A day in the life of a coach final edit

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**SPEAKERS**

Zoe Hawkins, Jo Wheatley

**Jo Wheatley** 00:03

The Coaching Crowd podcast is for compassionate courageous leaders, HR professionals and high achievers, people who are passionate about helping others to find alignment in their lives through coaching, and do a thinking of training and developing as a coach.

**Zoe Hawkins** 00:10

Hello, and welcome to the Coaching Crowd podcast with me Zoe Hawkins and my friend and co host, Jo Wheatley.

**Jo Wheatley** 00:17

Hi, everybody. Great to be here with you today. Today, we're talking about a day in the life of a coach. And we wanted to talk about that because when you're thinking about pivoting to become a coach, you're probably wondering, what does a coach do all day? Do I just get to coach all day? And what else would my day be made of? And if you have started working as a coach, you might be wondering, am I doing this? Right? Does my day look like other coaches? Am I missing things out? So we'll give you an honest account of what our days look like now what they look like, you know, in the beginning, so it gives you some idea as to an insight into what it could be like for you.

**Zoe Hawkins** 01:03

Absolutely. And I guess we'll be flitting around between, you know, what things used to be like what things are like now, but I mean, if we start with a kind of an ideal morning, and bearing in mind, we're parents, so we don't have morning routines that involve meditating or bullet journaling, or any of that, it would be lovely. And maybe in the future, that is something that will factor in, but obviously, the mornings for us are actually getting up getting the kids out the door. And that's not always smooth, you know, with the children that we have and the needs that they have. So the mornings are often start once the kids have have left the house. And I don't know about you, Jay. But for me, once the kids have left the house, and I'm fortunate, my husband does all the school drop offs, and I do all the school pickup. So when that house is quiet for, I just sort of sit and enjoy the silence for a good 10 minutes and start to just settle into the day. And often, I'll spend that in my house and I have an office that's just out outside of my house, it's sort of an old story, actually, that we've converted into a small office, and I'll sit in the kitchen, enjoy the silence, and then I'll come into the office. And once I'm in the office, typically I'll start my day by running through emails that have come in from the night before. You know, that's that's typically how I like to start. So I can tie up loose ends before I start to focus. And then the next thing I'll do is some social media. So before I get into any client work, I'm always kind of picking up what's come in over the evening. And also putting out some social content. Usually on LinkedIn, we have Shelly on our team now who supports with social media across other channels, but I still own my LinkedIn and my personal Instagram. And so I'll start by tending to that. How about you, Jo? What's your morning like?

**Jo Wheatley** 02:52

Similar as you say, but when I wake up, I do tend to look at my phone and see the emails that have come in overnight, if people are in different countries, for example, will often get things in. And that gives me a sense of what I didn't know was going to arrive and be part of my day that I'll need to do as well as the stuff that I already have in my diary, I'll go out and walk the dog, usually unless it's raining. And while I'm doing that I'll have looked at my diary, reminding myself what the day involves. And I'll be getting attuned to, to work really, and what I'm looking forward to and what and what needs to be done. And then as you say, if I have time, then I will write a social media post if I feel if I feel called to. So I'll know the things that we're working on and up, you know, right now, our business is not just pure coaching one to one. And actually, even in the early days, our business wasn't purely one to one coaching, we did a lot of executive leadership coaching. But we have also designed elearning design leadership development programmes that have incorporated one to one coaching. So I think that's one of the myths really about having a coaching business, which is that you're going to be coaching one to one clients all day every day. And I don't think that is well, that just is not the reality because there's obviously a degree of working on the business, which might be accounts, social media, you know, that business development side of it, the invoicing and so on, as well as the delivery of the coaching.

**Zoe Hawkins** 04:26

Yeah, I mean, there was a time where we were doing some associate work for a company. And I would say I was coaching pretty much not all day every day but because I didn't work a five day a week I worked three days a week, but in those three days, they were full with clients and those days where they were slightly different. So I would come in and look at the client list that I had for the day and start to zone into my client. So be thinking about them, their organisation the topics that we've talked About I would do my preparation for each of those sessions by rereading notes. So there was actually a lot more, if it wasn't kind of a working on the business day and it was a client day, there was a lot more channelling of my clients and getting into their zone so that when I arrived at their session, I was ready for them, and ready for them to present. And that's still true today. So as you said, our our work is a blend. And typically I will do, I don't know, three or four clients sessions a week, I only have a very small portfolio of clients these days, when I know I have a client coming in that day, I'll start my morning, before I look at my emails, by thinking about that client, by looking at their notes, before anything else comes into my space, I'll be zoned in on that client. And nowadays, I have an element of spirituality and kind of in my world, and so I will often pull a card for that client and start to think about what the relevance of that may or may not be for what they bring into the space. And sometimes in a session, I'll share that with a client. And sometimes I'll just keep it to myself, it depends kind of on the client, and whether they're open to that. So I think however, you start your morning, whether you're somebody that needs routine, or whether you're somebody that enjoys flexibility, obviously the beauty of being a coach is that you have the ability to choose and start to really think about what works for me in the way that I like to work and the way that I like to show up the people.

