

52. Transformative Tales: Physicians Share How Coaching Ignited Their Journey to Living Deliberately



FULL EPISODE TRANSCRIPT

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Michael: Well, hey everyone, and welcome to another episode of Doctors Living Deliberately. Thank you so much for being with us today, and of course, welcome to my co host, hi Arpita.

Arpita: Hi, Michael. How you doing?

Michael: Doing great and I'm excited for our episode today where we get to chat with some of the clients that we work with, physicians who have embraced physician coaching so that they can tell a little bit of their story and what coaching has meant to them. And we've both invited some familiar faces here with us today and excited to, to get to chatting. What about you?

Arpita: Super excited. Just always again, thankful to have clients and have the opportunity to help other people in a different way than conventional medicine for myself. And I'm just really, really excited to hear what each person has to say today in terms of their own personal experiences with it. I think before we jump in, maybe we can just go around and have each person say a little bit about themselves and maybe what, what was their turning point to help where they got to, where they recognize that something needed to change. And then maybe how we found coaching and why we considered coaching as that opportunity to make that change. So I will just pick the first person in my order if that's okay. And that's James. That's you. So please share with us. Tell us a little bit about yourself.

James: Morning. Thanks for having me. So my name is James. I'm a urologist. And I guess my story is, is one that's probably consistent with everybody else's. I found coaching. I was kind of at the, three or four years of practice and discovered a group coaching program and tried it out and really liked it. But after I completed it, it felt like, it was kind of missing something. I was missing that one on one attention. And then to the good fortune of a mutual friend that introduced me to Michael I started working with Michael, I think about three years ago now and that could be off and yeah, it's been, it's really been great. It's I think about my thoughts three years ago compared to my thoughts now are 180 degrees different and in a very positive way. And so I'm much more balanced and peace with where I'm at right now both professionally and, and certainly with home and with relationships.

Arpita: Amazing. Amazing. Tiffany, my love, tell me a little bit about yourself or tell our audience a little bit about yourself.

Tiffany: Hi, my name is Tiffany. I am a physician and I learned about coaching when I did a women physician wellness conference. I was feeling burned out by my career and frustrated with family dynamics that were going on. So I started coaching with Arpita and life looks a lot different than it did just a few months ago, but really able to make some changes to my career. So, yeah, I'm excited to be here.

Arpita: Awesome. Thank you, Tiffany. Mahesh, my dear, tell us all the things.

Mahesh: All the things. Hi, good morning, everyone. I'm happy to be here. I'm Mahesh. I'm a family physician. I am a wife. I'm a mother. I'm an avid reader. I'm a recovering perfectionist. And my journey to coaching, I would say, I think the pandemic, that was when I first was browsing all these virtual conferences and came across coaching and then I joined a group program and from there, I felt the same, you know, as someone else said, I just felt like I needed some one on one and I think I worked with Arpita last year, if I'm

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right, you know, it was last year. It was in 2023. Right now I'm not in any coaching at all. It's more of a, I've pulled back to look at what the next step is, but I feel the impact of coaching almost every day. I know that my thoughts are not really me and I'm able to separate and I can look at things, I can self coach a bit. It's, it's just improved my quality of life. And it's also improved the quality of my thoughts even because I can recognize and I can change them around a bit.

Arpita: Amazing. So good. All right, Manas, please share who you are and how you found the amazing Michael Hersh and why you went to him.

Manas: Sure. By the way, it's really great to be on the podcast because I've told Michael this, but I listen to the podcast regularly. So when I'm meeting you, I'm like, Oh, meeting like a podcast celebrity because, you know, you only know somebody, I don't watch YouTube. I listen, you know, on my drives. I'm like, oh, you know, I'm getting to talk to Arpita which is kind of fun. But, my name is Manas Nigam. I'm a reconstructive surgeon. I just started my second year of practice. I live in Virginia Beach and I'm an employed physician. And how I got into coaching was that there's a lot of challenges in residency that I was like, man, it would have been great to just bounce this off of somebody who I wasn't directly connected with at work. And then obviously you can only talk to your significant other so much about, you know, what's going on at the hospital. So with that I was coming into a new practice. And there's just a lot to learn outside of just this year practice of medicine by itself. There's all, you know, family is really important to me and I want to start prioritizing some things that you don't necessarily prioritize when you're in training. But I also want to make sure that patients feel good about their care and I'm not getting caught up in you know, things on the back end. So there are pulls administratively, there are pulls in building your own practice, there are pulls to things outside of the practice of medicine. So Michael Hersh has been a really important voice to me outside of this other community that's really important to give me not necessarily his own perspective, but help me to maybe turn an outward lens. into the things going on in my personal life and my professional life.

