

## Ep #170: Disrupting the Coaching Industry with Mark Butler



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Amy Latta

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## Ep #170: Disrupting the Coaching Industry with Mark Butler

You are listening to episode 170 of *The Confident Coaches Podcast*, the one I don't know how else to put it ... we're going to blow your mind. Let's go.

Welcome to *The Confident Coaches Podcast*, a place for creating the self-confidence you need to do your best work as a life coach. If you want to bring more boldness, more resilience, and more joy to your work, this is the place for you. I'm. Amy Latta, let's dive in.

Hello coaches. Okay, so I don't want to give a ton of information up front here. I do want you to lean into this episode and just take this conversation wherever it leads you. I am interviewing Mark Butler. Mark Butler has been my CFO, my numbers guy for over two years, and he has been the CFO for multimillion dollar coaches, small coaches, mid-size coaches, hundreds if not thousands of businesses.

He has seen the reality behind closed doors of the big launches and the big guns, and his perspective has blown my mind and I think it's going to blow yours too. So, I'll be back on the back end. But right now, here's my conversation with life coach and numbers guy, Mark Butler.

Amy: Okay, coaches, I'm so excited to welcome my good friend and my CFO, my money guy, Mark Butler to the Podcast. Hi Mark. How are you?

Mark: Hi, Amy. I'm great, and I'm happy to be here.

Amy: So, you and I have been working together I've actually been working with your company for a couple of years, but you and me one-on-one has really, probably just been in the past year, and I really look forward to our once a month calls, like we only meet for one hour a month, but every time I leave that call, I feel less stressed, more relaxed about the money that's coming in because I think you have this power, and this is where I want the conversation to go today.

And this is what I said in my intro for the listeners of this nuanced conversation between holding the big fantastical dreams of what's possible in online business, also loving where we are right now and seeing all of the goodness that is in our business right now, and I feel like you have a really, I don't know if practical is the word you would use.

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I don't know how you would describe your approach to money as a life coach of let's look at the reality. I feel like that's where our conversation always end up is “yeah, I hear you Amy, but let's look at what you actually have and what actually matters.”

So, let's just start with, what would you say that you do for life coaches? What would you say your special secret sauce is?

Amy: I think it's what you said. I think my special secret sauce is that people coming away from interactions with me feel calmer and more peaceful internally and just more clear on what the current job is. That shows up in my work with, as CFO for coaches like you.

And it shows up in the life coaching that I do, because I'm spending more time in general life coaching these days than I am CFOing, but that's who I want to be. I want people to feel peaceful after having interacted with me. And that seems to be how it goes a majority of the time.

Amy: But see, here's what's interesting ... as I've had some really big, huge goals for the past few years and I've not come anywhere near hitting those big, giant goals, so how is that possible that I can feel calm and peace?

Mark: Oh, that's a big one. I will really try not to derail the conversation, but in this direction.

Amy: Oh, we can derail.

Mark: I think that goals mostly don't create peace. I think goals in the way that we typically set them and talk about them become actually a net negative in a person's emotional life.

Amy: Yeah. Why? Tell me about that, because a lot of our conversations have led here, and I think why I always feel more peace at the end of them. So, what is it about goals that is creating, as you're saying this net negative in our particular community.

Mark: There's a lot going on in our particular community, goals are a way of belonging. And so, if I don't have the right goals, I'm at risk of expulsion.

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Amy: Whoa. Yeah.

Mark: And at some basic, even lower brain level, depending on which parts of the community of this life coaching community I interact with there's muddy water around my goals because I'm trying to use them, not just for validation, not just to prove that I'm worthy and that all the money I've spent has been well spent, and that all the time I've spent has been well spent.

But it's also a way of maintaining status and inclusion in the community. And I think that's a really bad reason to be in a community. I don't think that's healthy as a baseline. I don't think that's healthy, so there's that with goals.

Also, something that our community is particularly prone to is the idea, we as a community have become convinced that we can put anything in the R line. If you believe that, if you fully buy into the idea that I can truly create any result that I want, and that the vehicle for that result will be my thoughts, then when I don't achieve that result, the blame goes to I'm deficient, my thoughts are deficient, I'm failing.

When all the dust settles, what's left is, she is good and I am bad, and the evidence is a number on a spreadsheet. Or a number on a big screen at an award ceremony or whatever. She is good and I am bad.

But the simple reality is, in the pursuit of goals, especially financial goals, we do not have the final say in the achievement of those goals because we're asking other people to take a particular action so that we can have some money that we're asking someone to buy something, they're giving us some money, we're taking the money that they give us, and we're trying to use it to buy status and validation, and we're trying to use it to prove that our thoughts are whatever, good, powerful, complete, healthy, whatever, right?

