

Ep #300: Beyond Core Beliefs: Why You Still Feel Stuck



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Lindsay Dotzlaf

Ep #300: Beyond Core Beliefs: Why You Still Feel Stuck

Hey, Coach. This is Lindsay Dotzlaf, and welcome to Episode 300 of Mastering Coaching Skills. Oh my goodness, what is even happening?

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.

I cannot believe we're here. It feels like in some ways I just started this podcast yesterday, but obviously, we are 300 episodes in, and this is blowing my mind.

So I am so glad you're here. I cannot wait to dig into this content, but first, I have a few announcements for you. First of all, Episode 300. What does this even mean? Where do we even go from here? Don't worry. I have a plan. Part of that plan is a handful of really special episodes coming up next. Stay tuned for what those will be because next week I'm going to let you in to some of the things about to happen on this podcast. So there are going to be some really fun episodes, plus some really fun announcements.

Now, again, this is all happening next week, starting with Episode 301. But for now, we're just going to dig into some regular content, but just be sure to come back next week because I cannot wait to share with you everything that is about to happen, okay?

Now, this episode has been a few weeks in the making, and I apologize to you because in Episode 296, I promised that that was Part One and there was a Part Two coming. And then, if I'm honest, I just had some logistical and scheduling snafus that got in the way, but here we are. This is going to be Part Two to Episode 296, which was Part One. Now, this episode will kind of stand on its own, so if you haven't listened to that, it's okay. But if you want to, you can pause right now, go back and listen to that one first, and then come back here to dig into this new content.

So just for a brief setup, in Episode 296, I talked about core beliefs and how to shift out of them. And I gave you, I think, eight strategies that you

Ep #300: Beyond Core Beliefs: Why You Still Feel Stuck

could try when kind of the same beliefs kept popping up over and over. But sometimes there's this thing that happens where you can't even recognize why maybe you feel stuck or you're working towards something, and you know that you really want to create these specific results, except you can't just get yourself to take the action that will do it, no matter what you try.

This can be a very common and frustrating experience. And I just want you to know, first of all, obviously, you're not broken, you are not failing. There's a real reason that this can happen. And today in this episode, I'm going to speak directly to you, but just know, of course, as always, everything I'm about to say can also be applied to the work you do with your clients, okay?

So let's talk about why this happens. We have something called implicit memory. Sometimes this is a great thing. This is the mechanism that allows us to do things without thinking, like riding a bike. If you know how to ride a bike, you can probably think back to how you learned, where you learned, when you learned.

And now, if you've done it enough times, you just pop on a bike and go. Your body just learned to take the actions it needed to take automatically to make the thing happen. Even though when you first started, it felt so hard, and you had to really think about how fast do you pedal. And oh my goodness, how could you possibly just stay balanced, right? Like just balancing was a skill you had to learn.

Recently, my daughter learned to drive. She was very scared at first, and I promised her, I was like, "Listen, it is kind of like riding a bike. Like you see me drive now, and you probably notice that I am not thinking through, okay, when do I put on the turn signal? When do I start braking in time to stop at the stop light? How hard do I push the gas pedal to make the car go? I just kind of do it, and I promise you, you're going to get there." And now, months and months and months in, she actually came to me recently and said, "Hey, you were right. I noticed the other day, I just like get in the car and go."

Ep #300: Beyond Core Beliefs: Why You Still Feel Stuck

So your implicit memories, which are stored in your subconscious, are more like this. They live in your body. They're stored through repeated experiences, often kind of heightened emotional experiences, and they're usually learned through a lot of feeling, not as much thinking. Or maybe at first, repeated thinking that's happening over, over, over. It feels very hard, but then the thinking kind of goes away, the thoughts kind of evaporate, and your body just kind of takes over. It knows the feeling, it knows what's happening. Even things that feel very hard, like riding a bike or learning to drive a car, you are having an emotional experience in those moments. You might have fear, "Oh my gosh, am I going to hit something? Am I going to fall off this bike?" There is an emotional component to that experience.

Now, think of things that have happened in your life that were amazing or that weren't amazing, that you had heightened emotional experience that you learned over time. Here's how I react in this specific situation. This is the same mechanism. Now, obviously, this is quite simplified, but that's okay. For what we're talking about today, you don't need to know every term and all the science behind all the reasons that this happens. Just know it's a similar mechanism to learning things that you learned before, like riding a bike, that are now just happening without you having to really think about it. The same thing can happen in other parts of your life.

All of us have certain core beliefs that live in our conscious mind that we can easily access through language, through thought, through conversation, and those strategies I shared in Episode 296, those work for those types of beliefs, right? Because you can access them. You can say like, "Oh, here's the thing I know that's keeping me stuck. Now, let me get on the other side of it."

But what we're talking about today, they feel different because often you can't access them through your conscious mind. You might not even be able to identify them and say, "Here's the belief I'm having," or "Here's the thing I learned over my lifetime and why I learned it." These are stored in your body. They're stored there through repeated experiences, through feeling instead of thinking. They don't speak that same language of logic,

Ep #300: Beyond Core Beliefs: Why You Still Feel Stuck

which is why sometimes you can feel like, “Okay, logically I know this thing, but I'm still stuck.”

