

Ep #201: Lessons From Dismantling a Signature Program with Sindy Warren



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 201.

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, hey, coach. I am so glad you're here today, as always. And today I have something super fun for you, which is an interview with my friend, my client, a coach who contract coaches for me in The Coach Lab, and an all around amazing human, Sindy Warren.

She has been on the podcast before, but recently she has been making some changes in her business that are very similar to the work we will be doing in Reimagine. And we were chatting about it and I was like, I need to have you on to talk about how you knew it was time to make some changes and how you knew now's the time, how you did it, how you implemented it, all the things.

I promise you, if you're listening, you're going to learn so much from this episode. Sindy is incredible and she has so much goodness to share. So here you go. My interview with my friend, Sindy.

Lindsay: Hello, hello. I am so thrilled to have you here today. You have been on the podcast before and you're always such a fun guest. Tell everybody who you are and remind them what you do.

Sindy: Hi, Lindsay. I am Sindy Warren. I'm the founder of Blue Tree Coaching and I am a life and business coach and I have worked with you for a very long time.

Lindsay: Yes. I love having you as a client. You're also an amazing coach in The Coach Lab. You are a contract coach in there who coaches my clients in The Coach Lab. And I'm always so thrilled when you are the guest

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because you're an incredible coach. So, welcome, so happy to have you here.

So first I'm going to do just a little setup of how we got here. So I have this new offer, Reimagine, that I've been selling. I've been talking about it. I've been talking about how sometimes it makes sense to make changes in your business. And you emailed me, you're not in a current mastermind or whatever of mine so we had kind of not talked about this. And you emailed me and said, hey, I just did this. I just did all of this work.

And we chatted about it for a minute and we decided, wouldn't it be fun to come on and talk through some of the decisions you've made, how you've made them, the fears that came up for you, kind of walking through all of it.

Sindy: Yes. Yes, that is how we got here.

Lindsay: Amazing. Okay. So first thing, tell people kind of what your, so you kind of made a big change and I don't even know all the details. We didn't talk about all of it because I wanted it to just come out kind of naturally as we talked through it here. So you had an offer, you decided to make some changes. Let's just start there. What was the offer and what did you decide to do?

Sindy: And I'll give a little bit of background. So my background is I'm an employment lawyer. I had an HR consulting business as a solopreneur for 18 years. I also had been for many years a yoga and meditation teacher. And then in 2019, I found and fell in love with coaching and went all in.

So when I first started my coaching practice, I was a one-on-one life coach on all the things. And then partly because I love facilitating groups, I was sort of looking for a group idea. And I've just done that for years as a yoga teacher. And I created a program called Side Gig School.

And I am someone who has, as a business owner, I've started many things. Oh, this will just be a little thing on the side for fun. And they turn into

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full-blown businesses, which is what happened with my HR consulting business. Also parts of my career as a yoga teacher and teacher of teachers. And then that's how the coaching started. Oh, just this will be a fun thing on the side, and then it took off and became what I ate for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

So I put together a program that was a cohort style group coaching program, a 12-week program. I don't remember what year I wrote that out, probably 21. And I ran it as cohort style several times before I decided to change it. And I was in your first round, you know this obviously, but for anyone listening, I was in your first round of the Advanced Coaching Certification, which was incredible.

And I decided that for my project, I wanted to actually turn Side Gig School into more of a permanent kind of community. So I created a lifetime access program where I captured my curriculum online and then held weekly office hours. And I really gave birth to that project during the Advanced Coaching Certification, which was, let's see, geez, I think I launched it about 13, maybe 14 months ago and ran it for about a year.

So that was one part of my business. The other part of my business was one-on-one coaching, coaching people going through life change, pursuing goals, leadership, business growth and development, all the things.

Lindsay: I want to pause you for a second because I just want to add this in here. I think it could be really helpful for people to hear this. I'm pretty sure we might have even talked about this before, but I just want to point out that you had those two things. One thing I loved about you is that you, like coaching you, is that you are so clear about, yeah, I have this thing, it's Side Gig School, that evolved over time.

But you were always so clear too, and I want to have a handful of one-on-one clients and you never really swayed from that. You didn't indulge in a lot of confusion around it. It was just like, here are my offers.

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This is what I do. It was so clear to you. And I think a lot of people get stuck in like, how do I do both? Or can I do both? And they just let it create so much confusion.

And we coached on it every once in a while, but always from a place of more like the, when do I sell this? Or how do I know what's right for what? Or whatever, those things. But it was always so clear to you that you wanted to keep those. And I love that you never thought, I shouldn't. Or maybe you did. You never brought it to me if you did. There was never like, I shouldn't be doing this, or this isn't how other people do it, or what I'm supposed to be doing.

