

Ep #265: How to Recalibrate Your Goals When You Feel Behind



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With Your Host

Lindsay Dotzlaf

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Hey, this is Lindsay Dotzlaf, and you are listening to *Mastering Coaching Skills* episode 265.

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 am so happy you are here today. This is going to be a short episode. I just want to talk to you for a minute about something that might be happening for you right now. If you are listening to this in real time, then you know it is almost December of 2025. And you might be looking at your goals for the year and thinking, oh man, I have a lot of work to do. Maybe I'm behind. I need to catch up.

And I just want to share, one of my favorite thoughts to use against myself is, I'm so far behind. It's one my brain just loves to have on repeat. And therefore, I'm really good at coaching on it because I've had so much practice unwinding this thought for myself.

And I just know for a lot of my clients, as we start to head towards the end of the year, specifically in October or November, my clients can really start to have this, like, oh, I'm so far behind on all of the goals that I set in January. Or even, I'm behind on goals that I set this year. And no matter when you are listening to this episode, this will be relevant because we all are setting goals all of the time, and you also hopefully are setting some goals with your clients.

So, what I'm about to say here is hopefully going to be super beneficial to you, but it's also something that you can apply while working with your clients. Because hopefully, once I point this out, you will start to see it when your clients do this too, okay?

So, here's the problem. When you are telling yourself that you're behind on your goals. And even if you're like, Lindsay, but logistically it's true. I said I was going to have this many clients by now or have made X amount of

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money by now and I don't. Okay, sure. You maybe are not exactly where you thought you would be. But let me show you why the thought I am behind is never really ever useful. Past just the information, okay?

Here's what happens. When you tell yourself you're behind, usually one of two things happens. You go in one direction or the other. Number one, you frantically try to catch up. So maybe you hustle harder, you plan more, you work more, you just overwork, right? You do more. Or number two, you give up completely and say, like, I'll start fresh in, fill in the blank. So in this case, if you're thinking about the year, maybe it's like, whatever, I'll just kind of coast through December and then I'll start fresh in January.

And both of these options make sense on some level, right? If you set a goal for this year or this month or whatever time frame, and you are behind on your goal, maybe if you work harder and you frantically try to catch up, then you'll hit the goal. That'll be amazing. Or, if you just kind of let it go and you decide you'll start fresh at whatever the next interval is, those can feel like real legit options, right?

Because especially if you've been behind for a little bit. And so maybe you have been working pretty hard and you might be a little tired. Or maybe you've been thinking a lot about being behind. Like if you've spent most of this year, for example, behind your goal, think about how much time you've spent telling yourself all year that you're behind. And how much is that thought alone wearing you out, right? Like how often are you thinking about it?

Here's what I want you to really let sink in. Both of these options are actually terrible options because you are approaching them both through the lens of I am behind. You're making every decision with first circling through that thought, I'm behind, and that is going to drastically affect the way that you show up to solve this, quote, problem that you're having.

I want to offer something different instead. What if you are not behind? What if it's actually impossible for you to be behind? Because right in this

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moment, you are right here. You're right where you are. When you tell yourself you're behind, it assumes that the plan you made, maybe at the beginning of the year or the beginning of the month, is or was your exact right plan that was supposed to go exactly the way you thought it would.

But spoiler alert, as an entrepreneur, that is pretty much not how it usually happens. Not that you are going to fail at every goal you set. Sometimes you might even have the thought like, I'm ahead or I've caught up. But when you are behind specifically, and you beat yourself up about it, you are just doing that with the assumption that the goal you set was inevitable and was obviously supposed to be exactly where you are at this point in the year or the month.

And the thing that happens that makes your plan moving forward very ineffective when you are coming at it through the lens of I am behind is that whatever you feel when you tell yourself you're behind, so for most people, it might be frantic or stressed or overwhelmed or defeated. Whatever plan you make from there, from that heightened emotion, is not going to be a clear plan that takes into account all of the learning you've had, even in the parts where you aren't hitting your goals.

And I'm not saying to ignore all of those feelings. Definitely take care of them, acknowledge them. But if you can learn to make this shift, it will change so much about the way you approach your goals. When you can go from telling yourself you're behind to pausing and saying, no, I'm not behind. I am right here. I'm right here in this moment. And from this space, how can I recalibrate and decide exactly what the rest of this time frame might look like? So in this case, what the rest of 2025 is going to look like?