Michael: So when you first found coaching, since you're chatting, we'll just kind of start the conversation here. Did you have any skepticism around it? Did you have any doubts about kind of what coaching was or, or how it might help?

Manas: so I think that the doubts that I had was that I was a bit worried that I needed to, you know, I mean, my coach is a physician and we're a community of physicians, so I was worried that I need to project myself in a certain way. You know, there's all these preconceived notions that, you know, the, you know, I'm in surgery and surgery, you know, the traditional mindset. And hopefully that's changing is, you know, show no weakness, show no vulnerability. So, you know, you get worried. Oh, am I being judged? And I think Michael could tell in the beginning. I would say, what do you think? You know, like that I think this way or feel this way. And I mean, since that point, he's convinced me, that and I think this, this is my own internal programming that I feel like I am quote unquote being judged or, you know, categorized, but that was my reservation. And then I was worried about displaying vulnerability.

Michael: I think that's huge for so many physicians, we're all trained not to be vulnerable, to kind of have these facades on at all times to show no weakness. And I think that that, that takes its toll over time, the never really being able to kind of go back to the traumatic thing that happened, right? We've referred to this before in another podcast episode where this horrible thing happens in Bay 1, and then you have to spend no time

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processing it, put a smile back on your face and head into Bay 2 and pretend like nothing happened. And I think kind of learning to embrace the vulnerability and see kind of what happens when you allow yourself to feel all the things, how that changes your life. Mahesh, what about you? Did you have any kind of skepticism when you first initially found coaching or any thoughts about it before you actually embarked on, on coaching?

Mahesh: I think before I started, maybe it was cost. When I first was like, oh, this is expensive and you know, you're not used to spending so much money on like something that's self improvement. So that was initially. And then once I started, once I saw the program, the first one that was in, which is a group program, and then I started seeing all of these, it was mostly women. And when they started talking, I was like, Oh my goodness, they're sharing so many, I don't think I can do this where I can share all this stuff about myself and like actually like sitting and looking deep inside. I mean, that was, it's uncomfortable. So my first thing was always I mean, before knowing what coaching was maybe cost, but once into it, it was being vulnerable was hard.

Michael: Jimmy, how did you deal with that? The vulnerability aspect of coaching? You said you started with a group program and then kind of transitioned to one to one. So how did you deal with kind of the vulnerability aspect of coaching?

James: Yeah, so with the group program where I struggled was actually I felt like I wanted to get vulnerable in order to get the most out of it, but I didn't want to put myself in a public vulnerable position. And that's where I think, you know, with this group program that I was part of we did some one on one sessions and I found those much more valuable than the group program itself. And then I, I really kind of pivoted to doing just strictly one on one. And I think part of my initial, even still concern that my needs wouldn't be met we're really based around the fact that, well I'm a urologist. I have a pretty specialized focus of practice and maybe my coach may not fully understand what I'm going through, what's unique to my situation. And very quickly, I think, you know, Michael, you did a great job of kind of dispelling that myth in that, you know, the issues that surround all of us, whether you need family practice, reconstructive surgery, urology are, are really germane to medicine and germane to humanity. And so as soon as I understood that and put that bias down, I was able to get a lot more out of it.

Arpita: Tiffany, I'm gonna let you tell us your side in terms of your, I think this is your 1st experience with coaching, but I might be wrong. And so tell us a little bit about your original thoughts about what it is, if it's really going to even work any, any doubts you had.

