Ep #315: Can We Normalize These Thoughts About Being a Coach?



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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 315.

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, as always, am so happy you're here today. I want to talk about something that—it's been on my mind for a while—and I've had this podcast episode written out for a while, or whatever, in my notes for a while. Not written out, but just in my notes with notes added. And that's because this is something that happens so often in all of my different offers and all of my different communities that I want to talk about it today. Which is normalizing some of the thoughts that you have as a coach that really hold you back. And giving you examples, as a way to normalize them, of when I have had similar thoughts.

Because here's what happens. Often, my clients will come and they'll tell me this thing, and then they'll tell me a thought that they have about it. And I can tell by the way they're presenting it that they think that they shouldn't be having that thought, that I have obviously never had that thought or that experience, and that also most other people, most other coaches, have not had that thought or had that experience. And I spend a lot of time, kind of first step, normalizing, nope, that's just a normal thought that a lot of people have, including myself.

So today, I want to give you some really specific examples of when I have had some of the thoughts that come up for you all often and give you some examples, and then also tell you why it's really important to—like why I take the time to, as the first step—just kind of normalize it. So, first I'll tell you the thoughts, then I'm going to end with why it's so important to just see that these are just thoughts that everybody has. In some form, including me.

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I think sometimes when you listen to a podcast and you don't know the person, you don't interact with them, or you only have them as your coach and so you only get coaching, you don't know a lot about them, you can start to develop these thoughts that are like, well, obviously they've never experienced this or, like, they've done so much work, they no longer have this thing anymore. But when it happens for you, you're like, oh, it becomes like some sort of affliction that you personally have as a human.

And so I want to just poke holes in that story just in case because I think this—some of these can be really heavy for people. For some of my clients, I know they are. And one of the really powerful things that happens when you're in a group coaching container or a community of any kind is that you can start to see like, oh, other people experience this too. And when you normalize it, it can start to really remove some of that shame and guilt, frustration, like whatever those things are.

So, and I know I've talked about this in some previous episodes just a little bit, but today I'm going to give you some really specific examples, okay? So that you all can be like, oh, Lindsay has these thoughts too. So the first one. Ready? So these are just like thoughts that I have sometimes, some of them more so than others. And specifically kind of when they come up for me, and then what I have learned to tell myself about them now. Sometimes after lots of coaching, lots of tears, lots of all the things.

So the first one, and this comes up, I think, for most coaches, probably most entrepreneurs in some form, is: I shouldn't have to do this. Or, I shouldn't have to work this hard. Now for me, there's a really specific time that this comes up, and that's usually when I am launching or selling something new or something even I've launched or sold before. And ahead of time, we make a plan, right? My team and I, we make a plan of like, here's what we think it's going to take, here's how it's going to go.

And then often, I, specifically, underestimate the amount of work it's going to take. And then, after we've executed the plan, we have to come up with a new plan, right? Like an add-on plan. Like, we launched the thing, we

didn't sell as many spots as we wanted to, and now we have a choice to make. Do we sell more spots or do we cap it and just move on? Right? So I do both. It depends on the situation.

But sometimes this really kind of heavy pity party comes up for me that starts with the thought, ugh, and it's always like very heavy and probably a little whiny is how it sounds to me in my head. I'm not usually saying this out loud, but just in my head is how I experience it. Just like a little bit whiny, like, ugh, I shouldn't have to do this. I shouldn't have to work this hard. Like an entitlement, I guess, to like, I've already done this work. I shouldn't have to do it again.

And I know that this comes up at every stage of business, right? I see it often with my clients who are newer coaches, newer entrepreneurs. Right, they get very frustrated. I worked so hard. I shouldn't have to do it more. And I just need you to know that doesn't necessarily go away. But you can change the way you think about it, right? So I still have this. Sometimes it still feels very heavy.

Sometimes I still cry the tears when I have this thought. And the tears don't usually come from a place of like entitlement or I shouldn't have to do this. It's more like the plan was to move on to something else, and now we have to—it feels like we kind of have to backtrack and make new plans. And that can feel very frustrating for me, especially when I'm like excited to get to the next thing or just like mentally ready to move on to the next thing.

And what I tell myself about this now that, I don't know if it feels comforting, it just really normalizes it for me is like, oh no, this is just what I signed up for. It's literally part of being an entrepreneur. So you might not love hearing that part. And maybe someone else has different thoughts that, something that you tell yourself when this comes up.