Sindy: Right. That is so true. But to be honest with you and everyone else, there are plenty of things I did indulge in confusion on, this just wasn't one of them.

Lindsay: Of course, we all do. Yes. Yeah, I just like to point that out. I think some people hear on a podcast, in a different program, wherever, they hear one sentence, this is how you're supposed to do it. And they just take that as like, oh, that's the truth. And not that it's wrong for people to be teaching that in their spaces, right? But I just wanted to pause and point it out because there's so many ways to make it work. And I always think you have to do what you really feel pulled to do.

Sindy: I totally agree with that. And I do remember there being a point in time, probably early in, I was in one of your early masterminds. I was like, oh, well, Lindsay used to be a one-on-one coach, and now she's a group coach. So I'm sure there was a thought of like, so is that what I'm supposed to do? Like, is that the right way to do it?

And I quickly was just in my own head, I don't even know how conscious this was. No, I'm going to do both of them. I love the Side Gig School idea and I love my one-on-one coaching practice. So that is true. I always had both.

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Lindsay: Good. Love it.

Sindy: Even as I was creating, launching, running, trying to grow Side Gig School, my one-on-one practice has actually always been more of the bread and butter, if I look at my coaching business from both a time and a revenue standpoint. Which is interesting because I think, insofar as I'm known by anyone for anything, like Side Gig School was sort of a catchy phrase so people sort of associated me with that, I think.

Lindsay: Yeah, and you had a podcast, which we can dig into that piece too. But it was just like, this is kind of your branding. This is what you do. And then you had a handful of these clients over here.

Sindy: Yes, exactly. So the Side Gig School program, I was, as you know, so excited to launch it, worked on it really hard. It was like a six-month process, I would say, of writing scripts, recording videos, and then all the marketing and selling and running and all that. And I really enjoyed it for a period of time.

And the way I had structured it, which I'm pretty sure I learned from you, was like it's lifetime access, which means for the lifetime of the program. So the business model was, you pay a fee, you get the content, which is the course in this online, go at your own pace kind of thing. And then you get a year of weekly office hours, which you can, my plan was like, and then you can renew that piece of it if you want to keep that for a much lower price point.

Lindsay: Oh yeah, I loved that. And I think I want to pause you there in case anybody has a question about this. If I remember correctly, I think one reason you decided on that format, going from kind of like the cohort to more lifetime access is that, tell me if I'm wrong, but I think one of the main reasons is you noticed some people would go through it quickly. For some people, it took a little bit longer, depending on where they were starting or

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how busy they were, maybe with a full-time job or whatever. So you wanted them to have that support all of the time.

Sindy: That's 100% true. And I thought I could be of more service to my clients in a longer time period capacity without them having to pay a lot more money to either work with me one-on-one or join the next cohort or whatever. So that's exactly right. So running it as I did for a few years before I launched it into lifetime access was great.

But there came a point several months ago, we're recording now at the end of August, and this was sometime early spring, late winter last year, I think. I started to feel a little bit of cognitive dissonance, like this isn't where I want to be going. I don't think this is necessarily evolving the way I had ideally wanted it to. And I just had this like nagging in the back of my head about it that I ignored for at least several weeks, if not more.

And I finally had the realization one day, and it was like a pretty sharp moment in time, this is not the business I want. And that felt scary. And I had to look at it and say, well, what is it about this that I don't want? And it really was a gradual process of me making some decisions, then figuring out how I was going to implement them, and then implementing them.

So I would say it was like a three-part process. And I ended up deciding, and obviously you can ask whatever detailed questions, but I don't want to bore everyone, I ended up deciding to close Side Gig School, and to have a very simple business model. Like go back to my beginnings of I'm a one-on-one coach and I coach on all things life and business. So that's what I did.

And when I listened to your podcast, it was the one, The Future of the Coaching Industry, and that's when you teased out Reimagine, I think. I listened to it with such rapt interest and thought, oh my gosh, that's what I just did. So I had to tell you.

Lindsay: Yeah, you emailed me right away, which I loved.

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Okay, so let's rewind before we go down that piece. Let's rewind a little bit. When you started noticing, this doesn't feel aligned, this isn't something, there's like a niggling there of like something's not right. Do you think it was, maybe it was a mix of all of these, but do you think it was you didn't like selling it, or you didn't like running it? Maybe you wanted to be coaching on something different, a mix of all of it. Could you pinpoint at that point what it was?

Sindy: That's a great question. The selling and marketing of it was definitely a big piece of it. And looking at what it was taking for me and the team I had assembled to help run it, both from a time, energy and financial perspective, that started to weigh on me.

