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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,

**Zoe Hawkins** 00:10

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.

**Jo Wheatley** 00:20

Hello, and welcome to the coaching crowd podcast with me, Jo Wheatley, and my friend and co host, Zoe Hawkins. Hi,

**Zoe Hawkins** 00:27

everybody, good to be here again. And this week, we are talking about how you can help your client to get the most from coaching. We know many of you are coaches yourselves, or thinking of becoming coaches and motivated by providing value and service. And so we want to share our thoughts and some topics around how you can help your client to get the most from their investment in coaching. So where would you start Jo?

**Jo Wheatley** 00:51

So many different places we could choose, I think we'll start with expectations and being clear with your client on what the expectations of them are within the relationship. Of course, there are expectations of you as the coach, but they are two distinct roles that have coach and coachee. So you may share your expectations with the client verbally in the chemistry conversation, you might share them in a contract, the terms and conditions may be part of the pre coaching questionnaire that you share with them as part of the welcoming process to coaching, but being really clear around the different aspects of the expectations. So what happens before the session, what they do in the session, what they do in between sessions, in order for them to get the most out of that. And I know we're gonna go a bit deeper on that in a moment. So hold back, I

**Zoe Hawkins** 01:43

think expectations create safety in the relationship by No, you know, it's a privileged position to be a coach. And we may have as coaches many, many coaching conversations on a weekly basis. But for a client, this could be the first time that they've ever experienced a coaching conversation. And what tends to happen is when they aren't clear around what is going to happen, or how they need to show up, that creates a discomfort or an anxiety. So I think the clearer your expectations can be, the more settled, the client is able to arrive to sessions, knowing that they are holding up their side of the relationship and the deal that you two have together. And I think when you're settled, you're more easily able to relax into the coaching sessions. And that's where obviously, the best work can be done.

**Jo Wheatley** 02:33

Yeah, and we, you know, we talk about preparation as a really important part of the coachee being able to get the most out of the session. So the coach has a responsibility to prepare for the session. And they'll have their own rituals and ways of doing that in order to be able to show up and, and be present in the session. And it's important that the client is clear that in order for them to get the most out of the session, they need to think about what's going to be the best preparation for them before they arrive in that session. And that might be about shifting the physical space that they're in to have the kitchen conversation so that it's clearly distinct from the other conversations that they're having in their role. It might be about them, creating another sort of differentiator between the space so perhaps they go for a walk before they arrive at the coaching session. Perhaps it's about them making some notes for themselves around what it is that they want to talk about in that session, really connecting with the reflections that they've had since the last session and what's changed for them? Are they still focused on the original goal that they stated that they wanted to work on? Or have things changed for them since? So, as the coach, asking the question, how will you prepare for each of the sessions is a useful question to ask even if the client initially is surprised by that question or is unsure about that. And obviously, the rapport that you'll have built in the chemistry conversation is going to enable them to understand the purpose of that question. Or you might need to do a little bit more scene setting to explain why you're taking the time to inquire and explore that with them.

**Zoe Hawkins** 04:12

And in an ideal world, your clients will arrive to your sessions fully prepared with a clear outcome that they desire from that session, and many do. And also recognising that there will also be times when your client arrives, and they aren't particularly prepared for the session. And it's worth thinking how might you handle that? You know, if you have an expectation that your client comes prepared and brings something to the session, and they arrive and they haven't been able to do that, or they just haven't done for whatever their reason may be. How do you hold space for that conversation? Is that a theme or a pattern that may be emerging because you might be in real service of your client to be able to draw attention to that which might be look We had this agreement where you were going to be prepared and you bring something to the session. I've noticed how for the last couple of sessions, you haven't done that, shall we hold some space to talk about that, that may be a pattern in your clients life, that may be sabotaging their overall coaching outcome. And so that could be a courageous way to step into a conversation in that way. Or it may be that what the client needs is some support in developing clarity, you know, so you might contract with your client around well, would it be helpful if we spent some time getting really clear on what you want from this session? And checking in on are we still clear on where we're going in the future sessions, so that reconstructing and making sure that you and your client have the same shared agenda is really important in helping your client to get the most from coaching?

