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[00:00:00] 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. Before you dive into this episode, here's a quick introduction to the structure of the show.

In each season of coach to coach a new guest coach will come on the show to demonstrate a range of coaching tools and strategies. The first episode we'll offer you an introduction to the guest coach. Then I'll coach the guest and they'll coach me for the next six episodes and always on real topics and issues we're dealing with in our own lives.

Each season will end with a debrief episode where we'll talk about how the season went. And offer any updates on the topics covered in earlier episodes. It might make the most sense to start each season in the [00:01:00] beginning and listen to the episodes in order this season, I'm delighted to introduce you to dr.

Danielle Barkley, a higher education professional and coach and training. Danielle currently works as a career and professional development educator at the university of British Columbia, where she specializes in supporting students at the masters and PhD level. Coaching gifts, Danielle, the opportunity to engage in career conversations with a wider audience, including mid-career professionals, career changers, and anyone wondering what their best life could look like.

So Danielle, I am so excited to launch into this next season of coach to coach with you. I've really been looking forward to recording this together. And I wanted to start with just some of our kind of basic questions to introduce our listeners to you as a coach. And tell me about how you first learned about coaching.

What was kind of your introduction to coaching? So I actually work for an organization with quite a robust coaching culture. There's actually a very well known coaching training program. That's hosted at the [00:02:00] university I work for and quite a number of, sort of my, my colleagues kind of people within my professional orbit.

We're coaches are talked about doing coaching. So really quickly when I started my current position, I coaching. And if embedded in, I might almost say like the organizational culture. So I actually got really curious about it and, um, access to coaching client myself fairly early on in that, just to sort of see what it was all about.

Um, and that was really my first introduction to coaching. Following up on that there then of course became the opportunity for me to think about being on the other side and working as a coach myself. But I think it was a bit of happenstance and that I haven't find my way to a place where coaching is actually quite embedded in how a lot of people work.

So I think you're actually the first coach who's come on the show who coaches as well, part of your day job, like this is part of what you do and it's part of our institutional culture. Can you tell us a little bit about what coaching looks like within your institution? How are you defining it? Um, just to kind of [00:03:00] set a baseline for us.

Yeah. So, and I think one of the things that we'll probably kind of this season and something I'm currently thinking about as a coach is I almost think about it as like concentric circles. So in my kind of formal work my day to day job, um, There's a whole spectrum, I think, between advising and coaching.

Yeah. And then my formal job title is actually educator. So then we can think about that as a third piece, along that continuum. But in my day to day job, I am regularly working with students or sort of explicitly having. Booked sessions where I draw on a lot of coaching skills, but that sometimes do also incorporate elements.

That might be a little bit outside of the coaching relationship alongside, but kind of distinct from that. I'm also pursuing my own coaching training and coaching certification, which involves a bit of a wider pool of folks that I might be working with. And when I engage in that. I do think about that as a more classical coaching relationship, if you [00:04:00] will, where I'm a little bit more structured in my approach.

So I guess I would say there is sort of a loose use of some of the coaching paradigms and coaching techniques in my formal role, and then a kind of para coaching life that is a bit more in the classical tradition. So when you think about that spectrum and you think about coaching kind of within an institution outside of it, Because I'm also using a lot of my coaching skills in my administrative role as well.

Are there certain coaching positions within your institution that are a little bit more formal? And if so, what does those look like? Cause I think it will help people to get a sense of what does this look like when coaching is situated within an institution? Sure. So there is that a formal program offered through human resources.

I believe I actually know some of the folks who were involved in kind of spearheading that. Um, and it's been a really great opportunity, which means that any of the staff and postdocs, and maybe a few other categories who work at our institution are able to access coaching from other staff members. So other folks who might have a very different job, [00:05:00] but who have trained as coaches and are also working.

And that institution. So when I spoke about first accessing coaching, I think my coach's background was working in it at the university. So we had totally different kind of professional lives. Um, but he was a trained coach and that was sort of a surface that was able, I was able to access, uh, through human resources.

That is so interesting. Okay. So Danielle, as you are building out relationships with your clients and kind of building out your client base, what do you find to be the most important aspects of that coaching relationship for you? What are you really focused on is you're meeting new clients and engaging with them in that coaching relationship.