And I also felt like I had a lot of one-on-one clients that could have either gone the one-on-one lane or the Side Gig School lane, but they really wanted that one-on-one support. I saw them making a lot more progress. So I started to question, wait, is this the best way to be of service to my clients?

Lindsay: So you kind of started seeing it in all corners, kind of like, I don't know about this, and I don't know about this. Okay, thank you for being honest, by the way. I think that this – I did get permission to talk through this before we started recording because I know this can be like, you know, this is one thing I wanted to ask you about. This thing that comes up for a lot of coaches of like, I'm like going backwards or I wasted all my time creating this thing and now I'm going to shut it down. Were those things coming up for you at all?

Sindy: 1000%. I mean, I had this little shadow of shame and embarrassment and the story of like, okay, I failed in my head. I had to work through that before I could actually make decisions and implement them. And that was not a fun process mentally. Like it wasn't so fun to live inside my head, I got to tell you.

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But of course I did. Yeah. It sort of felt like I did this big thing. Oh my gosh, this was the basis of my Advanced Coaching Certification. And now I don't want it. I want to help people in a different way. So that, like I said, that brought up shame, feeling like a failure, some embarrassment and all that. Yeah, it took a while to sort through.

Lindsay: Okay. So when you, I just think it's so interesting because I've heard this from so many people, and even some of the people who've decided to join Reimagine who I've had short chats with, they say similar things. And the thing that really stands out to me is this thought of I failed, when really what happened was you noticed this isn't for me. I don't love this. You listened to yourself, right? And there's something about that, that we love to make that mean like, oh, that means I failed.

And we could just paint that so differently, right? Like I listened to myself. I trust myself. I made hard decisions. I decided to move forward in a different direction.

Sindy: Exactly, and being on the other side of that sort of mental bridge now, I mean, the way I look at it is it all unfolded exactly as it was supposed to. And we can talk about how I've continued to support my clients and all that kind of stuff. But I really think if I just want to look at success and failure in a black and white kind of way with respect to Side Gig School, I can for sure, obviously make the case that that wasn't a success. That was a fail.

And I can also, and I really believe this, look at, yeah, this was a really important part of my path as a business owner. I learned so much. I provided so much value until I decided to shift gears. And then I did that in a way that felt aligned, felt like I was delivering all the value my clients were entitled to and then some.

But sure. I think, yeah, I think that is, it doesn't surprise me that you're hearing that from people. And growth, however we think of it, it's never a straight path. And when you're on the detours or the windiness of it, we

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tend to forget that it's not intended to be, what's the saying, as the crow flies or something.

Lindsay: Oh right, yeah. Yeah, just that straight line, straight, perfect line from one spot to another. And sometimes I think there's so much growth in making those hard decisions. In owning I don't love this, I don't want to keep doing this. And really taking that pause, it's not like you just decided overnight and then blew up the business, right? It was like, okay, hold on. Let me really examine this. How am I still going to take care of my clients? Like you went through every piece of it. And I commend you so much for that. I think that that's the way to do it.

Sindy: Thank you. When I look, like where I sit right now, I feel really proud of myself. I managed the whole process with integrity. I was of service. I kept to my core values and it feels really good to be on the other side of it.

Lindsay: I love that you brought the values in. Where it's like, I think values, when you are very clear about what your values are in your life and in your business, it really does help making hard decisions like that easier. When you know that if I'm headed towards the direction of my values, that's always going to be the right decision for me.

Sindy: Yeah. And I learned that from you. And that is work we did in the advanced certification. And I literally like pulled out my core values document and I review it all the time. It's like a North star, even when other things feel very in flux.

Lindsay: Okay. What about, how did you work through this thought of I put so much work into this, like the dismantling of this thing that you, it felt so much a part of your business and you really had been working hard on for a while?

Sindy: Yeah, so I will say I tend to embrace professional pivots. Like I was like big law to solo HR business to yoga teacher to coach. So I'm not unfamiliar with the concept of just, all right, we're shifting things around. I

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thought I was that, now I'm this. So that piece of it didn't feel so unfamiliar and I could kind of embrace it because I had, I could look back and see inflection points in my life where I'd done that and came out the other side okay.

I believe so firmly in the quote, and this is somewhere from yoga philosophy, no matter how far you've gone down the wrong path, the right thing to do is turn around. And I don't think I went down the wrong path, it was just time to turn around.