Sit with the irony that a philosophy of life that says, my results are internal results, I have the ability to control my emotional state, to influence my emotional state and my actions. But this same philosophy is adamant that I cannot use my thoughts to control other people's actions, and if I attempt it, I'm out of bounds, but then the goals I set are entirely about using my thoughts to dictate other people's actions. Sit with that for 10 seconds.

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Amy: I think everybody right now is, “oh, okay.”

Mark: So, if you believe what we've been taught, and I think there is so much merit and power in what we've been taught in this particular life coaching community, that I have the ability to influence my internal emotional state.

And that my internal emotional state is my reality. Then no wonder that goals that are built around other people's behaviors and their supposed role in my internal emotional state, no wonder those goals on average produce more unhappiness than happiness. Isn't it weird, Amy? Sorry. You got me going.

Amy: I know.

Mark: I put the microphone in front of me. I told you.

Amy: Don't filter.

Mark: Isn't it weird that we would, in one breath tell the woman who is wishing her husband would behave differently, that she is the cause of her own suffering? Because that's his model, that's his behavior. And in the very next breath, we would tell someone to get a thousand people to take a specific action. How are we not seeing the dissonance there?

But not only are we not seeing the dissonance, we're smashing ourselves against that dissonance over and over again and wondering why we're miserable.

Amy: I see it. Because I'm coaching clients week after week who can't get them to say yes or no. And of course, legitimately what we cannot control anybody's thoughts and feelings.

So then let me ask you this question: when we are thinking about goals, I think this idea of setting goals for ourself to be a member of a community that resonates to my very heart.

I know every goal that I've ever set has been so much less about what I actually want in my life. And so much more about, this group of people over

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here is all striving for that goal. And I love these people over here and I want to be a part of those people over there. So I better make that my goal also.

And then everything you just said about, and we're stuck with the reality of we don't control other people's actions. It's literally, cognitive behavioral therapy is just, it's all us.

So why should we set goals? But that was the point of it?

Mark: I have I have a fantasy. I have a goal that there's a lake in Northeastern Utah that is massive and it's about six miles across. I want to swim the breadth of that lake. I don't know that I ever will, but I'm going to keep the fantasy, thanks.

Amy: Sounds good. Sounds good. I have a lot of fantasies too, Mark.

Amy: So, in, in open water swimming as opposed to swimming in a pool, you don't have a lane line that you're staring down at the bottom of the pool that's guiding you and making sure you're not swimming in a zigzag.

In open water swimming, you have to periodically pick up your head, look out at a focal point in the distance and course correct, because in open water swimming, you do swim in a zigzag, it's inevitable. But if you have that focal point out in the distance, then you're going to end up where you want to go even though you're zigzagging.

I think goal setting is very useful and very powerful to say, "am I pointed and moving in a direction that I decided is worthwhile?" So, I, for that reason, I'll have goals that I occasionally pick my head up out of the water and look out in the distance and say, "am I still pointed in that direction?"

Or "oh no, I'm actually not pointed at all in that direction. Why did I change directions? Maybe I want to change directions." But for me, the goal ends up being two things. One of which I think our community does a great job of talking about. So, the first thing is this idea of a focal point out in the distance to keep us going in the right direction.

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The second thing that I think our community is great with, is knowing that we tend to grow in beautiful ways in the context of challenging goals.

Amy: Yes, I would completely agree.

Mark: And I'm for that, I just don't end up seeing people really pursuing that and celebrating that. They tend to make the goal about the external reality, the external validation, instead of making the goal about the internal pursuit.

The beauty of making the goal about the internal pursuit is when I do that, I can celebrate a victory every day for the rest of my life, or at least the vast majority of days where I can check in and say, "I did, I pursued my goal, did I stretch myself in pursuit of that goal? Feel successful?" Then when you actually arrive at the goal, it's just, "oh, cool, I'm good. Now what?"

But it's not, the emotional high a long time ago I was saying to somebody, I was like, "hey, I think applause is flour and sugar."

Amy: Y'all pick it up what he just said.

Mark: Yeah, like this is a community that doesn't do flour and sugar; we don't do cheap dopamine. I'm like, "I don't know. I don't know. I think trophies might be cheap dopamine."

Amy: So, it's really funny because as you know, I have achieved quite a few trophies. I've moved them in my office, but I didn't realize that where I've moved them, is literally what I'm staring at over my computer screen. Can I put them up a high on the shelf over here? They're no longer over here, which is the first thing I see when I walk into my office and it's my inspiration spot.

And it's like my, YES, that's where I used to keep them. I've never verbalized it as that's my cheap dopamine, but that is what it is. You get this high and it's really exciting. You get to walk across the stage, and you get to have everybody be like, "oh, how'd you get there?"