Yeah, a few things come up for me. Um, one I was thinking about is kind of respect and regard. I think it's just really important to, to enter into these conversations and this relationship from a place of a fairly kind of sincere curiosity and openness, I would almost even go a level deeper where there is that sort of respect for someone's.

[00:06:00] Decisions for the experience and the strengths that they're bringing into those relationships. And I mean, I would say I also strive to look for things to like in my clients. I think that it, it shifts the dial on that relationship a little bit or moves it more towards what I would consider a relationship when there is, I think that rapport and that regard.

The other thing I think I really look to build out in that relationship is this sort of belief in the client as whole and inherently resourceful. Um, I'll be honest as an educator. I think that's been one of the learning curves as a coach is, you know, remembering and kind of relearning for myself that clients are really bringing everything they need into this conversations that they are far more, the subject matter expertise.

Than I could ever have. Um, but that my job is kind of, yeah. My role is to unearth and support that. So one thing I find I really mean into in these interactions is that belief that they're showing up with whatever they need. And then through our conversations, we'll get to a [00:07:00] different understanding of how to use that.

I love that. I think that that is one of the kind of core elements of coaching that some people may not realize that this idea of the client as whole, that we're coaching the client, not the problem, we're not fixers. You know, like I think that there's sometimes a, a thought that clients come to us so that we can solve something for them rather than with them or facilitative really, you know, through that relationship.

So I love that idea of a client is coming to us full. I think the other, the other piece I would layer onto that is, you know, the awareness of the way people's lives intersect. Um, I may be coaching on something that relates to their work life or their education that often tends to be sort of the, the grain.

Um, but you know, what else is going on in their lives? Where else have they lived there? Their family structures, their values, uh, perhaps the subject matter, they've engaged with all these things are informing who they are and it may or may not show up explicitly in that coaching. [00:08:00] Conversation, but just holding kind of that awareness that whether or not I get to see it as a coach, there's this complex and intersectional person that I'm engaging with and what a privilege that is.

Yes. This is actually something that we talk a lot about with the participants of my coach training, that there's often contexts that we don't know, and we don't have to know it to be effective coaches. Um, and that is, I think, such an interesting thing for people in academia and higher ed to think about because we're so used to.

Getting more information, building our knowledge, having a lot of context, asking informational questions and in the coaching relationship, we don't necessarily do that. And so it's such an interesting difference. I think from how some of us are trained, um, in our professional lives. So Danielle, I'm really curious.

I always love to know if coaches have favorite coaching questions or tools that you tend to kind of fall back to, or that you just really enjoy. Um, we don't always, you know, plan to include these things in our sessions, but are there any things that you're particularly drawn to in your practice? Yeah.

And it's been interesting [00:09:00] for me as someone who's fairly early on to sort of see those develop or to kind of notice what I gravitate to, but a few questions I use, I would say fairly frequently, what's important to you about that topic or that question or that statement. I find that it's just such a.

Simple and yet powerful way to go a level deeper and give someone that moment of pause and that moment of States. Uh, sometimes I really like to ask what's the opposite. So if someone has described a situation or a context, or even a word they're bringing up, kind of push them a little bit about what would, what is the opposition.

What would another version of that look like? Um, and maybe checking back to that idea of people being inherently resourceful and all the things they bring with them. I often love to get clients to think about where have you already encountered a similar challenge or situation, and how did you approach it at that time?

And I've had some really great pieces come up when people started to realize they've actually been in fairly comparable [00:10:00] or situations that had some similarities. And it's really helped them to kind of bring up. Actually, I do have a lot of coping skills and I have a lot of things I've learned from these past experiences that I can leverage into this present moment.

I love that so much of our work is about the new ones, so that really gets into it. I love it. Okay. So before we talk a little bit about coaching, um, and how you're kind of using it in your business and the kinds of things. Clients you work with Danielle, tell us a little bit about where you are in your pathway of kind of training.