Lindsay: Yeah. Okay. I love that. And I mean, my guess is, this is maybe just a belief that I have, possibly because I'm very similar to you. I've made lots of big pivots in my life and I've always been willing to like, okay, I tried it. That's not the thing, now let's just as quickly as possible make the change. Because once I see it, I'm not a person who can just like, okay, keep going anyway. And so maybe that's where this belief comes from.

But my thought is anything that you learned doing that and putting it together and creating the membership, the portal, whatever you call it, right? The content and the value that you offered in Side Gig School, all of that learning is just going to be used somewhere else. It's not like now we just throw it in the trash and it's all a waste.

Sindy: So I think I know you're this way, and like all of our like froach friends and all that, many coaches are just growth oriented people. Like I'm a lifelong learner, always have been. So I learned so much by actually even doing the tech piece of it and recording videos and creating and I did an online portal.

Like none of that was wasted, whether I ever do that again or not. I learned something through the whole process. And it was challenging and I don't think we ever have an intellectual or emotional challenge without growing.

Lindsay: I pointed this out to someone recently who I was talking to about joining Reimagine. And she was having thoughts like, well, I have this

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membership and I've created all this stuff. And I said, which I'd never thought of this and it just came to me in the moment. I said, you do know that you probably would have redone all of that at some point anyway, right? And she was like, oh my gosh, I never considered that.

Just from someone who's run a program for years and who's constantly like, oh, I want to redo this piece. I want to redo this piece. That's the thing that's going to happen no matter what. So my thought when I hear people say that is it's like, oh, that was not your final draft anyway. You would have just put more work into it. It's not like the work is now for nothing because there's always more work.

Sindy: Yeah. I love that. That's so true.

Lindsay: Okay. So you made a pivot, how did you think through what will I do with my clients that are in the program?

Sindy: Yes. So I wanted to complete the full year of the weekly office hours, which I did. And I also then for people that had been in the program for less than the full year of its existence, I gifted some one-on-one coaching too. I also, even though I dismantled the beautiful high-tech not inexpensive portal, I have all the resources, including the videos and the audios and everything in a Google Drive. So it's there for my clients whenever they want it. They actually didn't lose anything.

Yeah, that felt important.

Lindsay: But so much of what you taught there, I think does overlap with probably a lot of clients that you still work with.

Sindy: 100%. I work with lots of kinds of people, but many of them are growing service-based businesses and I'm working with them in a one-on-one capacity. So all the resources that I've created over the years, that still works. It's still good.

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Lindsay: Amazing. Okay. So, all right, so you made a plan of here's what I'm going to do with the remaining clients. And then was there anything that came up that felt really uncomfortable for you or things that you were like, this might really make people, like people might not, they might not love this. I'm going to continue forward anyway.

Sindy: I wasn't sure what to expect from client reactions. And to be honest with you, I got nothing but support and people really appreciated, you know, when I would show up to office hours after I'd made the announcement and people would be like, wait, what's happening and why? They appreciated how transparent I was. Like, come on, come behind the curtain. I'll walk you through the whole thing, like nothing secret here.

And I think that can be really helpful for them as business owners. So I really tried to do it from a place of authentic vulnerability, even at times, but with the aim of being of service to them. And I think I accomplished that.

Lindsay: I love that. You know, because I've talked about this in groups that you've been in with me and I could just not imagine making changes like that without being transparent. I see coaches do it with a like, oh, but I can't tell anyone what's actually happening because then they'll know whatever. Whatever they think they'll know, I don't know.

And then it just creates some issues because their clients' brains start to fill in like, oh, well, it must be because of this, or it must be because of this. Instead of just like, here's exactly what I'm doing. Here's how I plan to take care of you, and just being so open about it.

Sindy: Absolutely. And making myself available for any questions, concerns, et cetera. But authenticity is one of my core values, so I couldn't have done it any other way.

Lindsay: Yeah. Okay. And then is there anything that came up? Were there any issues as you started to make those changes and really implement

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them? Did you have any, I mean, you don't have to go into details. Were there any upset clients, anything that like happened that you didn't expect?

Sindy: There really weren't. The implementation of my decision to close the program down could not have been smoother. And I think it is because I took my time. I didn't rush it. I processed my feelings around it. By the time I was actually ready to implement, I was good. Like I had really worked through my negative emotions about it and I was ready to even share that piece of my journey with my clients, partly to normalize and partly just to be transparent.

Lindsay: Let's just do a sidebar on that real quick. When you say that, what does that look like for you? Like what's your process to process those negative emotions and just recognize them instead of just ignoring them and trying to move forward anyway?

Sindy: This is a great question. I'm going to say, I wish I was a journaler, but I'm just not.

Lindsay: I'm not either. I'm very open about it, don't feel bad.