Tiffany: Yeah, so this was my 1st experience with coaching. At the WPW conference, you lectured there, and so I connected with your story, and I remember reaching out to you, and we did a small group session at that conference, and I realized kind of at the small group session that group coaching wasn't necessarily what I wanted to do. Just didn't feel as comfortable sharing all the details of things that I wanted to work on in a group setting, but we connected after that and did an intro session. I was hesitant about the cost initially because it is costly. However, after talking with my husband, we agreed that that was the next step of what I needed to do. And so I went for it and really with the changes that I was able to make in my career and the changes I was able to make with my contract like I paid for that cost with the increase in income that I was able to make with renegotiating my contract with my employer.

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Arpita: . I mean, I think you guys, I think Mahesh also brought up a very good point that the cost a lot of times people find it so prohibitive. They're like, what the heck is this voodoo that I'm paying for? Right? It's just, who's going to pay for that? And that, again, goes to speak to what we don't know, like how much of what we don't know, and how powerful this work actually is when you dive into it. Because if we're willing to spend that much money on you know, I don't know, refurbishing your house or taking care of the kids or taking trips to build your wellness, whatever it is, our mind is our most valuable asset. And when we start to learn how to kind of cultivate that in a way that actually serves us best, that is the most valuable thing that I think you can invest your money in, but it's a, it's a great point. And we didn't cue them to say, talk about the cost. They all brought it up on their own,

Michael: But here's the thing, right? I mean, everybody that is speaking right now, pays for coaching, right? Or has paid for coaching and it can be something that holds people back and male physicians in particular, this was my story, I didn't want to spend money on anything that I did not absolutely need to be spending money on because I needed to save as much money and get out of medicine, right? Like that was my story. And what I realized was, yes, I was doing all of that and I was miserable in the process. And we talk about investments. What's the right investment? How am I going to grow, you know, my financial stability? And for me, part of growing my financial stability was learning how to enjoy my life because I could be so much more financially stable when I was happy and enjoying my life and saying yes to the things I wanted to do and no to the things that I didn't. And yes, it required an investment, but so do most things, right? And it just so happened that the investment that I needed to make was in my personal well being and I hadn't really considered that before I found coaching. And so, yes, the cost was prohibitive when I first found it and my initial response when I was joining my first program was no, I was not going to do it. And when I allowed myself to do it, everything changed. It was probably the most important investment I've ever made.

Arpita: Yeah, I would say, and Tiffany, not to, no means to minimize, I think what happened with regards to your progress within the first eight weeks, it was just, again, a complete shift in your mindset with how you're approaching the situation and just truly just having the belief that you are valuable, right? Because I think a lot of times physicians, we don't think that we're worth anything. Like that, we should be speaking up or being the squeaky wheel or we just think that, oh, my God, if I say something, they're going to fire me or they're going to find somebody else. We don't recognize our worth and that belief totally needs to be blown out of the water that we're not worthy or we're not worthy of more because we are pretty damn worthy and valuable. But I would love Tiffany for you to go on to talk about a little bit here is maybe describing how your life has changed so far. I mean, I know we're kind of actually pretty early on in our time together but how your life has changed and how you've already seen some changes in how it's impacting those around you in your life.

Tiffany: Yeah, so I'll just add to your point of I had that negative belief of my employer would never negotiate. And so once I changed my thoughts about that and learn how to negotiate. That was a game changer for me. It was also just a game changer of my job, my happiness and thinking about my staff, how to kind of work with them to help improve the culture and my office. So, that's kind of 1 area that I've been working on and it's been awesome to see the changes in my office staff. They're happier because of the things that I'm doing there to help kind of change the culture. And then the other aspect is really prior to coaching, I always felt angry about things that weren't done or weren't done how I liked it and changing my mindset on that was really helpful. Sorry, I have barking dogs.

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Arpita: It's all, it's all good. We all have life and barking dogs. Mine are actually quiet for some reason right now. They're normally going crazy too. Well, thank you. Manas, tell us how you would maybe describe how it's impacted your life now and how it's impacted the lives of those around you, closest to you.