But for me, it's just like, oh no, this is part of being an entrepreneur. It's also part of what I like about being an entrepreneur when things are going my way, right? When they're going well, when I'm hitting the goals that I set. Is

that there's always a next thing. There's always more work to do. There's always like a problem that I get to solve or a thing to figure out. Is part of what makes being an entrepreneur kind of exciting and makes it enticing for me.

But when things aren't going the way that I want them to go, right, that can turn into, oh, I shouldn't have to work this hard. And to be clear, that is the way I say it in my mind: I shouldn't have to work this hard. But it's not actually about the amount of time that I work or the—it's not like, oh, I should just be off all the time not working. I love to work, so it's not about that. It's just about the, I think, the mental kind of drain. Right?

When things aren't going the way I want them to go. And so, when I just remind myself like, oh no, this is what I signed up for, this is part of it. If there wasn't this part, there also wouldn't be the amazing parts of it. That really helps lighten it for me. And sometimes I might need to take a day, right? Before I can just like jump right back into figuring out the thing. Solving the problem, planning a new launch, whatever it is.

So if you have those thoughts, just know, totally normal. They come up and they might keep coming up for you. And that's okay. Just figure out a way for yourself to reframe that thought. Just like I did with the examples I gave you.

So the next one is: I should be better at this by now. Or, I should be past this. I hear this so often from my clients as well. So for me specifically, this comes up. First, it comes up almost always with tech stuff, which is really frustrating even now. This is one thing I have a really hard time even managing my thoughts about. Right? Like, ugh, I should be better at this by now.

Recently, I did a—I think it was a masterclass or maybe a workshop—and I was sharing my screen, and something happened in the middle of the screen share and it just like turned off. The screen share turned off. But also, for some reason—I can't remember now why—I couldn't figure out

how to, when it turned off, the whole window that I was sharing disappeared. And there were like hundreds of people on, right? This was not in one of my communities. This was like I was hosting something that people had registered for. And I may have appeared super calm on the outside, but on the inside, I was losing my mind. Right? I should be better at this. Like, why is this happening right now? I should be past this. I shouldn't have tech issues. That can cause me lots of frustration.

Also, when something comes up that I have really worked hard on before. Right? Something that's like work that I've done, like coaching work that I've done, things that I've really worked on, processed through whatever. And then it pops up again. And sometimes I can just have the thought like, ugh, why is this happening again? Why is this coming up? I shouldn't have this thought right now. I shouldn't feel this way.

Obviously, telling yourself that you shouldn't have this thought, that you shouldn't feel this way, doesn't ever move you forward, right? That will immediately halt you right where you are, keep you stuck, keep you frozen, or have you panicking on the inside. Right? Like with the tech stuff, the example I gave, it probably took me longer to fix it than it would have if I had just been like, oh, well, this happens. Or, I'm great at tech. I know how to fix this, right? Or whatever like a different thought would be. But it just wasn't available to me in the moment. So, if those types of thoughts come up for you—and I know they do because I've heard them from a lot of you—just know, you're not alone.

The next one is: I shouldn't be so scared or nervous. So, for me, this usually comes up when I am about to host like a masterclass or a webinar. Maybe it's the first time I'm doing it, or something's different, or I'm using a new platform, or I happen to know there are a lot more people registered than usual. Or maybe if I'm being honest, like I didn't prepare enough, right? And I feel really nervous or really scared. Or I'm about to launch a new thing and I feel really scared, like what if no one wants it. It's not like what if only X number of people buy it? It's always like what if no one? Right? Like it's very dramatic. What if nobody wants this?

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The other time that I get really nervous, which always surprises my clients when I share it—I share this often just to say like, hey, this is normal. I get really nervous for first calls. So, not all first calls at this point. But when I was a newer coach, oh my gosh, forget it. I got nervous before every first call with a new client. Now, I get nervous mostly with first calls of new groups, right? Especially if it's a larger group and maybe, especially if we're doing something I've not taught before, I've not done before, whatever. I get really nervous. Really nervous.

And again, if you're my client, you may not have noticed this before because I do tend to stay very calm on the outside. But I do get very nervous. And the thought that helps me tremendously is, oh, this is just part of my process. Of course, this is just the first call, I just get nervous. It immediately takes all the heaviness out of it, all of the—like I might still feel a little nervous, but it actually makes me feel much less nervous when I'm like, oh yeah, this is normal. I should be nervous.