And then you share the one thought that got you there and it's all, yay, yay, yay. So now my cheap dopamine is sitting up on that shelf and that's the

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best articulation that I can put it, that the accomplishment of that goal meant so much in that moment, but if that is the reason for it, the crash coming down, devastating would be a particularly extreme emotion.

But it can feel that way because it was all the external validation of people watching you walk across that stage, here's all these amazing things and we want to separate ourselves from these are their thoughts about me, and I am neutral. But that's not how the human brain works.

Mark: Not on average. No.

Amy: No. That is a highly disciplined, not very human brain that can receive those accolades and not internalize it a little bit and then need it a little bit more, and then need a little bit more, and then need it a little bit more. But that's what we have set ourselves up is this is the ideal.

So, I love this conversation about the internal pursuit of goals because the stretching of ourselves is something we can celebrate every day. And we don't need anybody outside of us.

Mark: No, we don't. And maybe one little point of clarification there is, so we talk about, we call that cheap dopamine, walking across the stage and getting the ovation.

People might be listening saying, that wasn't cheap. That was very expensive. Tens of thousands of dollars. Hundreds and hundreds, thousands of hours. That's not cheap dopamine. No, but it's the cheap reward for all that effort. And the evidence is, you just articulated it perfectly. The evidence of its cheapness is how fleeting it is.

That's why we're calling it cheap dopamine. It's because it's so fleeting and because the crash can be so severe, the daily pursuit is this dopamine drip of this internal knowing of I'm pursuing something that feels right to me, feels good to me, and I'm exerting myself in its pursuit, and I feel amazing.

Amy: Yes. And I think it's it, and I would agree with you. I worked my butt off for every single accolade I've earned. But that ability to celebrate myself in the day-to-day, no matter, because we all know and anybody who's ever



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pursued a dream knows that the line from point A to point B is not a straight upward trajectory.

Mark: No. Correct. It is up down.

Amy: Sometimes it circles back around again. And so, the circling back around again and the up and down feels that much more heavy. Like an ankle weight. Like I said it becomes so much more uncomfortable to handle when we have put so much effort into that external validation.

Let me ask you, maybe that's the next question. Should we be in the business of pursuing believe anything is possible type goals?

Mark: I'm not in a position to declare those ultimately good or ultimately bad. What I think in our particular corner of the world, something we want to be aware of is we want to be aware of incentives and we want to be aware of anchoring.

So, if the person who is promising me that I can achieve anything I want and that I should have a higher and higher, larger and larger vision, bigger dollar signs. If the person who is encouraging that has a financial incentive to encourage it, I just need to be aware of that.

It doesn't make them sinister. I need to be aware of is, "oh, okay, wait. The person who's promising me that if they have a financial incentive, they win today by me having that "impossible dream" or big, huge dream or whatever, they win right now, and I just need to maintain awareness of that because I hopefully win big later, but they win now.

So, it's in their interest to promote my huge dreams. Independent of the outcome. They'll never have an incentive to say to me like, "you know what? Just chill. Like life's pretty good. I don't know why you would really chase that big, crazy thing," because they actually are financially worse off if you become content. So, we just need to have awareness of that.

Amy: And I think that is such an important conversation and it has shifted how I've decided to market my own businesses and charge for my own businesses. At the time of this recording, I've not made some big announcements, but I think by the time this drops out to the public, that will

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have how I've repriced some of my offerings because is my purpose really about changing as many lives as possible and helping as many people achieve their dreams and me doing that helps me achieve mine without, and I think you really articulated it the best.

And it's why I've been hesitant. I've been hesitant in the past to put people on my podcast that didn't achieve the big financial goal of my masterminds, but they achieved other goals. They achieved goals that had no financial arm to them, but their view of themselves had changed so dramatically that making 10k in a month, or 100k in a year, became so much less relevant.

And I've put those people on my podcast instead of the starry as students. I think there's value in sharing goals that no longer need external validation from other people to believe that I have a space in here.

I now know more than one of my clients have said, "through the course of this program, and coaching with you, Amy, the financial goal is no longer my goal," because it was attached to the trophy or the metaphorical trophy, the external validation.

And now they are perfectly content running, small memberships, making the amount of money that makes their life easier now, and they're so damn happy. And I think this is tied into what you said, we never hear the stories of the dream that didn't quite work out.

That's not the people they are putting on the podcast.

Mark: No.

Amy: You had a name for this in a conversation.

Mark: It's borrowed, but it's called The Invisible Graveyard.

Amy: Okay. Tell me about the invisible graveyard.

Mark: The invisible graveyard is the metaphor for what you just said.

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It's that for every person we hear about who succeeded in an outlier way, there's an invisible graveyard filled with the bodies and the dreams of the people who pursued that same path and did not get there.