**Jo Wheatley** 06:28

Here, I mean, we also work shorter days. So we work we try and work within school hours, so that we can, you know, be there, I will often do things afterwards, if if the kids are, you know, happy busy doing their thing. And there's you know, bits and pieces that have come out of the day, they want to be able to tie up so that I can then relax in the evening, then I will choose to do that. But for each client that you have, you will do some preparation as you were talking about. So you know, that could be anywhere between half an hour to an hour, depending on the client, how long you've been working with them for how experienced you are as a coach. And then if you are a coach that has contracted with your client to send them notes, then obviously after the session, you will take some time to write those notes up and send them across to the client. So you know, in reality, if you are coaching, say on an hour and a half, you are looking at really like a morning or an afternoon, per client. And so you need to factor that into your working day and how you plan the number of clients that you will need to work with. Now some clients, some coaches do boxer coaching, that can be quite popular. Now that would be probably a bit more sporadic. So if you're somebody that doesn't want to be tied down to, you know, long sessions with the bits and pieces either side, you might choose an alternative way to engage in coaching support with your clients.

**Zoe Hawkins** 07:58

Yeah, we've done a variety, haven't we done half hour sessions, 45 minute sessions, hour long sessions, hour and a half. And I think it depends on the flavour of coaching that you're bringing, obviously in an hour and a half long session, that's more of the nature of transformational coaching and being able to go much, much deeper with a client. Whereas in half an hour, you're not obviously going to be able to go out such depth. So it tends to be more in the moment coaching, like what's happened this week? What are you preparing for next week? What do you need support with, and talking through different situations and scenarios, of course, with a with a thread that goes across the time that you spend together. So I have always taken a lunch break. You know, I think when you work for yourself, managing your time, and giving yourself downtime is an important part. And obviously, some days that lunch break is later if I'm kind of working with clients, but I keep at least half an hour in, in my in my diary to be able to step out and have lunch. Sometimes in the summer, that becomes longer because I want to go sit in the garden and enjoy some of the sun. And that's that flexibility and freedom. So the morning I think what we're saying is often about getting your admin done, looking at social media working on the business, perhaps you'll have a client in that morning, then there's a break in the afternoon before what we would do is move in to the afternoon, which of course, there can be many things in the afternoon, it might be filled with Discovery calls, it might be more client sessions, it might be some creative work can be anything from designing what we call a lead magnet, which is something that you help to bring clients in into your funnel, but it might be creating content for a group programme or a leadership development programme. So back in the day where Jo and I would do more corporate work we would be as Jo said, designing leadership development programmes for different organisations and so we would need to hold space to do that creative work. Otherwise that will spill into evenings and you and weekends, which we've always tried to avoid.

**Jo Wheatley** 10:03

There's so many creative aspects to coaching and a typical day. So even if we think about yesterday, we're talking about new terms and conditions and contracts that we need to review and edits and, and then that spills out into them thinking, Okay, we need to update that page on the website. And then when we talk about a new service that we're going to be offering or a new product, then we're like, okay, so do we need to speak to a graphic designer to be able to design a new brand, you know, a new element of our brand for that particular product and service and, and so it continues and so are our day is also the ease involves liaising with suppliers, and also might be where we're developing, maybe not formal partnerships with other organisations, but relationships with other providers in our area, other mission led, you know, whether it's values alignment, where we can support each other in different ways and doing different things. There may be elements where you're thinking about, Okay, what's our corporate social responsibility? And how do we want to contribute in that way in terms of building out the business and, you know, discussions about what do we want to do in that area, there's a lot of as a coach getting familiar with different bits of tech. So you know, if you're building a business out, you might be using mailer light, or you might be using Kajabi, or different things. And that takes time. And that time, obviously needs to be built in now, for some people. Like for me, I prefer to have a clear, intensive period of time, when I'm looking at something new or something that I feel is going to be challenging, or really going to require concentration, I prefer to do it that way, rather than little snippets of time. But obviously, you'll know how you work best and your design your diary and your days to look, not just your days, I think it's also about looking at your week, and then looking at your month and then looking at the quarter and and just judging does that have I designed my diary in a way that suits me, and then, you know, when I get up on Monday morning, or you know, I'm excited about how I'm working with my clients, how my business is developing, and where it's going to be in another, you know, three months time, you might be doing a lot of one to one coaching or purely one to one coaching and be thinking, you know, I'm just noticing this emerging desire to do group work, or, you know, clients seem to be either finding the one to one challenging from a financial perspective, when I have the discovery calls, or you're thinking about, I think we can have even bigger impact with the coaching in a group context. And so that's the driver for that. So you might have that kind of going on in the background and want to put a little bit of time in here or there just to explore and start to develop that concept in your mind.