I also tell myself I'm nervous because I care. Or I'm scared because I care, right? The only reason I would be really scared that not one single person is going to want this offer, whatever it is, is because I care, right? Because I want people to want it. I want it to help people. I want to bring money into my business. I want to be able to pay my people, pay myself. I want to—like I care about it for so many reasons. Right? It's important to me for so many reasons. So yeah, of course I feel scared or I feel nervous. Right? If you can just like tell yourself that, of course, this is just part of my process. This is just normal because I'm a human. Even though I'm a coach, I'm still a human. It will just help lower the stress, lower the nerves, lower the fear, at least a little bit.

So recently I had to have a small medical procedure. I actually had an endoscopy. And everything's fine, by the way. But I was super nervous. So I get there, and I've had surgeries before, so I've been like under general anesthesia, which is like, you're fully asleep. But of course, I had been like googling and reading about endoscopies because I had no idea what to expect. And some of the things I read, and even in the paperwork they

gave me, said that I would be under sedation, but it's a different kind than general anesthesia. It doesn't last very long. And that I might be aware during part of the procedure. I might even remember part of the procedure.

For some reason, that terrified me. I thought I was pretty okay with it until I got there, and then I was just losing my mind nervous. So the nurse comes in, I'm talking to her, she's so great. And I—we actually were talking about coaching. Turns out she was looking for a coach, so I gave her some recommendations, right?

And then I said, hey, I'm really nervous. Like really nervous. And she said, really? Okay, well, make sure when you go back there, when you get into the room that you tell them, because you present so calm. Like, I'm actually shocked that you're saying this right now. And I was like, yeah, I feel like my heart is about to beat out of my chest. Like I feel so nervous. And she just kind of laughed and said like, okay, be sure you tell them because you are just coming across as the—like you just do this every day.

So that's just something to know, especially if you're my client and you're like, you always look so calm. It could be that I am calm. It also could be that I just appear calm on the outside. But then she did hook me up to the—like right as we were talking is when she's putting—she's putting in my IV, hooking me up to all the monitors and everything. And then she sees my blood pressure and my heart rate, and she was like, oh, yes, you are really nervous. And I was like, yep, told you. So, I thought that was kind of funny as I think about it outside of that situation because my clients do say this to me often: like you're just—you just always look so calm. And sometimes it's true, I am very calm. I can be a very calm person often. But when I'm not, there's also a chance that you just don't know, that I just don't really show it on the outside. And the same could be true for you.

Okay, the next one. Oh, this one., this one I've had a lot of coaching on. Or not a lot. I've had some really heavy coaching sessions on this. It is: why am I the one who always has to grow? Or like, why is there always more work to do? Right? So a couple examples.

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When I was working with a marriage coach, the amazing Maggie Reyes. I just had one call where I don't even remember now the situation, but my husband and I were just—we were just like in a weird place that day, that week, whatever. As couples are, right? Like nothing crazy out of the ordinary. But for some reason, it was just really heavy. And I started thinking about like, I'm paying all this money, I'm doing all this work. And why is it always me? And it just felt so heavy. And I'm pretty sure I cried through the entire session.

And another example of a coaching session that I probably cried the entire way, just like releasing a lot of that, but it started with: why am I always the one? Like why do I have to grow? It could also be like, why do I have to be the bigger person? Why do I have to—anything like that? And oh, it just felt so heavy. And what—one of the reminders that I was given that day, and probably similar reminders for both occasions—is because you want to. Because you're the one that's here, because you chose to. Right?

Immediately hearing that, I'm like, oh yeah, right. Or also because I'm the one that wants a different result. I'm the one that wants something to change. Right? And when I think about that, like, oh, it can still feel heavy, but in that moment, reminding myself of that, I'm like, oh yeah, I am the one. I get to do this. I'm choosing to do this. I don't have to. I could not grow at all. I could not hire a coach ever again.