That in, especially in a life coaching community, that can sound impossibly, tragically cynical. And I don't mean it that way. For me it's a mathematical reality, but it doesn't mean that we shouldn't pursue dreams. It doesn't mean that we shouldn't pursue these amazing goals, but we should, I think, change our reasons for pursuing them. Because what's in that graveyard is not the person who started pursuing the goal.

It's making a zillion dollars that's laying in the graveyard. The person and the character they develop and the strengths and the attributes and the skills and the relationships they develop, those are all there, but they don't appeal to our lower brain.

The irony of this, those stories don't appeal as much to our lower brain, and so they don't get surfaced. We tend to surface the stories that go to the lower brain and hearing that somebody made a million dollars, 10 million, 50 million, those appeal to our lower brain. It's this rush, this surge of adrenaline dopamine. It's like a lottery effect.

Amy: We hear that the mega millions is like 1 billion and we're like, I could win that.”

Mark: Exactly. That's it. That's it. And in the life coaching community, it's not just, I could have been that by luck, but it's, I can be that just because my thoughts are so powerful. You can do incredible things. You can make incredible changes in yourself because of the power of your thoughts, and you are subject to the math of reality at the same time.

There's a little bit more luck in 1 million, 5 million and 10 million stories than our community is comfortable discussing. We don't really want that to be true, but it just is math.

Amy: I've been talking a lot on the podcast and included, even on my updated website is I've actually listed out, here are things that helped me get to where I am. And I feel the need that I need to acknowledge that because it's really easy for me to run my business full-time when I'm

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married, happily married, a good marriage to a man who supports what I do, and if everything implodes tomorrow, we have a roof and food, and everybody's taken care of. That's a privilege. I don't know that it's necessarily luck, but it could, some people could call that luck. I have advantages and I have privileges operating in my favor and I think a lot of times the coaching community can overlook, and think as high they want, but if I am a single mother working three jobs trying to build this business, their circumstance is very different than mine.

And being able to have a coach that can help them coach through that and really set those goals that are real and true, and also grow and stretch, and really does make their life easier right now.

Mark: I do totally agree with that, Amy. Where I differ, a little bit is that actually every living human being is privileged. Privilege is universal. If you have two arms, two legs, and all 10 of your fingers, there's a shocking privilege in that.

And yes, some people do start like farther down the track because maybe they have a professional history that gives them an advantage in their new job. Or they have they come from a high earning or a wealthy household, so their financial resources put them farther down the track.

All of those things are real. And where I think things get particularly interesting is if you look at people whose lives and whose skills are substantially equal and their effort is substantially equal and one gets 10x the results of the other, we don't have a great explanation of that other than a lot of the world would call it luck and then a whole other part of the world would tend to call it something in the neighborhood of the power of their thoughts or the law of attraction.

And all I'm saying is, there's more luck in it than we are prepared to acknowledge a lot of the time, but the luck factors mostly into financial outcomes. The luck doesn't factor into character development and internal results.

If someone comes to me and says, "I want to start a life coaching business of any flavor, what are my chances of success?" I'll say, "if your goal is to become a different being and enjoy a richer life experience, richer

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relationships overcoming obstacles, then I can offer you a 100% success guarantee. If your goal is, I want to make a jillion dollars, and I'll be like, "yeah, buy a lottery ticket. They're the same."

No one will convince me otherwise, Amy. I was like I'll die on this hill. And I'm okay with that.

Amy: And here's the thing, and I'm sure I will preface this in the intro and the outro, that for some people, this is not what we've been hearing for years, but I think that it is such an important conversation because I have so many clients who are in that proverbial graveyard who have shifted and grown, and they have changed how they approach their entire life, and their relationships and their day-to-day lives are better.

They have these amazing tools, but because they haven't hit X figures, they think I'm a failure.

Mark: Tragic.

Amy: And it's so damn near heartbreaking because I can see that full picture. But because we've pinned success means 100k, then it's a million. And then from a million, it's 10. Because we have used those as the gauges. How many people feel unsuccessful?

And we don't want to say that luck has factored into this. We want to believe that it's all laws of the universe and laws of attraction, which so much of this is playing a part, but for years, I know I beat myself up of I just must not be thinking high level enough.

Mark: Do you know what percentage of externally motivated people feel successful?

Amy: Ooh, that number's very low.

Mark: Zero. Do you know how many conversations I've had over the years with a coach who has earned fill-in-the-blank dollars in a short time period, or who's earned this much more this year than last year. And they doubled, or 5x or 10x or 100x and it's really interesting because whether there is a literal stage that they walk across and get a standing ovation, or whether

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that's just something that they experience when they look at the spreadsheet or look at their Stripe account it's the same. It's so fleeting.

So, they'll make the hundreds of thousands or the millions of dollars and then it's like the next conversation we have, we're right back to lack. We're right back to the next bigger, the better, the more. We're right back into the same cycle. And I'm like, "dude, this seems like a dead end. I'm going to pass, no thank you."