Sindy: This involved a lot of conversations with my husband and two besties, who not only helped me emotionally, but also like, I mean, I have one of my best friends in the world is also a coach. And that was so helpful to just talk it through with her. And her attitude was like, yeah, this is no big deal. Okay, so we're just going to make a change. And my husband being like, honey, you created this hamster wheel you say you feel like you're on, you can just step off.

So it was like, I don't know that I could have effectively done it in a totally solitary way. It was just a lot of conversations. And this is unusual for like my natural tendency, I really took my time. I tend to be a rusher and I just gave it time to breathe, to feel, to think about it on a run or in a yoga class or whatever. And I think that was a key, it was just really like slowing down with it.

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Lindsay: I love that. How did you know, I don't know if you'll even have an answer for this. How did you know that, okay, it's time to start making the changes or that it was like, when you say you took your time, what do you mean by that? Or I don't even know how to ask the question, but do you know what I'm asking? Like, how do you know?

Sindy: Yeah, totally. Yeah.

Lindsay: Like, okay, I've worked through so much of it. Now I'm ready to move forward.

Sindy: I think I had worked through a lot of the mental work I just described before I spoke to my business manager at the time and said, hey, this is what I'm thinking. What do you think? Can you help? And she was incredible. She was like, yeah, totally. It totally makes sense. Here's how we'll do it. ABCD, what's the timeline? This is how we, you know, I take everything from this beautiful, expensive platform, and put it into a Google drive.

And just having someone to help me with the administrative aspect of implementation and help me set dates and sort of like deadlines for communication was immensely helpful.

Lindsay: I love that. Okay, so you started implementing, you've started shifting. Did you know then, here's exactly what I'm going to do instead, here's my offer?

Sindy: No, this is such a great question. Well, one thing that resulted that I have to say felt so fun was I had 90% of my business expenses and I lowered my coaching prices.

Lindsay: This is one thing that people don't talk about, right? When people are like, well, I've heard that I should start with one-on-one, but I don't want to, I want to go straight to a membership or a, you know, I'm like amazing. I don't think there's any right way to do it. But one thing we need to talk

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about is expenses, right? They're just there. There's like no overhead, basically with one-on-one coaching.

Sindy: Exactly.

Lindsay: There can be depending on, you know, maybe if you have a VA or whatever, like everyone's circumstances are different. But for the most part there's not much overhead with one-on-one coaching. You just get lots of coaching reps and you spend a lot of time coaching. And with a membership or a program or whatever, if you have any kind of portal that your clients log into, there's just a lot of things that you have to take care of that most people don't consider.

Sindy: Absolutely true. I didn't really consider that going into it.

Lindsay: Now, I'm not actually saying you didn't consider it. I just wanted to point it out because I think you were at a totally appropriate place in your business to take on those expenses. And I was your coach at the time, you made a lot of decisions around what platform you wanted to use, all of that. And I think sometimes coaches just get very surprised by, Oh, now I'm paying for this platform. Now I have to pay for this thing that connects my email to my platform. And I have to, there's just all of these little things that you just don't know. You don't expect.

Sindy: That is so true. And I will tell you, having scaled back feels like so much freedom. And I have delighted in telling clients, yeah, now my prices are lower.

Lindsay: Yeah. Oh yeah, of course.

Sindy: And they're like, wait, what? I'm like, yeah, no.

Lindsay: Because your expenses are probably so much lower.

Sindy: My expenses are so much lower. And I did have that, like I had zero overhead when I had my prior business, my HR consulting business. I

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definitely consider that, that was a big factor for me in deciding to shift gears a little bit and it feels lovely. And yeah, so that's actually been a really fun kind of by-product.

Lindsay: Okay. So I just want to point out, because I think this is just so good to see where it's like, you started having these feelings around, I don't know if this is right. I don't, you know, whatever. And then when you actually looked also at the logistics of your business, where it's like this thing that isn't bringing in maybe the money that I would love it to be, I don't feel motivated to sell it.

It's taking up 90% of my time and my money. And I mean, I don't know if it's 90% of your money, but it's taking up, right, it's like creating a lot of business expenses. A lot more work, you probably have to have people helping you run pieces of it to keep it going. And now, even though you're charging less, my guess is your profit margin, we don't have to get into details on this, but my guess is your profit has gone up a lot.

Sindy: Beyond. Yeah. And that's been fun too.

Lindsay: It's just so good to see, right? It's like, we can have these huge goals that I want to bring in this much revenue, but sometimes I think people skip the step where it's like, yes, and your expenses are going to go up too, which is fine. That's what I do, right? And I make that conscious decision all the time. I will not get rid of The Coach Lab, at least not right now. I have no interest in doing that. And I know it comes with a certain amount of expenses that I just have to account for in my books.