It's why sometimes you can have real, genuine insights. You can have, “Oh my gosh, I had never considered that.” And then you can wake up the next day feeling just as stuck as you were. It's like you're trying to update one system by talking to the completely wrong system.

Now, earlier I used the term implicit memory. There are other terms for this, especially as coaches, that you may have heard. So you may have heard somatic memory, embodied memory, procedural memory, or just general speaking of your nervous system or something being stored in your nervous system. Some of these have slight differences, but for the purposes of this episode, that's what I'm talking about. Okay, they're all a bit interchangeable for this work that we're doing. I promise you are not having a test at the end of this on any of the terms. It's more the idea of it that I want you to understand.

The first thing I want to help you do is help you identify which kind of stuck you're dealing with. Because just because you're stuck, even if it maybe happens a few times, doesn't mean that you need to pause everything and go have this deep nervous system cleansing, right? Sometimes feeling stuck is more situational and explainable and doesn't have as much of a charge to it. There's not a pattern.

The deeper kind of subconscious stuck that I'm talking about today, you can usually identify it because it's more of a pattern. Maybe there's a charge to it. You feel quite activated when it's happening. You genuinely want to move forward, but you can't. You understand all the things logically, and yet you're still not taking action or doing what you keep telling yourself you're going to do. And those strategies I've shared in 296, maybe you have tried and tried and tried and repeated so many of them that you feel like giving up.

Ep #300: Beyond Core Beliefs: Why You Still Feel Stuck

So it's important to see this difference, this distinction, because you don't need to over-pathologize every missed plan or a week that goes by where you didn't get done what you said you were going to get done. Sometimes when my clients come to me with this, it can be common that they made a plan last week. We're coaching a week later, and they say, "Oh, I didn't actually do any of it." I'm not jumping straight to, "Oh my goodness, this must be some subconscious thing. We need to do all of this trauma healing, and we need to..." Like that would be silly, right?

What I do in that moment is first we examine the situation. Could it have just been you're human? You were busy. You need a new strategy. You just didn't feel like it. Like all of those things are also reasons that you might be stuck. Sometimes it's just like you're using the wrong strategy or one that's not right for you. We need to just make a new plan. We need to coach on your time and figure out where are you going to find time over the next week. Maybe you felt confused and you didn't recognize that you were confused. Confusion, always a good reason to not move forward.

But again, what I'm referencing today is the thing that is repeating. It keeps showing up. You don't understand why. You know you want to move forward, and you just aren't.

I'm going to now give you some strategies, but first, a few caveats. First caveat, what I'm speaking to today is from personal experience and from all the work I've seen with clients and just, you know, from humans in the world. I'm not giving you an exhaustive list. I'm sure there are other ways to handle this that I'm not covering here. Amazing. These are just like tried and true in my experience. If you know of something else, go for it.

Also, just know, even if you've identified, "Oh, this is a place where I am consistently getting stuck," you don't always have to stop everything and do a full excavation before you can move on or be fully healed before taking any action. I've said this before, but I feel like I can't say it enough. I know this is a little counterculture for many coaching spaces, but you just do not have to be in a constant state of healing. It's okay sometimes to decide,

Ep #300: Beyond Core Beliefs: Why You Still Feel Stuck

“You know what? This is not my work right now. I don't have the time, I don't have the energy, I don't feel like putting in the effort.” Sometimes the answer is as simple as, “I'm just doing something different today. I'm making a different choice today.”

If no one has given you that permission, I want to be sure you're hearing it now. You always have to approach this work with choice, not because, “Oh, it's required to move on.” I want you to think about how many people in this world are building and growing businesses without this work that we do, never even having heard of a nervous system or subconscious beliefs. Doesn't mean they're doing it in a way that maybe feels great to them, right? That doesn't mean that those things might not help them in some way, but just know you do not have to have five years of healing work before you can move forward from where you are right now.

Okay, so here are some strategies. First, pattern interruption. This is one of my favorites. When I feel really stuck, specifically if I'm sitting at my desk and I just notice some kind of old patterns coming up, some like, “I'm really scared to put this out there because people aren't going to like it.” And it just keeps me either frozen or it keeps me re-editing, re-editing, re-editing. One of my favorite things to do is to interrupt the pattern, and I think about it like I'm confusing my brain and my body.

Recently, I've been keeping a little notebook with a canvas for painting or doodling. I bought some fancy and fun markers. I have a bunch of paint. And I don't approach it like, “Okay, I'm doing this art project.” Sometimes it's just like putting on some music and moving my body by painting or drawing or doing something that's just distracting part of my mind completely will shift my state and make me much more open to working on or thinking about whatever it was I was just doing.

So either I'll do it separately, I'll do the more creative thing, and then I'll come back to my work, or I'll actually do it at the same time. This is probably one of my favorite things to do. I have the best ideas, and I also notice, “Okay, I see where this is coming from.” It's almost like it just allows

Ep #300: Beyond Core Beliefs: Why You Still Feel Stuck

me, like my guard comes down and it allows me to see what might be going on underneath.