Amy: It's exhausting to operate in that, because there's never enough zeros in the bank account that can make me feel that I'm doing a good job and I deserve this. I am valuable enough. What I'm doing is good.

There's this endless pursuit. Where do we get to just chill is the right, I don't know what the right word is. I don't mean like coast ... chill, go to sleep, but just truly enjoy and be in our business.

Mark: I have not achieved this perfectly and I wouldn't pretend that I have, it's when the share of our motivation that is external, and it's when the balance of our external motivational and our internal motivation, it's when they shift, it's when more of our motivation and our energy is internal and less external. That is when we start to feel rest.

We're still pursuing growth. The greatest blessing of life is that you get to pursue growth until the day you die. That's an incredible blessing. And as we move from thinking that growth will have its primary evidence as externally instead of internally, that's where we're exhausted. That's where the pursuit never ends.

But as they move internal and we can say, wow, what a victory today was or what a failure was today was. Today I betrayed myself today. Today I was dishonest. Today I was unkind. We're going to have those days and we're going to hopefully correct ourselves, but it's all about the internal pursuit.

And as soon as you get there, it's like, "yeah, this is really hard work, but it feels so different."

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Amy: Life coach-money man, Mark, do you have favorite coaching questions or questions that you spend time answering that help shift from external to internal? Are there thoughts you've relied on?

Mark: I have one. The question is "why?" I just keep asking why like a four-year-old, I'm going to make this many dollars this year. Why? Why? And I keep saying why. Until either they're really annoyed with me or they're crying, or I see their shoulders relax. I see their gaze change. I see them go from anxious and I see them start to look up and get, move into a, like a curious physical state. And then I hear them say, yeah, actually why? And then we have a great conversation.

Amy: Yes. Because then we can start having a conversation about the amount of income, the amount of revenue that elevates the life that you already have.

Mark: That's really nicely said. I love that.

Amy: Yeah. That's this is the life that I have. What elevates it? Then it's still a push, it's still a stretch for us. But then this, as you said, we've answered the question why 5, 6, 7 times?

And so, I know that the push is not dependent on what somebody else thinks of me on my decision. and I think it's the question is so damn simple. It's literally just why, and I do think there's also a level of trusting ourselves that we'll know when the answer becomes something that still is internal. I think this is what I butt up against as I've been shifting this past year, is, then we would never pursue bigger and harder goals.

Mark: So, if you sit with that, you realize that's a pretty cynical view of our clients and of ourselves, that I'm incapable of through my own introspection, my own inner voice of determining my own target.

I have to have an authority figure, give it to me, force it upon me. It's such a cynical view of ourselves. It's such a diminished view of ourselves. I think a common misunderstanding of the conversation we're having is that, that we are proposing ease over difficulty.

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Oh, that's hard. Don't do it. This is easy. Do it. No, this is hard. It's hard work. Sitting with yourself, letting yourself get still going inside and saying, what is the good and right pursuit for me, even if it's scary, even if I don't know how to do it.

Even if it doesn't offer me significant external validation, what is good and right for me? And then to act according to that inner voice is the hardest work in the world. It's not a dopamine pursuit. Yes. It's not the pursuit of a trophy and you probably won't ever get a trophy as you move down that path. That's hard work.

Amy: Yeah, I love that, because two pieces just connected the puzzle in my brain, of it's harder because we aren't pursuing the dopamine. Like we think that pursuing the dopamine is harder, but there's a big dopamine hit coming and it's going to feel really amazing and we're going to like ride high, like the wind, nevermind that we're going to crash super, super hard and it's going to be devastating almost.

But by not pursuing that, we actually don't get the dopamine hit. We actually don't get those big jolts. And it truly is just internal validation over and over again. And let's just be honest, I wasn't raised that way. I can remember from the earliest date, I can remember in kindergarten being rewarded for being the good girl who kept quiet, who, didn't talk out of turn.

And Amy gets to sit in the special spot today because, like from a very young age. So, it makes sense that we would want to pursue the goal that has the external validation.

Mark: That's right. That's our whole culture, our education systems they're built around external approval. Here's you're A, here's your gold star. Here's your valedictorian, here's your captain of the team, here's your championship. All of it is, so much of Western culture is built around external validation, and it's not so much serving us. It has served us in many ways, but on average, I don't think we're necessarily happier.

And in our community in particular, I worry, I can't say I'm right. I worry that all we've done is trade one kind of misery for another. It's like this, we traded the sort of the misery of our pre-life coaching life, and now we've traded it for this sort of aspirational misery of "I'm chasing this amazing



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dream, but I never stop chasing. I never get there, and I'm getting more and more tired and I'm getting more and more discouraged, but everyone's telling me that I'm supposed to be excited, so wait, what's wrong with me?"

