**CC\_S4E3**

Welcome to coach, to coach a podcast dedicated to showcasing the power of coaching. I'm your host, dr. Katie Linder, and I offer coaching to academics and higher education professionals to bring more ease to their lives and work. This season, I'm offering a slightly different format than earlier seasons.

I thought that might be useful to go over some coaching fundamentals for anyone listening, who hasn't gone through. Coach training. I wanted to share some of the things that you can be listening for each season. That would be good examples of coaching structure, philosophy, and techniques. So for each of the episodes in the season, I'm going to offer solo episodes, talking about some coaching basics.

Feel free to email me with questions about these episodes or ideas of what you'd like to hear more about in future seasons. We do this kind of format again now onto the episode.

The last couple episodes, I talked about some definitions of coaching and also got into session structure and how to co-create an agenda with the client. And in this episode, I want to talk a little bit about coaching ethics, because this is a huge part of how I'm training coaches and the coach training program, and a really big emphasis in the international coaching Federation in what they call their.

Core competencies, which are the main things that are used when we train new coaches into the field. And there is definitely a code of ethics that ICF is using as they're thinking about those core competencies. And so I thought I would address a few of those things today. So I see a few uses four main areas when they're thinking about their code of ethics and I'll include a link to this in the show notes, in case you want to do a deeper dive, but the standards of ethical conduct fall into kind of forming categories.

The first one is your responsibility to clients. And this would include things like creating clear coaching service agreements, explaining limits of confidentiality, respecting client's, right to terminate the coaching relationship at any time. And other kinds of, um, ethical coaching areas that are tied to working specifically with clients.

Now I also include in this, when you are working with a client and there is a sponsor involved. And basically what that means is sometimes, and this happens pretty frequently in higher education. You might have, um, someone who hires you as a coach on behalf of someone else. So for example, if a. A department chair asked me to coach one of their faculty and the department chair says they'll pay for it, but I'm not coaching the department chair, I'm coaching the faculty member.

So in that case, the department chair or the institution is the sponsor of the coaching. And, um, the client is the faculty member. Now in those kinds of situations, you have to, the clients that you're kind of working with, you have the client who's being coached and you have the client who is the sponsor.

And in those kinds of situations, it's really important to clarify, for example, the limits of confidentiality or what the relationships are going to be between the client, the coach, and the sponsor, what kind of information that sponsor might receive about the coaching relationship and things like that.

So, um, you also want to be careful when it comes to your responsibility with the client to think about things like conflicts of interest that might come up between you and the client and other parties. So a good example of this, um, we actually do a lot of brainstorming around coaching ethics in the coach training.

And one of the case studies that some of the participants came up with in the most recent cohort was what if you're coaching someone and they come to you and they're applying for a job. And it turns out that you are also applying to that job. And so you have this conflict of interest and we talked about, you know, all the different kinds of ways that you could respond to that, to make sure that the client.

Um, maybe gets another coach or that they're, they're supported through that process, but of course you would have a conflict of interest if you're both up for the same job and the client is wanting to be coached directly on that particular issue with you. And you'd be surprised that this can happen because if coaches are niching or specializing in particular areas, especially within a discipline, it wouldn't be surprising that they would be, um, working with someone who.

Is going up for the same job as them. And this is especially true, I would say in leadership circles and things like that. So the first area again, is responsibility to clients in the standards of ethical conduct. The second area is a responsibility to practice and performance. And this would include things like just adhering to the ICF code of ethics, just in a more general way, understanding what that is and adhering to it, engaging in continued professional development.

So making sure that you're continuing to learn and grow as a coach in your profession, recognizing personal and professional limitations and also resolving conflicts of interest. So conflicts of interest come into this category as well. And I think sometimes the personal and professional limitations is also a really important piece here.

And I've been having a lot of conversations around this time topic with people who have, um, kind of professions that are adjacent to coaching. And, uh, for example, and I mentioned in a previous episode than in the first cohort, Of, um, coach training participants. I had someone who was a trained therapist.

Um, I've also had people who are trained in topics around like ethics or, um, other forms of kind of leadership, uh, service professions that might have some overlap with what they're doing with coaching. And part of what we've really tried to define in each of those roles is what are some of the boundaries?