Let's recalibrate the goal. And here's why that's important. Because if you recalibrate and let go of the shame, the whatever you feel about being behind your goal, further behind than you thought you would be, it's going to allow you to take all of the learning you've had and to apply it to making an actual clear plan that will feel totally different and that you can approach

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with fresh eyes instead of the ones that are all fuzzy looking through the I'm so far behind lens.

Here are three questions you can use to recalibrate. And I am going to frame these questions like I'm thinking about this year and the year's end and the goals that you've set, but obviously, you can reframe these questions and make them useful for any goal or anytime you're feeling like you're behind.

Number one, what actually matters between now and December 31st?

Number two, what would make this a successful end to this year from right here?

And number three, what's one thing I can complete really well instead of five things that I'll do halfway?

Here's why these questions are important. Because they have you focused on where am I right now and what do I actually want to create and what is really important to me between now and the end of December or the end of the goal time frame.

So when you drop all those thoughts about I'm behind and you stop gathering all that evidence and bringing all the things with you, the way you're going to move forward the most is by just getting super clear. What is the goal? What am I working on right now? What's one thing I know I can accomplish at least to start with?

And that's going to keep you out of the hustle, it will keep you focused, and most importantly, it will stop having you trying to make up for lost time. Because making up for lost time is never ever a good business strategy, or really any kind of strategy while working towards a goal.

Now, I'm not saying don't finish strong, right? What I want you to do is check in on how you're feeling. If you aren't quite to where you thought you

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would be at this time of the year, but you feel very confident and excited and ready to implement your plan for the rest of the year, absolutely get it.

But when you feel defeated or shut down or overwhelmed or panicked because you're so far from where you thought you would be, you never want to approach the plan to move forward from that space, right? You can see if you think about how those things feel in your body and how you operate when you're feeling that way, you can see how probably your best work doesn't usually come from that place.

I want to just give you one quick example so you can see how this plays out in action, right? Let's say, we're just going to think about one month. Let's say this month, whatever month you're in, you decided you were signing five clients, or fill in the blank, however many clients you would want. And by the 25th of the month, you have signed zero.

And when you tell yourself you're behind, and then you start to panic, think about what plan you create from there, right? When you are like, the only option from here is to sign those five clients or I fail, and you don't feel good making this plan, then it will have you doing things that just won't be that effective, right?

You'll just probably spend a lot of time spinning. You might also put some new offer together at the last minute that you aren't really that lit up by, but you're thinking like, oh, this will be easy to sell, so I'll just do this. Or you offer something where you decrease your price drastically, or, you know, you just make decisions that end up not feeling good and, if you think about the potential clients who are watching, can also feel a little haphazard and all over the place. And that is not what you want them to feel when they are watching you and your marketing.

Instead, what if you said, okay, it's the 25th. I have six days left. How many clients do I think I can sign in six days? Maybe your answer is one. And then you get to work making that happen. The pressure is much lower because your thoughts are different.

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You aren't waiting till the next month to start over, and you aren't going to exhaust yourself, but instead, you're going to get super clear on what haven't I said? Where do my clients come from? How can I show up more there? You're going to get crystal clear about a plan, and more importantly, you're going to feel differently while you do it, while you implement the plan. You might feel full of possibility and hope and excitement and motivation, because you're no longer thinking you're behind.

And remember, I will leave you with this. I have said this probably a million times on this podcast, but goals are so arbitrary, especially when they are goals that you have never set for yourself before, right? You're just kind of blindly guessing at what you think you can accomplish, and then you get to work making it happen.

And hopefully, as you're working on it, you learn more and you learn more and you have all these takeaways and you get better and you get better, but you still might be wrong about exactly what you can accomplish in a certain time frame. And if you can just start to see that as information, it will be so much easier and so much more fun moving forward and figuring out what your plan is from right here.

Okay, coach. Hopefully this was really helpful. If you are one of the people thinking you're behind for the year, you are not. Take a deep breath. Remind yourself who you are and make a plan to move forward after the recalibration.

Now, if you are listening in real time, next week is the public launch for my new membership, The Complete Coach. I cannot wait. And I hope to see you there. So, if you go to the show notes, you will find a waitlist link. If you want to be one of the first to get the link to sign up, go there, sign yourself up.

And if you are thinking about goals for the year and maybe even starting to think about your goals for next year, I also want you to know that I am hosting a two-day planning event, not two full days, on December 16th and

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17th for an hour and a half each afternoon. And I would love for you to be there. It is free. It is for all coaches, and you are welcome to come. You can find the link for that in my show notes as well. I'll see you back here 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. That's Lindsay with an A, D-O-T-Z-L-A-F.com. See you next week.