Now, as I've mentioned before, I've had lots of therapy, lots of different healing modalities that I've participated in. So I know what a lot of my deep kind of trauma and those things that my body just really likes to hold on to. I do have quite a bit of awareness around them. So sometimes for me, it's simply opening up that portal so that I can access what's underneath. And often, when I see it, then I can kind of shift past it because I can remind myself that it's no longer true or that it's just not something I need to worry about right now.

So for you, maybe you don't like painting, but maybe it's dancing. Maybe it is drawing or writing or just something that really gets you out of your logical brain and into your body. There's so many different ways to do it. I'll let you explore them on your own, but just make sure that it's not something, so like even when I'm painting, I'm not thinking, "Oh, there's this specific destination I'm getting to."

The painting is just part of the process. The painting isn't to make beautiful art to hang on my wall. The painting isn't you know, "Here's exactly, like I'm going to paint this thing." It's mostly just the movement, the mixing of colors, the putting colors on a canvas, and just really letting it be whatever it is. Sometimes I might save them, sometimes I might not. My kids always say, "What is that?" I'm like, "I don't know," because for me, that's never the point of this type of exercise.

The second strategy is finding some sort of body-based practice that might work for you that you enjoy. This could look like breathwork, EFT tapping, somatic movement, somatic experiencing, or even tai chi. And this list could go on and on and on. I am not going to teach you any of these in this episode, but just know that these are all options. And some of them can be quite fun. I have done some of these before. They can feel a little weird or uncomfortable if you aren't used to them at first, but I may have talked about this before, but I really enjoy EFT tapping. I've hired coaches and

Ep #300: Beyond Core Beliefs: Why You Still Feel Stuck

practitioners, EFT practitioners to help me with that in the past, and it really helped shift some deeply rooted trauma for me, especially when it comes to medical trauma. So I can say firsthand, these methods can be quite effective.

The next strategy is being witnessed. This could take many different forms, but sometimes just being in the company of someone else or even a community of others can really help uproot some of these subconscious things that you don't know are happening for you. Sometimes this is what I think can be, when done well, very powerful about group coaching.

Sometimes you might not have any idea what you need coaching on. You might not have access to any of it, but just showing up and being in a room with other people working on similar things can give you a lot of access and maybe even safety to access some of the things that are going on for you. And this could be true for your clients, too. Think about that anytime you're creating communities or coaching in groups.

But it doesn't have to be just group coaching. This could also look like just being coached in general. Sometimes one of the things that is very powerful about coaching is just someone sitting there with you, witnessing the things coming up. But of course, this is also where a therapist comes in or some kind of group that you meet with based on maybe past traumas or something you have going on in your life right now or just any group where you can be witnessed, you can be heard, and also you can see you're not alone. And there's something that just happens when that co-regulation kicks in, everybody starts to feel a little more comfortable, and again, it's like it removes the safety mechanism and allows you to access whatever is underneath.

And then the last one, of course, is getting professional help that isn't coaching, something that might look like therapy, that might look like EMDR, or even somatic therapy, or possibly even medication when that's appropriate, among so many other options. Again, I'm not going deep into

Ep #300: Beyond Core Beliefs: Why You Still Feel Stuck

any one of these, just kind of giving you an idea of what this level of support could look like.

And there are two things I want you to keep in mind when you think about these four layers of strategy. One, they can often be combined with other things. So, you know, you don't usually have to do one of these as a standalone, like stopping everything else and doing the thing. I have had times where I've gone to therapy and I've had a coach. I have used somatic experiences while also getting mindset coaching on my business. They can work together. Actually, for me at least, they seem to be the most effective when they do work together.

And second, when you are doing this work with yourself, possibly with yourself or with your client, just be sure to know where the line is. Some of these things are not for you to do as a coach. They would be things that you are recommending to your clients or talking to them about, which is a completely valid thing to do. You never have to be trained in every modality that's ever existed in order to help your clients. Know what your strengths are and what they aren't. And if you notice, "Oh, this thing is really missing from my client experience," then maybe that's something to consider.

Could you experiment with having your clients paint with you or something along those lines? Of course, that's not going to hurt anyone. But should you be, you know, Googling what type of medication is best for trauma and giving your client recommendations? No, don't do that. Or like watching one YouTube video of somatic experiencing and then trying to do that yourself? Nope, also not okay. But what is okay is just for you to know for yourself and for your clients that all of these options exist, and they all get to be a piece of the puzzle when needed.

Now, can you learn some very simple somatic exercises that could help you and your clients briefly in a moment? Absolutely. I'm actually currently creating some content around that for my membership, The Complete Coach. We will put the link for that in the show notes if you want to join or get on the waitlist.

Ep #300: Beyond Core Beliefs: Why You Still Feel Stuck

But for today, this episode is complete. I hope that it gave you a better understanding of sometimes why we truly get stuck and just cannot move forward and we don't understand it in our logic brain that usually is so good at thinking through all the things. I hope you use these episodes again and again and listen to them when you need to. And just know, I'm here for you if you have any questions. Always feel free to reach out, and stay tuned for next week because I cannot wait to share with you some of the exciting things I have planned.

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.