it's just going to feel really bad. It's going to be constantly pointing out this incongruency, pointing out how you're lying to yourself and that feels awful.

The more honest you are with yourself, the more genuine your external relationships become. So we could all I could also say that the more self-aware you are, the more honest all of your relationships will be. That's true, no matter what niche we're talking about. Right? Even just being a human living your life, this is true. The more self-aware you are, the more genuine your relationships will be. And those genuine relationships will help create space for the kind of feedback that helps you grow in that area. So again, let's not even think about your business, just in your life. The more genuine your relationships are, the more honest people are going to be with you and the better you're going to be at being in that relationship.

So if you think about the episode I shared last week where, right, if I didn't take that moment and take that time to process all those emotions coming up for me, all the heaviness I was feeling, I wouldn't have been able to really clearly read and receive the feedback. Even the positive feedback. Right? I wouldn't have been able to do that and I wouldn't have been able to clearly think through, okay, what are my next moves? We'll talk more about that next week. Also, those authentic relationships I spent time building with my audience made it willing for them to give me that honest

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feedback. And then that honest feedback led to better business decisions. Right? So it's just a loop. All those things have to happen in order for all of them to keep happening and to keep working.

So your own emotional honesty will show up in how you hold space for your clients. What I mean by that is it'll show up in how you believe in them and how you believe what they can accomplish. And how you know that even when they're struggling, they're going to turn it around. And your clients can sense when you're hiding your own stuff. Right? In sessions, your clients are going to know, even if they don't know, if they can't say it with words, they're going to sense something's off here in the coaching. And then the coaches who build the strongest practices are the ones willing to be real people. Not just perfect experts.

So here's what I hope your takeaways are from this episode. First, strong businesses are built on strong relationships, relationships with yourself, your clients, potential clients, audience, whatever you want to call it. It has to start with the relationship you have with yourself. You have to be open and honest with yourself. Your willingness to be honest with yourself and others will directly impact your business results. Again, when I say honest, I don't necessarily mean trauma dumping, sharing every single detail, bringing up things that feel unnecessary or unrelated, that's not it, right? But just the willingness to not be perfect and to say here's what's really happening with me when it makes sense.

Coming up in the next episode, what I'll be sharing is more on the collection and analyzing of the data, right? How to really figure out what's working versus what isn't. And talking about making big decisions, all the information you need to make those decisions and how to interpret it without responding just with emotions or just by breezing by it and covering it up, which is what we covered in this episode, right? It's that's why this is the most important first is to work through that relationship with yourself, to work through that relationship with your client. That's where you have to start. And the next week we're going to say, okay, you have all those in check, you have both those things in check. Now, what? Now, how do you



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gather data? How do you interpret the data and how do you use it to make super informed business decisions?

So, we've come to the end. And if you have loved this episode, if what I'm talking about, if you're listening in real time and you're like, oh my gosh, wait, is she still talking about reimagine? This what I'm teaching here is some of the things that we talk about inside of reimagine in different ways. These are just things that come up often. And I'm guessing by the time this comes out, this round of reimagine is probably full, but maybe not, you never know. We're going to put the link in the show notes and it will either allow you to fill out an application, which will just take a few minutes, which will be perfect. You can secure one of the last spots, or it will direct you to a wait list link, in which case you can just be notified for the next round and you'll just be ready so that when the time comes, you can be willing to work through or ready and willing, hopefully, to work through all of this in your own business. So, thank you so much for being here today. I really appreciate you and I will see you or talk to you next week. Goodbye.

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