Manas: So I guess I'd probably put this into, like, three buckets. So is personally, like, dealing around just how personal, it's like the sheer practice of medicine is actually really, really hard. A lot of us are perfectionists who come, I mean, perfectionist wannabes or maybe reformed perfectionists like Mahesh was saying. And you come and you realize the practice of medicine is you know, you, you're dealing with people and people's lives and minds and bodies and, and I mean, you define perfect anyway you want, I guess, but that's something that was coming to grips with and realizing, you know, I work at a trauma hospital and people can come in in pretty dire situations. And so, you that, you know, Michael was there for me, even like on an urgent notice and things like that which is, you know, I think there's a lot of responsibility to being a coach, which I think is often understated because it's a, it's a you know, you're dealing with physicians and the weightiness of their situations at times. But he was there for me when I needed him, which was you know, I'm not saying to drop your family thing or whatever. You know, it was on a timeline that made sense for both of us, but that was really helpful.

Second, family wise, I think it's nice because then, you know, my wife's not hearing about every single thing that's going on you know, my day like this or that or this. But you, you actually have a colleague outside, like I mentioned before, a colleague outside of your practice or your training or even your friends sometimes who you, you know, who you could talk to things about. Because some things you don't want to bring up with your work colleagues, some things you don't even want to bring up with your friends.

So and then number three, I think it's affected my, my work colleagues, like my team I work with, not just physicians, but other people, because I'll bring up the same concepts that I talk with Michael about in our sessions or from the podcast and so for example, like the word of the year, right? So I thought about this and I know we talked about this last time and I think I'm following Arpita's rules, but I chose the word gratitude this year. So to remember to be thankful for what you do have and not just focus on, you know, what needs to improve. But then I talked about that with my practice manager and she said, Oh, you know, we're going to do that for everybody. So we'll have everybody do that, like all the staff and everybody do that. So I thought, so that's, you know, it, it spills over into other parts of your life, too.

Arpita: That's a great idea. I might have to steal that from my office, Manas. Yes,

Manas: I stole your idea and then you can I'll steal it back.

Michael: No doubt Arpita is beaming that you just referenced her word of the year. No doubt about it.

Arpita: Oh, good. And again, not solicited at all.

Manas: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. There's no check in the mail or anything.

Arpita: Awesome. Awesome. Oh my gosh. So funny. Well, so Mahesh, I want you to also tell us how has it, and it's kind of interesting to hear it from you because you've kind of been through it and it's been a little while.

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So if you reflect back, what are some of the biggest changes that you maybe are still even keeping in place and how has that also impacted the others in your life?

Mahesh: I, I don't know that I can just concretely say that this is what happened and this is what happened, but there's a lot of overlap in what everyone is saying. So I was just thinking, I mean, I have the same word, spills into parenting, friends and patient is something that I made note of when I took the questions and looked at the questions and he's saying the same thing. Manas was saying the same thing about spilling over into, so I noticed it's spilling over. Arpita was, I know that I've texted you. I love the surprise text of listen to this podcast episode or something, or she'll read a nice poem and like send it to me or something. This reminded me of you. Those were the personal touches that made it more than it's just being in a program that you know, this is someone who's looking out for me that, you know, that was really thank you for that because, you know, that really made it special.

I think in my parenting, because that was something we discussed a lot. I've come to notice how I'm behaving with my children, especially my adult son. I mean, that's something that's a, you want to be very careful because. With, with older children and teenagers and older about what you say and how you treat them because they're in their, you know, developing years themselves. I don't want them to feel like, you know, younger ones I can call, give a cuddle and then she's like, fine. But the older one is like, okay, you know, they can separate from me a bit. So I, it helped me a lot with my relationship with my son.

At home, I think when I'm angry, it's more than noticing when I'm angry or when I'm hangry or when I'm, you know, when the anger is coming out of fear or things like that, I can recognize it. Before I would just roll with it. Now I can recognize and then pull back and I'll be like, okay, time out or, you know, I take a little bit of time. And so that has been helpful. And then at work, I was always a pretty calm person. I don't think anyone at work would think I would get angry. And I don't show it there, but that's what we all do, right? We have this little persona that we put on there, which is not necessarily a false persona, but it's just that we save it for the loved ones in our lives. and they get the not so beautiful parts of us sometimes. And I think that it has helped really with the family.