Just go inside. Go inside and ask questions and trust the answers. And it's not that there's never any validation. When I have conversations with you, when I have conversations with other clients, when I write something that I love or when I do a podcast, that just feels really good to me, the validation's there and sometimes it has an external look to it.

When a client tells me, "I so value our coaching," that's external to me and it feels amazing, but it's a different kind of thing. And it's an incredible business to be in because it offers validation through connection if we are willing to pursue that.

Amy: Anything else we want to explode?

I am going to be one of those clients that says, our conversations have really helped me detach the external validation I was putting on my goals. I think the best question you've asked me that, and you've asked me a ton of really great questions, but one of the best questions you've asked me is because you are a math person.

We came at it from the math of which, what makes my life easier right now? And then all of a sudden and I want everybody to really internalize this. I felt the pressure fall off my shoulders because I realized making millions of dollars as a life coach, which I do still have that belief.

I have that focal point out in front of me. I believe it's entirely possible, and also, I don't need millions of dollars to elevate my life as it is right now. We've talked the dollars, you and I have actually went through like the dollars and the cents of what actually allows you to pay for all those kid camps, take the vacations you want to take, save up for college, what's the actual dollar amount?

And when that becomes, to your lake analogy, maybe these are like buoys in the water.

Mark: I love it. Great analogy there.

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Amy: Like that, these become buoys, this is my big focal point. That's where I'm headed, but here's this buoy I'm headed towards right now.

Mark: Yeah. I really like it actually.

Amy: And I know that it's much closer. It's the reason for it is rooted in my day-to-day life right now. And I can still hold that big aspirational dream that's out in the future because once I reach that buoy I might set another buoy. I'm going to run with the lake thing here.

Mark: I love it. I really think it holds I really think it holds.

Amy: I was starting to make some choices in my business of what are all the ways I can create all of the incomes, because in the rooms I'm putting myself in, I keep moving into rooms where people, to push my thinking, et cetera, but the results aren't coming in and I need the results to validate my existence in these rooms.

Mark: It's funny because I actually want those rooms to exist. I'm not anti-putting yourself in an environment where people have achieved amazing things, where they're pursuing amazing things. I want to be in that environment. I'm grateful to the people movers that set a big vision and fill fill rooms with people who are aspiring to something great.

I'm grateful to those people. I'm asking all of us maybe to do it for slightly better reasons and in a slightly healthier way, so that on average the people sitting in those chairs are obviously better off for having sat in those chairs and that we're not having to talk about, this is all good, but boy, it can come at a cost.

I don't think it has to come at that cost. If we shift the way we're doing what we're doing, I'm not telling anyone in your audience to not price the way they're pricing, not sell what they're selling. You and your audience are people movers. You're doing amazing work in the world.

I'm asking us to consider our motivation and whether that is a net positive for us and for the people that we're trying to serve.

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Amy: Yeah, I think that's really where this conversation needs to land. We've had this conversation of goals as validation and be making it more of an internal pursuit and to stop chasing the cheap dopamine.

And also, there is an audience of plus or minus a thousand life coaches that listen to this podcast every week who are saying, "what should I be doing?" I don't want to be charging my clients the amount of money I'm charging so that I can put that money on my balance sheet so that I can then say, I now belong in this room," because that feels shitty. I can verify that feels shitty.

I need to charge you this to cover my expenses so that I can be in the rooms where I can say, "look at me. I'm in these rooms. Don't you want to be in these rooms with me?" That doesn't feel good.

Mark: Oh, I felt it when you said it.

Amy: It doesn't feel good. Yeah, it's icky. When I hang out with my circle of friends, and I am the only life coach that they know, they don't have anybody else talking about the possibility of things the way that we do.

I do know that there's an entire population of people whose lives could become 10% simpler, easier, less overwhelmed, less anxiety, and it would totally change for them. And that this is a huge value that we're putting out into the world.

So how do we know, for those listeners that are listening how is it just simply asking why over and over again about the price they're charging and the packages that they're putting together?

Mark: Yeah, it is. And just really trusting the inner voice. And recognizing that what I'm doing today is not what I have to do forever, and the decision I make today isn't a forever decision.

So, if we remove the pressure of all these external pursuits and we say, okay, right now what feels good and peaceful to me and valuable to the world is for me to do X. I'm going to do that and trust that there will be an evolution.

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New doors will open, new opportunities will present themselves. I don't have to force it at any stage. I can listen to that inner voice; I can move in that direction, and I can be very confident that all kinds of evolutions are available to me. All kinds of new opportunities.

And some of those might be 10 million opportunities. I don't think it ever has to be forced.

Amy: And I think we know what feels forced by going internally and really, like you said, "how does it feel when we say the words out loud?" Not only did you say, "Ooh, I felt that," I could see your face as I was talking, right?