Sindy: Right. Absolutely. That's right.

Lindsay: Yeah.

Sindy: You had started to ask, did I know at this point what's next? And I want to share that, like, I didn't, but I felt like I needed an interim period to not even think about it. And at the same time, I enrolled in an advanced

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yoga certification. I've been an avid yogi for over 20 years. So what I'm doing now, the training I'm in, feels new and exciting. And it's fun to be in something where you achieve a level of mastery, and then to still be like, there's so much more, this is so exciting.

So it felt very gratifying to step back into the seat of the student. And I basically took the entire summer off of thinking about growing my business or where I was going. And I've just been enjoying the actual coaching, like the art of coaching and serving my clients, which brings me endless joy.

Lindsay: Which I love.

Sindy: Exactly. And stepping up a little bit on the yoga side, which is something that I definitely took a backseat for a few years as I was obsessed with all things coaching. So I think it just evened out a little bit. And now I'm at a point where ideas are starting to pop, which feels so fun because it's coming from a place of what do I want to do, not what do I need to do or what should I do?

Lindsay: Yes. And I love one thing you shared with me is that you are like, oh, this is really bringing back my love of yoga and how I kind of, I don't want to have, no spoilers, but how you might want to start integrating that into some of your coaching philosophy. Which as your coach, I think is so fun, because it's something you've actually talked about. I don't know if you even remember this, but you've talked about this so many times.

And you've kind of said it's like things that I teach and that I weave in, I don't really know what it has to do with kind of the work that my clients are doing but it feels, I just know it's an important piece of all of it. And so to me, this feels like full circle. Just to let you know.

Sindy: Wow, I can't tell you how much that means for me to hear that from you. Like it feels full circle in my heart, but I don't see it as like how it's influenced my coaching. And I think for a pretty long period of time, I have tried to bifurcate different parts of not just my business.

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And I know that's a word you and I've coached on a lot when it comes to like when I was doing one on one coaching and Side Gig School. But I think it also applies to the yogi part of me and the coach part of me. And they're really not different parts of me is sort of where I'm stepping into and starting to think about embracing. I am embracing and I am starting to have some really fun ideas of how to actually marry them together under Blue Tree.

Lindsay: So good. Yeah. And even your business name and your logo and all of that, doesn't that have a connection to yoga and yeah, all the things.

Sindy: Blue Tree is like a root to rise. Like that's yoga. Yeah.

Lindsay: I love it. Okay. So now do you know, are you selling coaching? Like what are you doing now? So you took some time off, you kind of did other things.

Sindy: My daughter just went back to college and I feel like I'm back to school too. I'm like, okay, now I'm ready, let's go. So yes, I am one-on-one coaching on life, business, all the things. And my one on one coaching practice is lovely. I adore it. And it's really fun, as I said, just making it financially more accessible for people.

And I am also just teaching a lot of yoga at my local yoga studio here in Shaker Heights, Ohio. And I also have a studio I teach at when I'm in Hilton Head. And I am spending a lot of time studying yoga as a student again, as I'm teaching it. And I do have some ideas that I'm not quite ready, because they're just sort of like embryo stages of how I'm going to bring yoga under the Blue Tree umbrella more explicitly.

Lindsay: Love it. I can't wait to watch and see what happens.

Okay, so if you could talk to someone who's sitting with this kind of like, they're at that place where they see it. They're like, I just have built this thing, it doesn't feel like something doesn't feel quite right.

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Maybe they don't know that they are like, I don't want to do this at all. I want to do a complete pivot, but just something. What I sometimes hear them say, when they start to see it is like, I'm scared to even look at it. Like I don't even want to go there. What would you say to them?

Sindy: I would say fear thrives in the dark. So let's take out our flashlights and go in and first tell ourselves we're safe, and we're lovable, and we're worthy. And then let's go take a look.

Lindsay: Yeah, I love that. I think that sometimes when I hear people say that, especially if they're my clients, right? I'm like, wait, why didn't you bring that to me? Like, let me help you. I can help you with this, right? Like, let's just talk through it.

And the two things sometimes that people say, one, I thought maybe you would tell me, like, you would have a strong opinion. And I didn't want to hear that yet, right? Like, either that I should, no, keep going, or, okay, let's just make the change as fast as possible. Which I'm like –

Sindy: That's so not your vibe.

Lindsay: Right. But maybe if someone hasn't worked with me for a while, they might not know that about me. But yeah, so not my vibe, right? I'm all about like, okay, let's just look at it.