**Zoe Hawkins** 12:52

Yeah, and of course, the business that we have today where we're liaising with suppliers and thinking about corporate social responsibility is not the business that we had 10 years ago, I can remember days and I remember saying this to you, Jo, where I'd sit at the computer thinking, I wish someone would send us an email inviting us to do some work. And those emails didn't magically arrive into our inbox. But this is way before the days where we used social media for business. We didn't know about lead magnets, we didn't know about funnels and things like that. So we we went on a huge educational journey when it came to setting up the business that we have today and what it looks like today. And so I think as a coach, you know, one of the things that I think me and you have really benefited from as each other, you know, so we we spent hours and hours, even in those early days, throwing ideas around looking at where our gaps, where do we need to focus right, what's on the plan? What do we need to do over the next quarter. And so I think coaches, certainly coaches in our business lounge, they will factor in time into their days and into their weeks to have conversation with other coaches for inspiration for ideas, perhaps even for collaborations and, you know, sharing some of the nerves in launching their first masterclass to be able to bring people into their world and get their message out. So, you know, there is a huge amount of work in the early days of a coaching business that is about working on your business. And I think that's really important to emphasise because nobody just walks into a fully fledged coaching business where clients are desperate to work with you. Most people walk in having a network, you know, so thinking about past colleagues that you've worked with, even family and friends and you can massage that network to help to support you by making sure that you let everybody know what you're doing and how they can work with you so that working on the business piece is the foundation to being able to enjoy the client work further down the line. And also thinking about in the early days, whether you want or need to take on things like associate work to be able to give yourself the confidence of stability, whilst you're building an active funnel that is going to bring you one to one clients, or you could look at working with organisations and doing workshops. And then of course, your time is going to be spent building relationships, through your network through LinkedIn, offering out different services. So there's, there's so much that's involved in being a coach. And if you don't enjoy any of that business stuff, there are plenty of associate opportunities to be able to do coaching, where you don't have to build a business around it.

**Jo Wheatley** 15:39

Yeah, I mean strategy, we spend a lot of time talking about strategy, creating it, reviewing it, and then talking about how we're going to implement it, and so on that, that really does take a lot of time. But of course, you don't always have to be inside and out your computer, you can coach outside, lots of coaches doing, you know, walking outdoors. So either with their clients, you know, physically, or you know, they're outside their clients also outside, they're still doing it remotely. So you can design and build your business to, to create the life that you want to have may not be 100% of your favourite things, because there may be elements of the things that we've talked about anything, let's still be a bit of that. And I'm not sure if I'd want to do that. But it's the balance, you know, for you to consider. What I would say is no two weeks of mine look the same, ever. So we're, what 11 years and I think, now, they never look the same. They're always different. And for me, personally, I enjoy that. I don't like to be doing the same things all of the time. And I like to be stretched, and I like to be continually learning. And so therefore, that's what we have in our business. We're constantly thinking, you know, what's that balance between comfort and stretch and think when we're in that we're in that zone, it helps in terms of what we produce how we show up as coaches, with our own personal clients

**Zoe Hawkins** 17:10

on learning. Actually, that's probably something I haven't mentioned. But I wouldn't say it's a it's an everyday thing, it's probably not an every week thing. But regularly, there is time in my diary for personal and professional growth. And that might be attending a seminar, it might be reading a book, often it's engaging in CPD, so I am a, you know, an avid learner. And that can be CPD in terms of extending my coaching skills, it may also be CPD in terms of extending my business skill. So both of those need to be imbalanced for me. And I would say that kind of comes in waves, sometimes I go through an intense period of learning. And sometimes it's a period more of consolidation, where I'm integrating what I've learned into both the business and into the practice. So if you're looking at transitioning as a coach, it's worth thinking about how you build time for that. And of course, as we say, all of these things, what you're probably starting to notice is that when it comes to charging for your, for your coaching services, you need to consider all the time that you're not actually coaching, because the building up the business is also part of the value that you'll be able to offer to your clients. Because it's part of you being able to build your visibility, make sure your message is strong, make sure the resources are the best resources that you have to bring to your coaching, that your toolbox as a as a coach in your mind is is sharp and is centred, and you're turning up as your best self. So all of that is part of your coaching fees. Often people think about charging for a coaching session. And it being just the time within that coaching session. But there's a lot of time when you're either self employed or building a business that you aren't going to be client facing. So you do need to think about that.

