**LWQA episode 125**

This episode is brought to you by seven weeks to radical self-trust my new group coaching program designed to help you to develop a consistent practice of purposeful actions rooted in your capacity for steadfast self awareness and self loyalty through the program. You'll develop self Knowledge and Skills that will lead to an alignment of values with actions Clarity of Direction and peace with decision-making increased self-confidence and self acceptance magnetism energized focus and meaningful productivity.

Learn more and register for the next offering of seven weeks to radical self-trust at Katie litter dot work / R. St. You're listening to lifework QA episode 125. Welcome to life work QA where I answer a listener question each week and provide resources and guidance to help you take your life and work to the next level.

I'm your host. Dr. Katie Linder. In this episode. I wanted to answer the question of what is group coaching. And this is a question that I get quite a bit. Now from people who are looking to get more information about my writing groups program or about my new group coaching program seven weeks to radical self-trust and they want to know a little bit more about the structure of what those programs include and especially because coaching is often something that can be very private for people.

They may just have never experienced group coaching and they may not know exactly what is entailed. So I thought it would talk a little bit about that and talk a little bit about the structures of these two group coaching programs because they are slightly different from each other and I'm still experimenting a little bit with what group coaching.

Looks like. So the main idea of group coaching is that you get to explore Concepts or ideas together in one space and that you receive some support from a group other than from an individual coach. It's an opportunity to potentially get new relationships with other people who are kind of seeking the same information that you are and it's just not really as personalized to one person.

So if you were to have a private group coaching session, you would pick the topic of that session and you and a coach would explore that together in a group coaching environment. There may be more of a decision making process from the group perspective about. The different kinds of topics that you want to explore so in the writing groups program, for example, typically what we do is we start out with a check-in about how things went in the last week.

So writing groups are particularly, at least the ones that I run are particularly about accountability and helping people to set goals to explore whether or not the goals. They're setting are realistic. How much time is it taking them to do certain? And when things aren't going well with goals and maybe people aren't completing what they wanted to why exactly is that happening when they are having a really good week.

Why is that happening? You know, what are the ways that they've set themselves up for success? So we start each meeting with a check-in and this is in part why the groups are relatively small I keep the groups to about four people because we want to have enough time that everyone gets a chance to talk about how things are going for them.

So we start with that and everybody has a chance to say if they met their goals if they didn't meet their goals, and we also write everyone's goals down each week. So there's kind of a record of how things have been going. And once we've gone through that check in sometimes a natural topic will emerge it may be that someone has struggled with a particular thing that we can terms of procrastination or they didn't have enough time or something came up in their work life that really got in the way of their writing and they want to explore that further.

But I'll basically open it up to the group and say what are the kinds of things that people want to talk about this week and it's kind of something that skips around to different people. Maybe we'll throw out a few different ideas from the group and then we'll pick the idea that everyone wants to talk about if there are lots of ideas that are suggested by the group.

I'll often write them down so that we make sure we get to them at some point in a future session, but then we'll decide kind of mutually as a group what we want to be talking about. Now sometimes this is a question that someone poses in the group where they want some ideas from everyone else about what they do, but often times what will happen is someone will pose an idea or question or a challenge and then I will ask some questions about that to try to dive in a little bit deeper.

And if other people in the group want to contribute they will get asked questions as well and the idea is to kind of be curious about a. Topic why something's happening. What is it? That is kind of leading to that particular situation and see if we can learn something about it together in the same space.

So sometimes people call this like a fish bowl or a hot seat where one person is kind of the main focus, but I would say in a lot of the writing groups that I lead that happens pretty rarely It's usually the entire group is interested in a particular concept or question. And so we mutually explore it together.

And in a writing group setting which these run for about an hour that typically happens for between 25 and 30 minutes and if we get through one question or challenge, we might move onto another one depending on how much time we have and then we'll spend the remainder of the time in the group thinking about the following week.

What are the kinds of goals and issues that may come up around someone's writing and then they write down what they want to achieve in the following week and the whole cycle kind of starts over again. So that's one example of a possible group coaching model that in the writing groups program is really about week-to-week.

What is it that people are dealing with that. They want to get feedback on or they want to kind of more deeply explore with the group. now in the seven weeks program I run this a little bit differently in part because this is really about. Helping people to have connections with each other and build relationships with one another within the group coaching environment.

But it's also about helping people to explore each of the concepts for every week on a really personal level. So this program is built around what I'm calling self work, which is basically some homework that people do every week and that could involve journaling or a particular coaching activity and then we come back together as a group and we report on how those things went.

So. In the seven weeks program we often will start with how did the self work go in the previous week. We're their questions or challenges that came up where they're aha moments that people had and everyone has a chance to check in with the group as a whole. Then I often present just a little bit of information.

I wouldn't even call it something like a mini lecture. It's more mini than that about the topic of what we're covering that week in the seven weeks program because there is a little bit of a curriculum and after we have done a little bit of kind of Baseline information about the topic. So everyone's on the same page then I use a breakout groups function within Zoom, which I absolutely love and I pair people up within.

Group and they get a chance to talk with each other around particular questions related to that particular topic. So it's not in the writing group. We kind of all stay together the whole time in the seven weeks program because I'm really trying to emphasize relationships between individual people.

We have a chance to do breakouts. And because the group is small enough. Everyone has a chance to talk with each other in these breakouts one-on-one and really to kind of Coach each other in some ways and I participate in these breakouts as well. So we will. Have a certain question that gets posed.

Everyone will break out into a pair and kind of talk with each other about that question and then we'll come back to the large group and get a new question and a different person to talk to about that. And that is one of my more experimental things that I'm trying with these group coaching programs.

I hadn't really used breakouts in the past as a facilitator. I had used them as a group member, but it's been really fun to be able to do that one on one connection and then to come back. Is a larger group and share what are some of the things that we're learning in those smaller group or paired conversations?

So then the seven weeks program. Once we do that breakout will come back as a large group and often tackle some other questions together here different examples from people in the group about what they're learning and then will we end every session going over the homework or the self work for the next week?

So you can see that those are a couple different Frameworks or models for how to do group coaching. But the general idea is to make sure that everyone is getting kind of a deeper experience with a topic through being asked reflective questions about how they would respond to a particular thing or how something is really being a parent in their life or through their.

And also it allows them to think about how they want to move forward in a particular area given where they are right now given their past experience given where they want to be in the future. So so far, I love group coaching. I really love individual coaching as well. But I think group coaching is kind of special because often times people come into coaching thinking maybe they're the only ones who are dealing with a particular issue or Challenge and through the writing groups and through the seven weeks program, they end up connecting with other people who are really deeply engaged in the same kinds of issues and challenges that they are and people form lasting relationships out of these groups.

And they end up with new kind of academic friends and people that they want to be staying in touch with and because the writing groups program also comes with a connection to my prolific online community. Everyone has a chance to kind of stay in touch through that and it's been really fun. So I would love to hear if you have additional questions about group coaching and how it works.

It is definitely a little more complicated in terms of the logistics and the structuring than what I do with private individual coaching. But that for me is a really fun challenge so you can always ask me questions by contacting me via email at contacted Katie Leonard artwork. You can tweet to me at Katie double underscore Linder.

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