Cause you mentioned kind of being early on. Um, let's tell our listeners kind of where you're at in terms of that. Yeah. So I went through my, uh, intensive and the, the sort of group training from October of. 2019 to January of 2020. So just under a year ago, I kind of started down that formal journey. And since about the spring of 2020, I've been working towards building my hundred hours to go out for certification as I'm currently, hopefully on track to do that about the end of 2020.

And right now my primary focus [00:11:00] is just kind of getting those hours in. I think the fitness metaphor would be something like getting those reps and to just build those muscles, that confidence and some of those key competencies. Congratulations on getting close and I'm excited to be three of you might be honor.

Okay. So w tell us Daniel about it while you're kind of envisioning coaching right now, um, in the work that you're doing on the side of your, your full time job, kind of building a business around coaching. What kinds of coaching do you offer? What does that look like for you right now? So I actually partially because I am kind of in this, this nascent and emerging and exploratory self, a place for myself as a coach, I've kept it really open.

I started by primarily reaching out to my network, people I had connected with in the past, or had some rapport with and pretty much said, like, there's something you're working on, let me know. And we can discuss whether it seems right for coaching. So I would say I'm working with everyone from kind of current students.

Recent grads to mid career professionals thinking about the [00:12:00] different pieces. I do work with a fair amount of folks in higher ed or near higher ed, just because that's where a lot of my network tends to. But something that I do also tend to provide some, the support around is folks who maybe are moving out of higher ed.

Or who are kind of transitioning in different fields, thinking about transitioning into different fields and something I'm particularly interested in is individuals who are moving between different jobs or different industries are starting to think about that, or maybe reinventing their narrative of themselves as a professional, or thinking about how some of those professional and identity pieces are starting to shift or change.

Uh, and that's something that I've been doing work around in my current practice. Yeah, as we're recording this, we are currently kind of in the middle of COVID, uh, experiences for people. And I've noticed so much more, uh, kind of drifting of people toward transition and, and kind of thinking about making changes in their work lives or in their personal lives.

And I feel like transition is such a key element of a [00:13:00] lot of coaching relationships. It's a lot of what brings people to coaching is because they're looking for somebody. As they make some kind of transition or they're trying to make a decision that could lead to a transition. So that seems like such a rich component of coaching.

Um, I'm curious if you're seeing kind of coaching related topics right now related to COVID or are these kind of more general things that you're coaching people around? Some of my coaching conversations have definitely been COVID related. It's interesting. And especially for me as a new coach, where I would say the majority of the coaching I've ever done has actually been kind of in the Kobe context.

I had done a little bit of kind of before. March we'll say ish. Um, but yeah, I had sent him interesting for me. If I think about my coaching journey going forwards, it's almost all going to have kind of had its roots in a COVID context. Uh, but your question about how it's showing up, right? I think in some cases I see it giving clients.

Courage to make the change. They had been thinking about [00:14:00] making that theirs a sense of, you know, either life's short or lifetime predictable, which are two things that have always been true. But I think for many people are becoming a bit more apparent or, or a bit more visible. So I'm doing a lot of work around there.

The thing I was thinking about doing, and I didn't really think I could do it for whatever reason. And now it's feeling like I have to do it, or now it's feeling like this is the moment to do it. Um, a lot of coaching conversations also around kind of shifts in workplace dynamics with the move, from working to home, either positively people kind of stepping into new forms of empowerment, new forms of flexibility, or sometimes, you know, some of the challenges around dynamics that may have been working and now aren't working so well in this new context.

Uh, but I think whether it's sort of. Large scale change, or even just navigating something that was existing pre COVID, that the space really of. How do I look at things and not just default to, to [00:15:00] autopilot or assuming that things have always been a certain way and will continue to be that way. I think for almost everyone I talk with and engage with that idea has really been shaken up in the past few months.

Yeah, I would say the same. Um, it's so interesting. The patterns that start to emerge in these kinds of unique times. So you kind of touched on this, Danielle. Um, but I'm curious if there are ways that you feel like your coaching is distinct. How does that kind of show up? Are there certain elements you're trying to bring into your coaching?