**Jo Wheatley** 19:03

I'm also thinking about the contrasts between you can also do CPD abroad, you can do business retreats, you can do quiche in CPD abroad, which is a wonderful way to combine you know, things that you might love if you love travel and adventure, along with you know, meeting new people or learning growing, developing that you can then share with your clients. On the flip side of that, in the early days, I would be coaching in the evenings I wanted to get my hours up I wanted as much experience as I possibly could get. I think my I think my husband might have still been working away at that point. But also I've had an in house role and working in the evenings with clients in the in the US where I've been obviously based in the UK and so that that worked well there. We've run our training programmes in the in the evenings because we want to enable as many people as possible to be able to act Access coaching and not wanting time to be a barrier. So, you know, I personally work better in the evenings, you know, rather than the mornings. So, you know, again, if it wasn't for my other commitments, I think I would be working from a hotel beach bar, from probably about six o'clock to two in the morning, that would be my ideal day, but the rest of my life doesn't kind of enable that, at least at the moment. But that's what I love and was definitely a big joy for me. So moving from a HR director position where I'd be in, you know, senior management meetings, and, you know, I would be drawn on for advice around disciplinaries grievances, job evaluations, reorganisations, all sorts of different things. And when I looked at ahead and thought, is that what I still want to be doing travelling to work and travelling back again, you know, in my own time, I just reached a point where that wasn't what I wanted for my future for my family as a, as a working mom. And for me, personally, I love working from home, I really, really enjoy it. I, I like my own space, and I love being able to have contact with people all over the world, and I get to choose the people that I work with. And I really love that. So for me, you know, a typical day as a coach is is never the same, I get into a rhythm, and then that rhythm changes because we change what we're doing. And and I enjoy that because it's through design. Yeah,

**Zoe Hawkins** 21:36

absolutely. And, you know, I remember when we first started forming the business, one of the conversations we had is I do not want to be working nine to five with no ability to, you have the flexibility to No, go for a walk, go for a swim, whatever it might be. And whilst there is pressure in those early days to be at your desk, and feel like you're working and feel like the clients coming in, actually, those are the times to enjoy the flexibility. The irony now is that me and you probably do work pretty much nine to five, what nine, I don't work till five, I've got the kids from school. But because we work shorter hours, our diaries are quite full in those days. So we have to plan that that level of freedom. So we will time block and make sure that we are holding whole days, and may might choose to work on those days. But if we don't choose to work on those days, we've got those days where we can go and enjoy anything lunch with a friend or getting our hair done or, you know, whatever it might be,

**Jo Wheatley** 22:34

I mean, this sounds dreamy, this isn't really what I experienced. So but I, you know, we might choose to go away for the weekend, like we were talking about yesterday, because whilst we try and contain our work to, to fit in with the other responsibilities that we have, also the business does require other things of us and we love our business. And we like to nurture it. So for us, our business is not a job. And then we have our life that we enjoy our business and what we do is part of our life and the things that we enjoy. So there there is a blend, and we and we enjoy each other's company. So I think it's having choice for me, that's the most powerful thing and the thing that I desire more than having, saying I, you know, I work nine to three or 10 to four, or whatever those things are, that isn't so much important to me as just being able to notice, how am I finding it working at a certain point is that something that I need to adjust. And I also accept that I can't necessarily always change that quickly. But I know that I can change that over time. And that, for me is the most valuable thing. It's also what I really hope that my children have the benefit of may not be through a kitchen business, but through the work that they do. So I think that's when I speak to clients, all my clients desire flexibility. And what that looks like for them, obviously is different from client to client. So

**Zoe Hawkins** 24:01

I think what we've covered in essence is that there's no one standard day you get to decide and choose what your day looks like. And worth being aware that there is a blend of working on the business and working in the business. And in those early days. Probably working on the business is actually going to be what dominates your time as you build the pipeline to be able to bring clients through and you might want to supplement that with other work associate work for example in the field of coaching whilst you kind of build a build your plans, but you know, that is for you to choose for you to design and for you to explore.

**Jo Wheatley** 24:39

And so if you are wanting to pivot into coaching career and doing accredited training to get your qualification is the next step. Take a look at our website, which is IG company.co.uk. You might also choose to take our quiz which is my coaching course.com and that will give you advice on which level of course Maybe the most appropriate for

**Zoe Hawkins** 25:01

you. And of course you have our business lounge. So if you're somebody who is already a coach and is looking to develop and grow your business, our business lounge is a place. It's a community where our fabulous coaches in there do support each other. You know, they're a really strong network, and you're supported by business trainings and q&a with Jo and I. See you soon.

**Zoe Hawkins** 25:28

Thank you for listening to the coaching crowd podcast with Zoe Hawkins and Jo Wheatley. We'd love for you to join our inclusive community to learn and grow in the coaching space.

**Jo Wheatley** 25:37

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