Arpita: Yeah, I think that's a very important point that you bring up the brunt of it gets to the people that we love the most when we're feeling anger or any of the other crappy, shitty emotions. And so for me, like, I remember specifically you talking some stories about your son and how you wanted to show up and, you know it also resonated with me because that was the main reason for me wanting to make a change in my life because I was showing up angry all the time with the people that I love the most at home. And so I think the, the point of this is recognizing where we are not being our best selves, you know, and putting into place actionable steps to help us be our best selves instead in those areas. And it's not that we're going to be perfect when that happens, but we are getting better. And each time we do have a misstep or a, I guess, regression into an old behavior. I hate saying regression. I always say that we're going up a spiral and it's just it's a different scenario with a little bit of a taste of the old version of it that triggers us to react the old way. But that's an opportunity for us to grow and learn and and apply what we're building with regards to our awareness to being better next time. So, well, thank you.

Mahesh: And I think also like giving myself grace, like not expecting too much of myself. I cannot see 27 patients, and lock every chart, and do everything, and come home, and make dinner, and be all available for the

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children. I just can't. So, like, what am I gonna do? I mean, is it, instead of getting angry, and then getting angry at myself, because I disappointed myself, it's more about, okay, maybe it's takeout tonight, and let me sit.

Arpita: Yes.

Michael: I also love that you guys are talking about how this spills over into the people around us. But the truth is, you guys spill over into our lives as well. Like Arpita was just mentioning, when, you know, when she hears people telling stories that resonate with her own story. And I know, you know, James, you and I have worked together for a minute. And a lot of times you are kind of talking about things that I'm like, Oh, yeah, right. I've totally experienced that also. And I never was able to kind of as concisely as you do, kind of summarize it. And we've talked about this before, about how you sometimes inspire some of the stuff that I end up putting out into the world. And so, like, for you, where have you seen the changes and the growth as you have kind of gone along your coaching journey, which has been for, you know, a couple of years.

James: Yeah. So I think, you know, for me, it was, you know, I think back to my version 1.0 was, you know, coming off of, you know, you take your MCAT, you take step one, two, three, get into residency, finish residency, take your board certification. And there's all these predefined goalposts that you have to hit. And then you enter independent practice and the only real goalposts out there are the ones that you set for yourself. And that was when I kind of moved into version 2.0 and I just kept, I didn't know where I wanted this goalposts and it was a moving target. I would be incredibly upset one day when my schedule wasn't full and then I'd have a full schedule the next day and be incredibly stressed out that I had a completely full schedule. I remember, you know, a few years ago on a Friday having a big surgery just cancel the morning of surgery or anesthesia canceled the morning of surgery. And I was just so frustrated. And now if that were to happen, it that's a gift. I mean, my weekend starts early now.

And so really where I'm at now, where I was struggling at kind of version 2.0 was with white space in that the only white space I had on my schedule was on Saturday and Sunday, and then that eroded time with family. And, and this was all even, you know, pre COVID and then into COVID. And so what I did was, and Michael was really instrumental in helping me see this, was just create some white space. And so I created some white space in the middle of the week, and the benefit has been tremendous. I now I pick my kids up at school. I'll meet my wife for lunch. I will, you know, go golfing, do something, a hobby that I enjoy that I would not have done otherwise. And just knowing that I have this buffer room there has really spilled over, obviously, into my family and that they love it. They're surprised when I pick them up at school one day or my wife, when I you know, ask her if she wants to do lunch in the week. It's also spilled over obviously into my coworkers and that they now have a little bit of breathing room in the middle of the week. And I think I'm a better physician, you know, to my patients as a result of it.

So I think where I'm at now is, is much, much more balanced, but I think where the coaching was really instrumental was getting me to that point to say, it's okay to scale back or to rearrange your scheduling and an interesting thing happened. And I think this is really the benefit of physician coaching is Michael is able to kind of understand and say, listen, what's going to happen is your other days of the week are just going to become much, much more full and much, much more efficient. And that's really what you want. And, you know, I don't think a non physician coach would be able to, you know, take off their physician hat and say, here's my experience with this. And so I think the experience part that Michael was just mentioning is, is really

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a two way street. Michael is a great coach and, at times is also able to take off his hat and say, as a physician you know, here's, here's what I did and here's why I think it would work. And here's a strategy that you might want to try.