And the other thing is, they'll say like, I didn't even know the words. I didn't even know how to bring it, what to say, whatever. So do you have any?

Sindy: Yeah, that second one is wildly interesting to me, because it speaks to just self-awareness. So I think when we have a nagging feeling that something's off kilter, first of all, we have to learn to hear that, then sit in whatever way we can. Whether it's from an embodied perspective, like I'm walking around with a tightness in my chest, or whatever it is. We have to start to look at it. And we have to give ourselves space for quiet exploration.

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And quiet doesn't have to mean solo. It can be like it was for me, sitting down with my best friend and saying, I feel really stressed. Okay, let's unpack why. And I will actually, I have a couple friends and we'll just say to each other, hey, I need an hour of your time to be all about me and this thing I'm struggling with in life right now. And so we just do that for each other.

So I think first, notice, don't ignore those inklings, because they're there to tell you something. And you've got to create a sense of safety, whether it's with Lindsay the coach, or a best friend or a partner or whatever, to then start exploring.

Lindsay: One thing that came up for me as you were saying that is to maybe even take a second to think, like, what is it that you're looking for? Is it like support? Is it advice? Is it coaching possibly? And knowing who you can go to for each of those things, right? Because I think sometimes there's a difference.

I think a lot of times coaches, hopefully, can be aware that if their friend says, hey, I would love coaching on this, or I would love just, can you just listen, or can you ask me questions because I'm having a hard time figuring out like what's going on, that the coach would kind of know like how to do that. But as we know, not all the humans in our life are coaches. And sometimes it is just useful to go to a friend who's not a coach at all, who knows really nothing about what you do, to just say, like, I just need someone to listen to this.

Sindy: I think that is so wise. And it's great to have people in your life, whether coaches or not, who can say, hey, what do you need in this moment? Are you looking for advice or do you just want a sounding board? But like you said, not everyone's going to ask you that. So ask yourself that question. What are you looking for? And then go get it.

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And certainly, they could come to a call in The Coach Lab and be like, I don't want advice or even coaching, I just need to say this out loud.

Lindsay: Yes. Well, and I always say in there, I'm sure you've heard me say this where I think I've taught people over time that it's okay to raise your hand and say, okay, I don't really know what I need, I'm just going to start talking, right? And I'm like, yes, do that. I can definitely, like I'll just ask questions, and we'll get to it. And I'm totally fine with that.

Not all coaches love that route. But that is definitely something we do in The Coach Lab. And I think sometimes that's okay. Like, it's okay to not know. But just to even say, there's some fear under here or there's some whatever it is, and I'm not sure. Can you help me unpack it?

Sindy: Yeah. And one thing that I think reimagining encompasses that maybe hasn't been so explicit in our conversation today is you might go through that process and decide, yeah, stay the course. Stay the course in a way where I've cleared out some cobwebs and now I feel re-engaged or more determined or committed.

But we can't necessarily get to that point if we're not willing to hold it all up to the light.

Lindsay: Yes. I love that you said that, because I think that is 1,000%. A couple of people have said like, so do I have to want to make a bunch of changes to my business to join your mastermind? And I'm like, oh no, that's not what it is. It's not just for making changes.

If you decide you want to make changes, absolutely amazing. I'll support you through that. And we might just unpack some of the suitcase and you see, oh, I actually have everything that I want and need. Now I just want to make it better or I want to find the thing that I don't love about it and find my way to do that piece.

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Sindy: Well, I do think one of your superpowers as a coach, Lindsay, is to help people get clarity on what they want and why. Like you're not going to say, nope, we got to pack the suitcase this way, you know, fold the jeans like this. Like that's so not how you coach or what Reimagine is going to be. It's going to be a very introspective yet supportive journey, I'm sure.

Lindsay: I've had so much fun selling this offer. And I've had people ask me if I would do business coaching for a while. And I'm always like, no, there's just something about it. I don't, it's just like not my thing. And what I have seen as I've sold this is that really I had to let this piece come together where it's like, no, I don't love coaching on like, here's the exact way to build a business. Here's the exact way to sign a client. But will I help you find your way? Yes. Because I think there are so many ways that can work. So many.

Sindy: 100%. I think this is the most brilliant offer for you because having been in like masterminds and The Coach Lab and the certification, what comes up again and again, and what your clients seem to want you as a sounding board for most is business and coaching. But the business of coaching, because coaching is both a practice and a business for those of us that are in that sort of space.

And I just see people, including me, wanting that from you again and again and again.

Lindsay: One thing I just kind of sat with, like the Reimagine process I did on myself, right? It's like where so much of this came from. And I just sat with like, okay, if I could build the perfect offer for me, like an offer that I cannot wait each week to just get on and talk about this and coach on this, what does that look like? And that is where it was born.