If you've ever had that thought, not alone. I totally feel you on that one. And then the last one that comes up so often—not for me. It comes up every once in a while for me, and I'll tell you what I do about it. But this comes up kind of as a joke with some of my colleagues, some of my coach friends. It comes up as a very heavy thing sometimes with some of my clients. And then I've also seen people talk about this online, and I just really want to normalize this thought. This isn't just true for coaches. I think it's true for all entrepreneurs. But there are days that I literally fantasize about getting a job. Right? About just closing down my business, getting a job, just like going to work and having someone just tell me what to do.

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Now, what's so funny about that is I would hate that. I always say that I feel like I'm unhirable because I would not be... I mean, I would be an excellent employee for a short time, but also I'm just so entrepreneurial minded, right? And I'm so used to doing my own thing and being in charge that I would have a hard time with it. But for like a couple weeks, I think I would probably love it. Maybe I'm wrong. But literally I fantasize about it. Not all the time, obviously.

But it's like some form of: I want to quit. I should just get a job. Like that after all these years of growing my business, having a very successful business, I still have that thought every once in a while. One of my favorite things to fantasize about is waiting tables, oh my gosh, I used to love it so much. And so of course when I fantasize about it, I only think about the good parts. Because, of course, I also hated it many nights, right? Or many days, whatever. I was usually waiting tables at dinner time. That's why I'm saying nights. But there were also so many things I didn't like about it. And now, first, I probably wouldn't be as good at it as I used to be. And second, my body would be very upset with me.

But then I also fantasize about just going to and sitting like in an office, at a desk job and, I don't even know, just like doing tasks, whatever tasks I'm given. Like that sounds just delightful and easy. And I know some of you listening are probably like, no, ma'am, I do that. I hate it. Stop saying that. But I'm just letting you know that someday, as you keep growing your business, maybe you quit that job—especially if you don't love it—and maybe you have a very successful coaching practice. Just know that it could be a thought that comes up for you every once in a while. I just don't want you to be alarmed by it. Right? I just want it to be like, yeah, this is just something most of us think about sometimes.

This doesn't mean that I'm not grateful for my business, that I'm not grateful for everything I've created because I—most days, I am. I'm going to say like 97% of the days I'm so happy that this is what I do. And especially on days I coach my clients. Like if I'm coaching my clients, I don't ever have this thought. It's only when things are just not going well or I'm maybe a

little burnt out or tired and probably related to that first one, right? I shouldn't have to do this. I shouldn't have to work so hard. In those moments, those are the times when I'm like, ah, I should just get a job.

So, if that's you, or if you're like, I should go be a barista at a coffee shop or I should go—anything like that. Just know, totally normal. And here's why it's so important and why I spend time on this sometimes in my coaching sessions. Because what happens is that when you have these thoughts or any version of these thoughts, and you might have different ones. Guaranteed, they're probably still normal. Other people are having them. Whatever your brand of these thoughts are.

When you have them, if you can just see them for what they are as like, oh, these are just normal human thoughts that I'm having, and then you can just move past them. That's going to be so much better than having them and then feeling shame because you have them. Right? Or thinking no one else is thinking this. Why am I having this experience? Why does this feel so heavy for me? Right?

And thinking it's like just you. It can make you feel so alone or like you're broken or like something has really gone wrong. Or that you're not made for this work or that you are never going to make it work or that—right? Like I could just keep going. Like these are the things that come up for my clients when they are having similar thoughts and they think that they're like the only ones having the thoughts.

So, I wanted to share this with you today. I hope that it was helpful. Next time you have any of these things, just remind yourself. I'm not alone. All entrepreneurs have these, or Lindsay has this thought, or whoever, right? Like whatever soothes you or soothes your soul in that moment. Whatever that is, remind yourself this is normal. And then ask, okay, now how do I get past it? Right? So for example, with whenever I'm like, ah, I should just get a job. It would be amazing. I let myself go there. I fully indulge it. Right?

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I'm like, okay, what kind of job would I get? What would that—like I go all the way down the path. I mean, I don't like fill out job applications or do like take any actual actions. But I do sit with it and allow myself to entertain it. Right? What kind of job would I get? What would I love about that job? Also, what would I hate about that job? Right? And I really let it play out until I am on the other side. I'm kind of laughing about it, and I'm like, no, I love what I do. That's so silly. And then I'm just able to like get back up, brush myself off, and keep going.

All right, I hope this was super helpful for you, and I will see you again 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 lindsaydotzlafcoaching.com. That's Lindsay with an A, D-O-T-Z-L-A-F.com. See you next week.