What does that look like for you? Yeah, I think, I, I think, I think I'm a bit of a chatty coach. I think I, that I lean a little bit more towards, um, Dialogue, of course, you know, the whole thing space for the client, moments of pause and the power of silence. But I do think some of my favorite coaching sessions and some of the clients that I have really good rapport with there is kind of conversational.

We'll say approach to it. I also think that something that's maybe a little [00:16:00] bit. A little bit specific to my coaching or that I'm starting to see emerge. It's really an interest in like bringing different pieces together. And of course there are moments where like decisions need to be made and paths need to be chosen.

But I think one of the strengths I might bring as a coach is helping people to sort of. Sit with the question of like, does it need to be this or that, that, and what if it was this and that, and maybe this other at the same time. And I think a lot of coaches probably do that, but it sort of surprised me because I think my initial more naive conception of coaching was you were helping someone make the decision between this, for that and where I've actually found my strength is and where some of those.

My most productive, productive conversations have gone, has been towards this place of like, what if we took all these things and put them in conversation with each other or put them in a sandbox. What would that look like rather than the belief for the story that you have to choose one or the other.

Yeah, I love that. I was just actually talking with our, um, the [00:17:00] coach training cohort the other night about this concept of story and how clients sometimes come with certain stories that can be very limiting, limiting assumptions, limiting beliefs, it kind of all falls into the same, um, category, or it can, and sometimes the stories can be very positive, but sometimes they're very limiting and helping clients to unpack those stories, or even just notice that those stories are there.

Um, and that there's like a, another possibility or a different pathway or something else that they can envision. That seems to me like such a powerful component of coaching. Yeah. And sometimes even just hearing the story or sharing the story that you're hearing. Uh, I know my experience when I've been coached has often been that there was maybe a pattern that I did recognize, or that I didn't see these two things as interconnected, but when I felt compelled to bring up the seemingly unrelated thing, that's usually a moment where I now start to think.

Okay. So there is some reason these two things are talking to each other. Even if it isn't initially clear what that is. So I know you're still early on Danielle and no pressure here, [00:18:00] but I'm wondering if there are certain characteristics that you look for that really make up an ideal client for you.

That is just a real click in terms of who you like to work with or who you think you can be most helpful for. Yeah, I think there's, there's kind of three things that initially come to mind. Um, maybe because of that point, I was speaking to about like this or that, or both these things. I'm really interested in the folks who like the nuance, the kind of careful distinction who likes sort of the shades of gray and maybe feel comfortable inhabiting that space.

That's something that I'm drawn towards. And that I think I really. I enjoy working with, um, at the same time and maybe almost in, in slight opposition or intention to that, I love a decisive. I love working with a decisive client. I there's something really energizing and motivating for me where it would be get to that place where there maybe is insight or there's a bit of a plan.

Uh, I get really energized by someone who's eager to get started with that. Awesome. Okay. [00:19:00] So, um, because you're still kind of working through collecting your hours, thinking about kind of your training and areas that you're still developing. I'm curious to know if there are areas of coaching that you specifically want to learn more about that you're kind of doing a deeper dive into now, or that, you know, you want to look into later.

Are there areas of kind of your own development that you're still kind of remaining curious about? For sure. I think for me that the biggest area of growth or attention right now is contracting and setting a focus at the beginning. I think I often want to dive right in and my ongoing work in coaching is kind of.

How much time do we need to spend at the beginning? What do we need to do to lay out the groundwork? How much do I need to understand about what the client's goals are for the specific conversation and where we want to end up so that I can be holding that thread and checking in as we go. And I think that's the biggest place that I'm kind of working on honing that ability.

Yeah, I do feel like there is such an art. Um, I mean it's an art and a [00:20:00] science recognize what that agenda is and then hold that agenda throughout the entire session when the client can kind of go and all these different directions that may or may not be kind of concretely tied to the direction you're, you're hoping to head in, you know, that they've kind of sat with you in the beginning of the session.

Um, and it is kind of this as you experience more and more coaching, figuring out all the different ways to kind of. Stay on that line or stay on that pathway with them, even if they're kind of wandering off in different directions. Um, that's something I also really pay a lot of attention to as well.