And one thing that got me there is I just started noticing that a lot of my clients, when we're talking about creating their coaching processes and all of that, there was a lot of like, okay, but let's rewind just a little bit and

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decide, is this even the offer that you want? Is this the structure that you want? Or did this just come from like, this is what you were taught or you saw or whatever and you're just thinking this is what you have to do?

Like, let's start there. And yeah, I'm pretty excited about it, but I know I'm impartial.

Sindy: I think you should be. It's so funny because had you launched it six months prior or eight months prior, whatever my timeline was, I would have been like first in line. But when you launched it, I was like, oh my God, I just went through this. It would have been so nice if I could have done it with Lindsay. So yeah, this is going to be amazing for people.

Lindsay: But I also love people to hear too, like you don't always have to hire a coach for every single thing. Like sometimes there are times, your process may not have been the same if you had – Of course, I'm not telling people not to join because they definitely should. But I love the way you worked through that.

And to be fair, you also worked with me for quite a while and you've had so much coaching around a lot of this, you probably had a lot of the tools that you needed to just kind of sit with the discomfort.

Sindy: That is 100% true. I had the tools because I'd been working with you for a long time.

Lindsay: And not even just because of me, but you just had the tools.

Sindy: That was one piece of it. That was for sure a piece of it. And I had, you know, we all have our own unique makeups and whatever, but yeah, no, that is so true.

Lindsay: I just want to make sure I was not taking, I wanted to be clear I was not taking credit for like, because I gave you these tools, you were

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able to work through it because I'm so excited for you. I love that you have done this. Even just talking to you, you're like lighter, you seem.

Sindy: Yeah. Yeah. I'm really excited. And I will also just say one thing that helped me get to the point like where I am today, which feels just so fun and exciting is I really took a few months of doing nothing other than running my business, like coaching, which I never feel burned out by the actual coaching. That I love.

But I really took a few months. I gave myself permission to just take time off.

Lindsay: The one last thing, I have one question before we wrap this up because we're about out of time. But when you say that, some people will hear that and they'll be like, well, you don't understand. I can't do that, right? Like I need money to keep coming in or that's just not a possibility for me to just give myself the two months.

If that was where you were, how would you have handled that? Do you even have an answer for that?

Sindy: I do. And it's not like I gave up making money. I didn't take the summer off of working or making money, to be clear. I really didn't. And the numbers changed a little bit when I shed my expenses, I didn't have to make as much to actually make even more. So I am not advocating like it wasn't a sabbatical from work. It was a sabbatical from clenching to business growth. That wasn't serving me, Lindsay. That wasn't making me more money. I actually made more money when I let go a little bit.

Lindsay: Yeah. Okay. So you still had one-on-one clients coming to you?

Sindy: Oh yeah.

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Lindsay: Because that was my thought, that's exactly what I would do. Like any coach that's in that situation and thinking like, okay, great, but I can't take two months off.

Sindy: No, I was still selling coaching. Yeah, no, I was still selling coaching. I wasn't like lying under the covers crying. Although maybe once in a while.

Lindsay: And I actually know that's true because I get your emails. So I saw you selling coaching. And I just wanted to make sure that people heard that, of like it wasn't just like, okay, I'm checking out of my business taking –

Sindy: I think it was more like a mental vacation, than like if you actually saw me it looked like I was on vacation.

Lindsay: Right. That's what I assumed. I just wanted that to be clear to everybody listening.

Sindy: Good clarification. Yeah.

Lindsay: Well, thank you so much for doing this. I think that this is really going to help people at least just release some of that pressure of like, there's one way to do it. I have to keep going. I created this thing, I couldn't possibly undo it, because that's just not true.

Sindy: It's not true. You can do whatever you want.

Lindsay: I love that. Yes, you can do whatever you want.

Okay, where can people find you if they are like, oh, Cindy's on the market for one-on-one coaching, I'm in? Or they just want to kind of watch the evolution, see what you're doing, where can they find you?

Sindy: Awesome. My website is the best place BlueTreeCoaching.net. On Instagram, I'm @BlueTreeCoaching, although to be fair, I have taken a little hiatus from social media, but I'll be getting back into it. And Cindy with an S at BlueTreeCoaching.net. Love to hear from anyone.

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Lindsay: We will link all those in the show notes so they can go there if they didn't, if they're driving and didn't write it down. Just go to the show notes, we'll link all the things. Thank you so much.

Sindy: Thank you.

Lindsay: Have an amazing rest of your day. And thank you for doing this with me.

Sindy: You too, Lindsay.

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.