What are some of the things that we really need to be attentive to so that when we're kind of wearing one hat versus another hat, we can tell the difference between the role that we're taking on at any given moment with a client so that we can clarify it for the client what's going on there. I also think another important piece of this is engaging in continued professional development and really thinking about and reflecting on what does it mean to be a coach?

Um, what are the kinds of areas that might feel like blind spots for you as a coach? Um, this came up again in one of the recent, um, coach training cohorts, where we talked a lot about coaching and social justice. And, um, there were a lot of questions about. Should you, and can you coach people who are different identity categories than yourself?

Um, especially if they want coaching specifically yeah. Around something related to that identity category. And there were a lot of really good questions brought up about responsibilities and obligations of coaches to learn about things like bias and microaggressions, and really make sure that you're kind of, um, integrating that learning into your coaching and your coaching relationships.

So again, that second category is responsibility to practice and performance. The third category is responsibility to professionalism. And this includes things like accurately identifying your coaching credentials, being truthful with clients about the value of coaching. So maybe not over promising what they're going to get from coaching and also setting clear boundaries to govern interactions.

Physical or otherwise with clients and sponsors. So this would include also things like sexual harassment, um, and making sure that you're not engaging in inappropriate relationships between the coach and the client. I'm in this one. I really feel like there are a couple of key areas here, especially around credentialing and making sure that people understand what coaching is and what coaching can do.

And I think that, um, ICF does a really nice job of. Creating clear understandings of what does it mean to have a coaching credential? So if you have their lowest level of coaching credential, which is an associate certified coach, that means you've had 62 and half hours of training that you have a hundred, at least 100 hours of experience as a coach.

And that you've taken a knowledge exam, um, from, at the ICF, uh, that shows that you have kind of basic knowledge of coaching competencies and ethics. If you have their second level, that means you've had 125 hours of training that you have a demonstrated over 500 experience, hours of coaching. Oh. And also that you've taken that knowledge exam.

Um, and right now I happened to be at that PCC level, which is the second level 500 hours or more. And then, and the third level is what is called MCC SI UN or master coach certification. And that is where you have over 2,500 hours. Right. Um, you have additional training on, on, on top of that, and you have just a lot more experience, uh, in the coaching field.

And if you think about it 2,500 hours, even if you are working full time as a coach, um, which I think back to back 40 hours of coaching a week would be hard. Um, but it takes a long time to get to that. I mean, yeah, it's, it's a real commitment to the field and to the discipline of coaching to get to that place.

So one of the things we talk about in coach training is when can you start to call yourself a coach? Um, and when do you start actually coaching clients? When do you start asking clients to pay you, how do you talk with them about being in training and not being credentialed yet? Um, and how do you really talk with clients about what code she is and what it can, and maybe I cannot do for them, what are the boundaries of coaching and what it can provide?

So these are all topics that we talk about in training, a pretty extensively. The fourth and final category of the standards of ethical conduct from ICF is a responsibility to society. And this includes things like avoiding discrimination, honoring others, intellectual property, conducting ethical research, and actively doing good in order to positively impact society.

And ICF does have a whole kind of research arm of coaching. Um, that I think is actually a. A component that academics would completely understand, um, academics and higher education professionals, uh, would, it would make sense to them that there are journals and other kinds of, um, white papers and resources that include research on coaching and that conducting ethical research would fall under the code of ethics, uh, to make sure that you have clients sent, for example, before you're using any of their data in your research.

I also appreciate, um, in this responsibility to society, the idea of just coaching as a form of, of doing good and that there's kind of a, a way that we're impacting society in a broader way, as we're working with individual clients and thinking about our roles with those clients as coaches. So when you are credentialed as an ICF coach, you are attesting that you were operating by these ethical standards as a coaching professional.

And so that's why it's a pretty big deal. Um, in terms of how we talk about it in the coach training and the amount of time that we spend on it, making sure that people understand what it is that they're attesting to. So that's a little bit more about the, the international coaching Federation code of ethics that we think about when we're working with coaching clients and sponsors.

And I will see you in the next episode. Thanks for listening to this episode of coach to coach for any resources mentioned in the episode, check out the episode, show notes at dr. Katie linder.com/coach. If you found this episode to be helpful, please take a moment to rate or review the show in Apple podcasts or recommends episode to a friend or colleague.

Thanks for listening.