So, I think we know when it's feeling forced. I know that I certainly invited a lot of people along with me into the rooms I was going in and they couldn't articulate it, but they kept going, I don't think that's for me. And it was just really interesting because they couldn't articulate it somehow, I knew they were right and it left me feeling there's something there and I can't quite put my fingers around it, because I'm not sure this is for me either, but this is the trajectory I've been on this entire time.

So, I think it's the difference between, is supposed to be my next step versus what feels good and peaceful to me right now that I can trust. That the next step isn't forced. And I know that a lot of people say sometimes we have to like push our clients into their discomfort zone.

And also, I think for the coach being able to sense when you're trying to push your client into the next space because it makes a better testimonial or makes a better story for you. What's pushing them because it truly is in their best interest? Maybe it's as simple as, if you don't get to tell the world at all about this client success story, would you still coach them to do it?

Mark: Ooh, that's really good. No, that's good. That's so good. Because I do believe sometimes in pushing our clients, I have a client, I love him. He has a desire to do standup comedy. It's one of the things that we've touched on during our time coaching together and he talked about it, and talked about it.

We strategized, we came up all these things and I finally said to him, one session, I was nervous to say this. I said, look, I'm wondering if I was a

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really good friend to you, would I say to you that I won't meet with you again until you get up on stage at an open mic? Because he had continually, he wanted I'm going to go do an open mic, but he wouldn't do it.

And I said, I'm wondering if I'd be a really good friend to you if I said, I won't talk to you again until you go up to an open mic. And he goes, "I think that would make you a really good friend." And he went up twice before our next conversation.

Amy: Oh, so good.

Mark: And I thought that was an example where pushing my client felt good. It was coming from a good place. And there was no award available to me as a result. It was all about him and his result.

Amy: Yes, that right there, this is how we can continually push our clients. So, from the coach point of view, continually pushing our clients outside of their comfort zones.

Because it truly is in their best interest. And you can just ask yourself the question like, is this what I would coach them to do if I don't get any accolade for it, any way, shape, or form, then that's where they should go. And then from the client side, for if you are the coachee, if you are the client, what feels good and peaceful to me right now?

What does require some stretching and some growth and some discomfort on my side? And also building that trust in myself that I'm going to know, does this feel forced or does this feel like the push of growth or does this feel like the shove of being forced into the square peg in the round hole?

Mark: Yeah. That's beautifully said. I love it.

Amy: Thank you, because it felt like a bit of a word salad coming outta my mouth.

Mark: I think you captured it. I really do. I think there's some magic there for coaches.

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Amy: Yeah, I really do too. I think this is a fantastic conversation. I do think we probably broke some brains open.

I hope that this conversation has just helped people see what is our motivation for our goals? What is the motivation for the things that we say we want to do, the pursuit of income and money and revenue because we do believe everything that we do, we can believe that we can create magnificent and glorious things and also detaching ourselves from the external validation because those big, glorious things are always fleeting if we've attached what other people think about us to them.

Mark: That's right.

Amy: I know that's been my growth this year. I'm going to shamelessly plug you, you've been my CFO for a couple of years now. You and I have worked one-on-one for about the past year. I was working with one of your associates before we meet once a month.

I don't know if that's available to everybody. I think the best thing that I can say, what you do for me is we take a look at my money. Where is my money going? And you will be the first person that will raise your hand and go like, "I just want to point out, this amount of money over here, it's a little outta whack. You might want to consider whether or not you want to keep spending that amount of money."

Mark is the first person to know I have told this; I have said this in a lot of one-on-one conversations. I don't think I've ever put it on the podcast. I have made as a life coach 1.3 million in revenue. Amy and Trey Latta are not sitting on that money.

Most, I have worked my butt off to pay a lot of people, and Mark for the past year has been the person raising his hand going, "I just want you to pay attention, how hard you are working to make sure other people get paid. You have the right to get paid, Amy." And it's been some hard conversations because I've been like, "yeah but I need," and you've just gently said, "but do you?"

And so, for the first time, I'm actually looking at in 2023, it's my 10th year as a life coach. I'm finally going, "oh, what does Amy and Trey want to have in

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their bank account? That's fun. And I got to tell you, I'm way more excited because the pressure of having to earn money to make sure other people got paid was very stressful.

Mark: Yes, it is.

Amy: It was incredibly stressful. And now I'm like, "oh what are Amy and Trey going to do this year?" Because I've got two boys who are teenagers. I got a kid that's a year out of college, I've got a young adult daughter who's trying to make her way in the world, and the trips you want to take and the time we want to see and the family we want to spend time with. And that feels like fun, enjoyable, much more peaceful and at ease.