**Jo Wheatley** 05:51

Yeah, I mean, if your client is in a situation where they've had to, you know, rush to the session, perhaps it was unforeseen, and you've sense that they they can't just transition and arrive and show up, as you know, the coachee that they want to be, and that's creating all sorts of emotions for them, you, of course, can say, to take a minute to catch your breath. Ask them, What do they need? Do they want to take a few minutes to going, you know, get a cup of tea or coffee or, you know, make the phone call that they need to make in order to be able to transition in the space. So, you know, time well spent at the start of the session is really going to enable the client then to be fully present. So inquiry, well, what do you need to be able to be fully present in this session? And for them to know that they can answer that question in any way that feels right for them in that moment, is going to enable them to get the most out of the session. And perhaps they just go and quickly grab their favourite pen or the notepad they've always been using for the coaching sessions. And without that, they'd feel a bit disorientated. And then you know, they go off, and they get that, and then they come back, and you can notice the shift in their breathing, you're going to be calibrating their body language along with the words that they're using. So if you inquire and say, you know how you're arriving today, and the client says, Yeah, rushed, and you know, they feel able to be honest, because they have that safety, and they built that relationship with you. And you're sensing my client is not ready to start to do the work in the session, then really take the time in the beginning, just to hold that some clients just need a little bit of silence, to transition from one busy space into another space. And I think it's also as the coach is thinking about how can you model good practice for them? How can you create that space, which is really, what a coaching session is, is often the oxygen that the client needs, you know, the space they need in their normal working week.

**Zoe Hawkins** 07:52

And I think what you're talking about there in a broader sense is needs in general, isn't it is that you, as the coach paying attention to your client's needs throughout the client relationship? And I know, we were talking just before we did this podcast around emotions, you know, and so if something happens in a coaching session, your client gets emotional. It's just checking in, what do you need right now, you know, what's happening for you? How do you need to be supported in this moment, you don't need to make that up for the client or search around and try to work out ways to do that you can just be present with the client and in doing so help them to connect into actually yes, what what am I needs right now, that in itself is valuable coaching, and helps them to recognise that the needs that they may have in that coaching moment, are also needs that they may have outside of that coaching moment. So that that can be really powerful. So, you know, tending to your client's needs frequently throughout the coaching relationship by asking them the direct question, what do you need right now? Or what are you becoming aware of, can be really helpful in accelerating your clients learning.

**Jo Wheatley** 09:02

It also shares the message with them that their needs are important. And for lots of clients, they may have lost that in amongst their other roles. And so being able to make contact with an acknowledge that yes, actually, my needs are important, can also be a great motivator for taking action then, to getting those needs met, or at least exploring what that might look like. So other examples in the coaching conversation where it can be useful to inquire about the client's needs maybe where the client goes, goes quiet and you're not sure what's happening for them, you know, where where they've gone in their thoughts or in their feelings. And you might not go straight in with what are your needs, but you might just hold that space, let the client do the processing and then where you feel that they might have got to the edge of that and be unsure themselves where to go next. You might just gently inquire what are you noticing your what's happening for you right now? Would you like to share that client doesn't have to share it, obviously, you know, the client isn't going to share every single thing that's happening for them probably in every session, there's a lot that goes on that, that isn't shared, when the client is motivated to take an action. So towards the end of the session, and they are like, right, I want to go and do this, that's what I'm going to do. Just asking them, you know, what else might you need in order to be able to achieve this in the way that you'd like to. So through from the beginning, all the way through to the end, I think it's really important to regularly just check in with your client. Often, it's about bringing it back to themselves, because lots of clients will talk about other things that are happening and other people and that question is a really nice one, to really bring it back to them.

**Zoe Hawkins** 10:47

And all of this is supportive and encouraging and gentle. And of course, on the flip side, what you've got around how you can help the clients get the most from coaching is around holding your boundaries. So you may have a client who constantly wants to reschedule or move sessions. And and that might be fine, you know, for a certain point, but what might that be a symptom of. And so when you hold a boundary for your client, that may open up more learning opportunity, you know, so whatever boundaries you set, and we aren't here to tell you what those boundaries need to be. But whatever boundaries you choose to set holding them, is an important part of, you know, service to your client, and to the coaching work that you'll be doing together. So that is around, obviously timings of sessions, it may be about how the client shows up. So we've talked here about preparation. So if that is a boundary that your client needs to come prepared for the session, then you hold that

**Jo Wheatley** 11:49

another way to look at boundaries is from the clients perspective. So for the coach to ask the client, what are the boundaries in terms of, you know, the scope of the work that we're going to do together in coaching? So what are we going to talk about? Are there any no go areas and being clear with the client around how that may limit? You know, the potential outcomes from the coaching conversations? So holding boundaries is something that you need to be aware of and, and be clear with each other around? What are your boundaries as a coach? What are the clients boundaries as as a coachee? So for the coach, it might be around if the client is paying in instalments or on a monthly basis for their coaching and they don't pay, will you continue to do the coaching anyway? Or will you? Will they not be able to attend that coaching session until it's paid? It might be around the client and and their boundaries? May be that what about if you as the coach need to cancel a session? What boundaries will the will the coachee hold in that situation?