Yeah. And I've also really seen that. I I've been lucky to work with some, some highly skilled coaches who really kind of, it was almost a version of holding the client accountable right at the start where I just kind of wanted to dive in and start talking. And they were really like gently, but also very deeply, um, attentive to what, what are we going to talk about and how will we know when we've gotten there?

And it actually really built in that structure of accountability from. The start of the conversation. And that's something that has been motivating for me [00:21:00] to think about how I can offer that as well. Awesome. Okay. Do you have any favorite coaching, resources, books, podcasts, things that you, you know, recommend to folks who are like, Oh, I want to dive deeper into this.

Anything that's a particular favorite for you? Well, I mean, I got a lot of my introduction to coaching actually from listening to the earlier seasons of coach to coach. So I would definitely recommend going back and checking those out. I also am often very interested in things that maybe aren't explicitly coaching or don't call themselves coaching, but where there is that clear techniques.

So actually one thing I've been, uh, I've gone back to recently coming out of a coaching conversation where I recommended it to a client is Elizabeth. Gilbert's podcast magic lessons, which is all about sort of creativity. In each episode, she works with a different individual. Who's sort of running up against some challenge around aspect of their creative life.

And she sometimes refers to it as coaching. She's not a coach fight training. She's also an artist, but the, the arc [00:22:00] of those conversations and the way they're set up is very much around a coaching practice. And I've just been finding that really. Beautiful and inspiring these days. And I'm interested in the idea of how do we sort of take almost a mosaic of different influences, different people, doing things that well they may or may not explicitly be labeled coaching offer Billy interesting model of what some of these techniques could look like.

Yeah. I love that idea. I listened to that, um, years ago and you're making me want to return to it so that I can go in next. Explore again. Um, but this also reminds me a little bit of when I coach people around. Yeah. Like academic writing. I often turn to resources that come out of like fiction writing. I mean, there's, there's so much about writing that's impactful and it's not always by academics or for academics.

Um, and we can think about creativity and all the, all these other kinds of things that are like writing adjacent. Um, and so I think that it's such a good idea to have that same perspective on coaching that there's these like coaching adjacent. Things that we can be, um, bringing into our practice and that can be [00:23:00] really influential to what we're doing with our clients, um, or what we're providing for our clients where we're opening them up to.

Um, so I love that. Very cool. We will definitely link to that in the show notes for people who want to take a listen. Um, Danielle, is there anything else that you want to say about you as a coach or about the journey that you're on before we dive into our next episodes where we will be coaching each other?

I guess one other thing I'll share because it might be interesting or it might surface is I keep the coaching from a bit of a skeptical place. Like when I first heard the term coach, I think, especially before I was working in my current role, when I just sort of heard it floating around in the world or on the internet, my initial reaction wasn't necessarily.

A receptivity to that. I think maybe I thought about it in like a very corporate context or in like a sports context where my first two kind of frames of reference to it. So when I actually began working in a place where coaching was barely accessible, I really have a lot of questions of like, well, what would coaching look like in a higher ed [00:24:00] context?

Or like, How do you coach someone with a PhD or be coached by someone with a PhD? So it's been a really interesting journey for me. I think too, to hold space for this openness, to learning this, this discipline in this practice, the skillset, um, coming from a place, it wasn't something I initially felt drawn towards and it wasn't something I inherently saw myself in.

And now when I think about coaching and the pieces around. Vulnerability and openness and curiosity, I think it's actually become a strength of my coaching journey. Uh, but that's something else I would sort of think about or that I think is informing my growing practice. Awesome. Well, Danielle, I am just so looking forward to the season and working with you and coaching with you, and, um, I hope that our audience is intrigued by hearing a little bit more about your practice.

Um, so I'm looking forward to what the season will bring. I am as well. All right, well, thanks to you for this wonderful introduction to your coaching and your practice. And for our audience stay tuned. We are going to start [00:25:00] our back and forth coaching journey, uh, in this next episode where I will start by coaching Danielle, and then we'll alternate throughout the season, ending with a final debrief at the very end.

And, uh, we're looking forward to it. So thanks Danielle. And I will talk with you next time. Thank you. 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 and review the show in Apple podcasts or recommends episode to a friend or colleague.

Thanks for listening.