Arpita: I think those are excellent little tips. I mean, because that's, that's the, I guess, the humanness of these interactions that we can bring the experiences that we've had to our clients as well, and they get to pick and choose which ones they want to take on for themselves, which ones are going to be applicable and work for them and which ones are not. And even if their ideas or thoughts that may not work for them, oftentimes it's a little bit of a spark to get them thinking about other ways that it could potentially be molded to work for them.

So, and I think that's really the whole point of how coaching works is we're here to kind of be a sounding board to hear what you're saying and then really question it with like some uncomfortable questions sometimes to make you guys think hard about, is this really what I want? Is this really in line with what I want to create in my life? And if not, how do I want to be intentional about changing it? What can I do? Even if it's just small little shifts here and there. And I think one of the biggest things that I've really enjoyed doing with my, my clients is that, that gratitude practice, because our brains always want to look at all the shit and the crappiness that's going on. It's human nature to do that, to keep ourselves protected and safe and in the best position we can be. And so we don't spend any time, most of us don't spend any time really basking in the good of what we do have in life each day. And even if it's small wins. It matters because it gives the brain the ability to see that there is good as well.

Michael: And then to add, like, you guys also get the benefit of the work that we have done, right? So a lot of times when I'm coaching, I've had to ask myself these same questions, right? I remember, right? I also, as a proceduralist, You know, I don't get a lunch break, right? Everybody else in my room gets a lunch break. And until I found coaching, I would do procedures from 7 30 in the morning until 5 p. m. without a single break. And I remember going through my own coaching process. And realizing, like, I could give myself 30 minutes to eat food in the middle of the day, which, you know, other people would just refer to as lunch. But I, and I actually had to go to bat to get that 30 minutes. I had, you know, managers and people telling me, like, no this is going to make you more inefficient, this is going to cause all kinds of staffing issues. And I had to figure out for myself, how do I show up in this situation? How do I show up knowing that I'm going to be making fewer RVUs so that I can put food in my face and, and be happier during my day? And so it is very much a two way street where we get to kind of not only ask you important questions, but also let you in on some of the experiences that we've had asking ourselves these same questions.

Manas: Something that I thought that was really interesting was that, you know, there are preconceived notions that we have in our head, or like beliefs that we have, like, I didn't even know you could do that, but I'm just learning now that you can carve out space for lunch. If that's important to you. So there's these things that you take as truth about how we practice medicine that and Michael has told me this, he said, Oh, is that true? Do you actually feel that way? And he'll ask it as a question. I said, well, I guess that doesn't have to be true. So that's what I think is interesting about this process.

Arpita: And it's unlearning these habits that have been ingrained in us because we were trained and experienced life a certain way during med school and residency and fellowship and all those things. You know, we were, we were always trained that we celebrate ourselves or take care of ourselves last. The patient comes

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first, the families come first. And so we have this kind of distorted view that this is what life is supposed to look like even after we're done with training. And that's just like, so false. Right? If we don't put ourselves first to take care of ourselves first to refill our cups. In whichever way we're choosing to, we are only hurting ourselves and the people that we love the most. And so when you're talking about lunch, Michael Hersh, I mean, it's the same thing with my husband in the office. Like, he literally, we own the office, but we literally had him running all day. He'd run over. He'd be scarfing down food and then trying to still see patients and multitask. And when we start to recognize that, you know what, this is really unhealthy for us, for our own sustainability, we can start to make those shifts. And so now he says 30 minutes, nobody bother me. My door is shut. I'm eating and all I'm doing is eating. And that was a huge shift. It sounds like such a small thing, but it's a huge shift for physicians to do that, to say no. I'm out. Nobody can talk to me right now because we always want to keep giving and always feel like we have this pressure that we have to always be working and serving others. But we have to serve ourselves first. So,

Michael: And then as Manas was, was alluding to, we start setting examples for the people that work around us, right? So I was the first person to demand like a 30 minute lunch break. And then before I knew it, all of the other endoscopists started, not all of them, but a lot of them, started putting 30 minute blocks into their schedule to eat. And so it just goes to questioning those beliefs that we have. Is it true that I don't get 30 minutes to eat lunch? And what if I could?