**Zoe Hawkins** 12:56

I think another one, which we've touched on is around the recontracting. One of the things I noticed can happen in client sessions is goal drift. So you start out in a coaching session, and your client has a clear goal of where they want to get to and the outcomes that they desire from the time together. And then as you get into the work, it sort of opens up a spider web, you know of different avenues that you can go down of like, oh, actually, there's this part of my life or this part of my career, which isn't quite where I want it to be either. And what can happen if you're not careful as you dilute the work that you are originally trying to do on the coaching outcome? That's absolutely fine for clients change their mind when on the coaching journey, but not by accident, not by default. So as the coach, one of the ways you help your client to get the most from coaching is by really holding the agenda. And where your client begins to drift into perhaps other goals or areas of life, you just pay attention to that and say what I'm hearing is there is something over here in this part of your your life that you want to spend some time on, How is that connected to the coaching outcomes that we've contracted on? Or is it connected to to that? If so, do you want to spend some more time on it? If not, is that a new area that you want to focus on. So just drawing to the attention of your client, that goal drift, so you can make sure that the time you do have together is genuinely focused on the area that the client wants, because this might be a habit that the client has in their life of sort of drifting away and not necessarily being able to focus on the outcomes that they want. And so if you're able to hold the agenda for them, then you are doing them a service and helping them to stay focused on what they want to achieve rather than perhaps some of the other things that might be distracting them from what they're trying to achieve.

**Jo Wheatley** 14:01

It's an interesting one that I think because it how do we help the clients find their voice. So we talk about, you know, coaching being a do with relationship, not a due to relationship. But how do we help the client to be able to experience, you know, the dynamic in that way, they may be used to lots of different dynamics in other relationships. So, if, for example, you know, the client gets the end of a session, and they haven't got what they wanted out of it, because they thought that it was the coach's responsibility to manage the time and the direction of it, then maybe not going to haven't got what they needed from that session. So how do you co create a dynamic and a relationship between the two of you where the client feels able to say, when you say, how about we do this that they can say? Yeah, you know, I think it'd be more useful for me today, if we did X. And also, if they felt that you as the coach, were asking, spending too much time in a particular area. And as far as they're concerned, there isn't a lot of value there and really want to move on to it, that they have an awareness of the time in the session, and that they can say to the they say to the coach, you know, I know, we spent quite a bit of time on this. But I'd really like to focus some time today on this aspect of it, because it's been something that I've been reflecting on and I just can't get the awareness that I need on my own. So can we explore that together. So I think the managing the time is, is a shared responsibility, because it it is you are in relationship with each other. So you can in the contracting, the initial contracting with the client, be very clear about that, you know, if at any time you know the relationship is co created, we can create a plan for how you, you know, we can support you to achieve your goal. If at any point in the sessions, you feel x, then please do that. Is there anything else that you need so that you feel that you're co directing these sessions, for example?

**Zoe Hawkins** 16:49

And you can check in with the client, can't you, throughout the coaching session? Like what is it you're taking away so far? How valuable is this line of inquiry for you? What are you learning about yourself as we discuss this topic? What are you learning about your situation? So you're always aware? Is my client getting value? Yes or no? is the value the value they want to get? Yes or no. So you're able to make those micro adjustments, as you go through the conversations with your clients.

**Jo Wheatley** 17:18

And reflecting is, is often more challenging for people than for any of us than we think that oh, yeah, I can reflect, I can think about something that's happened and have another thought about that thing that happened. But as a coach, I think we have a responsibility to support our clients to develop their own reflective practice abilities so that they can get the most out of the coaching relationship. So helping them to peel back the layers on not only their thoughts, but the reasons behind the thoughts and how they're connected to their emotions, and how that links between the past the present and the future. And so often, I think that can be overlooked between the coach and the client, in terms of not spending time supporting them, how do you reflect? How could you reflect even deeper, because that's often an avenue for them getting more value from the coaching?

**Zoe Hawkins** 18:11

Yeah, I call that about helping the client to ignite their inner coach, so they don't need you in a sustained way. You know, you want your clients to be able to exit your coaching, feeling like they have what they need, both for the challenges they've they bought to coaching and for the foreseeable that they can look ahead into their life and the things that they want to achieve and feel like they have all of the resources available to themselves to do themselves justice with what they want to achieve. And I think more you can do to ignite that inner coach within your clients then isn't that great value that serves them well into the future. So if you've enjoyed today's podcasts, please do come and like and subscribe to this podcast. We hope that you will also come and join us in our group over in the kitchen crowd and continue the conversations.

**Jo Wheatley** 19:03

And if you're interested in joining us for a coaching qualification to go deeper in these areas. You can find out details of the next cohorts that you can join on our website, IG company.co.uk

**Zoe Hawkins** 19:18

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** 19:27

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