Mark: That's good compensation for the hard work you do in the world to be able to have those experiences. I hate to say this, but I have my own issues that I have to work out, but I really don't have capacity at this exact moment in time. I really can't say yes to new clients right now.

What I can invite people to is two podcasts that I run. One is called the Beautiful Business Podcast. You can find that everywhere podcasts are streamed. And that podcast is dedicated to one-on-one coaching as a business model because I don't think that gets quite enough airtime. We have some good conversations going on over there.

And then I've recently I've started publishing a podcast called Money School with Mark Butler. Also available wherever podcasts are streamed. And that's one where we dig into psychology. It's not a lot of money tactics. There will be some of that, but it's psychology, it's money, mindset stuff. Feelings. Emotions, all of that. That's Money School with Mark Butler. That's where I would love to have people connect with me.

Amy: Do you have Instagram or anything? I'm on Instagram at @markbutlerdotcom

Haven't been active on Instagram for the last couple of years, but there's a bunch of saved content up in the top, whatever those things are called.

Amy: Highlights.

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So, if people wanted to get a feel for how I think about the world, they could go check those out and maybe one of these days I'll get active on Instagram again.

Amy: That sounds good. Hey, it's good to be in a place where you are not taking on a lot of new people right now, and these two podcasts, full disclosure, I have not listened to them, but I do spend an hour every month with Mark in my own ear, so I have no doubt The Beautiful Business Podcast and Money School with Mark Butler, to have Mark in your ear just a little bit every month.

I think more than anything, what you've really done for me, Mark, is just giving me questions to ponder. And, like you said, this the summation of this entire podcast episode right here is what are the reasons why I'm doing what I'm doing, and do I like those reasons?

Mark: That's it.

Amy: That's really what it comes down to because if you like the reasons of the decisions you are making in your life coaching business, you will always have a successful coaching business.

Alright, Mark, you're amazing. Thanks so much.

Mark: It's my pleasure. Thanks for having me here.

Amy's closing thoughts ...

I would love to know what's stirring around in your brain right now. What I love about this conversation is, it's been a few weeks now that I'm adding this intro and outro. We have met for one hour a month for 60 minutes and I get some of the best coaching I could possibly get in just that one hour.

So, first of all, let's just note what one hour a month can do to completely change your brain and how you think about things. My conversations with Mark have brought more relaxation and more ease just considering that the one way that I've been trying to do things may not be the one way we have to go. That there's a whole host of ways out there. And it is not better there than it is here.



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He has seen proof positive that for me, is that the ease is not going to come with the higher revenue.

Because then the business just gets more complicated. No, I'm not managing the day-to-day marketing and emails and posts that are going up, but I'm managing the team that's managing all of that. It's not necessarily more ease filled. And this, to me and my season of life, that is my biggest desire.

I just enrolled my baby into high school. I got four and a half more years with these humans before they are off on their own. And I got to tell you, this mom is really looking at it like, what does she want our next four years to be? I hope this conversation just got your brain thinking.

I'm going to add a little bit of coaching on the back end of this, okay? Spend some time every day with you in 2033. I just want you to get quiet every day with your hand over your heart and your hand over your gut, right hand over heart, left hand over, gut. Close your eyes and visualize you 10 years from now.

And what would she tell you? Oh, and it's very important that your two feet are on the floor and that you are upright so that you know the top of your head is connecting with sky energy and the bottom of your feet are connected with earth energy. And your hand and your heart are helping to ground you in this flow of energy.

And you're asking yourself, you're going to this place of you in 10 years, and what does she have to say to you? She's probably not going to say, well, you need to do this, and you need to do this. You need to hire this, right? It's probably going to be more energetic. It's probably going to be more of what's really important to you, and I want you to lean into that.

With that, don't forget to connect with me and Mark, and yes, I'm sorry. I am recording this when I have a little bit of a head and chest cold. So, I just have a little bit of "smelly cat" voice there. Make sure you connect with me and Mark on social media. Make sure that you tag us when you are listening to this and you're like, this is the thing I am thinking about right now.

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This is the idea that has me thinking about things. I'm serious. I know I say this at the end of every podcast. Let me know what connected with you. I am desperately seeking the information of what connected with you. I cannot wait to hear what little crack in your brain just opened up today, and I want you to know that in some form or another, I will be here to support you through that.

So, connect with me outside of the podcast. Let me know who you are. Seek me out. Instagram is probably the best way to go at @iamamylatta because I want to support you through whatever your next steps are. I can't wait to see what you create, and until next week.

Coach, it's time to sign your first free client, your first paid client, your next client, and to learn how to do it consistently and having a hell of a lot of fun along the way. This is exactly what you're going to do in Free to Paid Coach. It's the only program giving you step-by-step what to do to become a paid coach and step-by-step how to handle the roller coaster emotions that come with doing what you need to do to become a paid coach.

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