Arpita: Right. Exactly. So I would love to ask you guys, what you feel would be the biggest, biggest takeaway that you've gotten out of experience, the experience you've had with coaching in terms of how your life has improved or a big aha moment that you had tell us that and Mahesh, I'll start with you.

Mahesh: Okay, so biggest takeaway. I think the biggest takeaway for me is, like I said before that my thoughts are not me. Like, I, I can change my thoughts and I have to help myself in order to be able to help everyone else because I want to. I want to do that for my family. I want to do that at work. I want to do that for my patients. And in order to be able to heal other people, I have to heal myself first and that way of like asking myself, is it true? Just looking at my thoughts. And then the other thing is knowing that I'm human and this is a journey. And I mean, it's not going to get better. This is constant work. Watching and improving is going to be constant work. That's probably what I got from coaching, just not identifying with whatever was going on inside my head all the time.

Arpita: So, so true. So amazing. Cause I think that was one of the biggest things that I took away too, is that I finally had awareness of how little awareness I had before. And that was like the biggest game changer, like, Oh, holy shit. I can actually think and see, be the observer of what's going on in my brain and then decide if I really want to keep going that way. So that's, that's powerful. How about you, James?

James: So I think that, you know, Michael and I recently had like a aha moment that I discovered, and it was this awareness. I mean, one of the earliest coaching calls I had with Michael was on this scarcity mindset as it related to money. And at the time you know, much like you know, Michael alluded to earlier, when he had entered practice, it was, I'm just going to grind this out, work my ass off and just basically hit the ejector button when I'm financially independent. And I kind of actually came into coaching with Michael in that mindset. And when we discovered kind of the why, I didn't really know the why. I never really answered the why. We're putting the thought work to the why. And that was coming from the scarcity mentality. And then, you know,

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fast forward a couple of years and countless coaching sessions later, there was a different theme of this exact scarcity mindset that just kind of came up and, and it was on a coaching call a couple of weeks ago where, you know, it was the proverbial light bulb went off and I said, aha, this is you know, Michael, you know what this is like? This is just like, and then, and he, he kind of chuckled and said, you know, you're absolutely right.

And so I didn't have that insight before and I knew that there was kind of something wrong, but I didn't really know, and maybe I didn't actually know that there was something wrong. And a depressed person knows that they're depressed because they have insight and you know, a psychotic person doesn't know that they're psychotic always. And so I didn't really have that insight, and I didn't really think anything was wrong. And now I can kind of sense when something's not quite right. And it's, I have a better job being able to put my finger on it. So yeah, that was like one of my proudest getting coach moments was, was that exact moment was like, wait a minute, we've, we've talked about this before.

Michael: it really is amazing. Cause I think it happens to all of us. If you've done coaching long enough, these issues that, that we have, they pop up and like they just, there's just a slight different flavor to it and starting to recognize like, oh, this is that, I've done this before and I know how to get myself out of it. It really is amazing and it just goes to show how deep seeded some of these, right? I know I very much have to combat my scarcity mindset. Right? It has to be intentional, and it is incredible all of the different ways it kind of seeps into my life. And you have to be very curious and suspicious of yourself. Why, why am I feeling this? Why is this coming up for me? Oh, I know what this is. I've done this before. So, so kudos to you and bravo, cause, right, cause you were able to see it. And that is the awareness piece that we are always talking about. It's so important.

Arpita: And Manas, I'll let you go next with regards to how you feel like the biggest takeaway aha moment you've had.

Manas: Probably the biggest takeaway to date from my coaching experience that I can actually like, you know, perceive there's probably some subconscious things going on, that many of the problems and stress of what we do day to day are not personal problems. The thing is you know, when I just, you know, finished my training and fellowship, we learned to just, you know, when you're in that position, you just figure out how to get things done. You get things done no matter what system you're working in and what hurdles, like getting the patient home with home care, you know, as an example.

But my biggest takeaway is that there are systematic problems inherent to how we do things and, you know, how we finance medicine, how we carry out medicine. And when I say we, I mean just you know, healthcare as the way the United States has been doing it recently. And these are factors that are bigger than any individual. And so you just do the best you can and then just try to be intentional and just, you know, enjoy that moment you have with the patient, right? Enjoy that moment that you have in the care of the patient. And, you know enjoy that moment that you're having when you're working with your MA and just try to live each day with intentionality so that you can still derive satisfaction from the work the work and the lifestyle and the profession that you've chosen so that you don't get hung up on the, the things that you don't have control over.

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Michael: And I'll open it up to one last question. Anybody that wants to answer it, or if everybody wants to answer it, you know, if there's somebody out there that is we'll call it coaching curious is there any words of wisdom or advice that you would recommend to those people? Is there anything that you would say to somebody who is wondering about coaching but isn't quite sure it's right for them?

Mahesh: I think it's hard to explain to someone exactly, we can say all these things, but, you know, they won't know until they try it. So I would be like, don't knock it until you've tried it, try it and then see if it works for you. And I'm sure it will.

James: I would just say, you know, we tell patients all the time, like, Oh, are you interested in quitting smoking? There's help out there. Or are you feeling depressed? There's help out there, but we don't actually tell them what the help is. And we just know that there is proverbial help. And I think, you know, for me, it's for a physician out there that is just kind of need some direction, I guess, to figure out their own direction. And someone that they need to talk to and they don't want it to be their spouse. They don't want it to be some practice administrator. They don't want it to be their senior partner. And they've already bounced enough ideas off of the former co resident. You know, I think coaching is really really for them and trying to put all of the professional and domestic and emotional pieces you know, back in place.

Manas: And I'll just add that just start asking, you know, colleagues around you. Cause chances are maybe they're a closet coachie, you know, and they're not open about it. And so I mean, I'm pretty open about it with them at my work, but maybe, you know, you'd be surprised at how it's sort of growing. And the second thing that I want to add is that you know, you can do it like a trial session often a lot of the time and just to see if it's right for you. So if you're, you know, the financial thing is a consideration, if it's, you know, the cost benefit trade outs worth it for you. And then the 3rd thing is that a lot of the times it is virtual, so you can do it from the convenience of, you know, even while, you know, you're still at work, you're still at the hospital, or, you know, you're on call, like, we've done sessions while I'm on call, and Michael's been very understanding when I get paged by, you know, somebody who's trying to transfer a patient, another hospital trying to transfer a patient, which has been really nice. And so the fourth thing I want to add is that it really does offload the burden that not, I don't want to say burden, but necessarily like you talking to other loved ones in your life and other, you know, it really creates that space for you to focus on family with your family, focus on being a dad when you're with your kids, focus on trying to be a good spouse with their spouse and not just saying, ah, you know, this happened or that happened today.

Michael: Well, I just want to take a moment to circle back on gratitude and how thankful Arpita and I are for all of you for coming here today, for sharing your stories, for being vulnerable. We appreciate all of you more than you could possibly know. And so just a very sincere and warm thank you for being here, for sharing your story.

Arpita: thank you. And I'll also add just the biggest gratitude is the fact that you guys trusted the process and trusted it for yourself because that's what led to the ability for you to even be here today. So, thank you for having the open mind to consider this for yourself and and make some changes that suited you in a way that made you and hopefully have gotten you to where you want to be today, too, and as we keep moving. So, but yes, thanks for sharing your stories and your experiences. And I hope our audience will get to see some of the benefits of why this is so important.

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Michael: And, and if you're listening, if you're in our audience and you're listening and you are Coaching Curious, take a chance, book one of those free sessions that Manas was talking about because there's nothing to lose. And, who knows, this just might be the answer you've been looking for.

Arpita: Awesome. Well, thanks guys, and we appreciate your time, and we will see you hopefully soon.

Michael: Thank you again so much, and see everybody next time on the next episode of Doctors Living Deliberately. Take care. Bye.