

# Ep #100: Coach brain vs. human brain

## Full Episode Transcript



With Your Host

**Simone Grace Seol**

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Welcome to Joyful Marketing! A podcast that teaches you how to get your life coaching practice fully booked without having to pay for ads, buying Instagram followers, or complicated sales funnels. It's not rocket science and you can do it, too. Here's your host, Simone Seol!

Hey friends. What's going on? Today I would like to tell you about the difference between your coach brain and your human brain. Now, think about it. What I always say is it's not that you don't know what to do. It's that your brain gets in the way of you showing up to talk about your offer and to help people and to market.

And we all have times when our brains are sabotaging us and our brains don't want to make us do things, or our brains make us show up from a less powerful place than we could be in. And so if we could just shorten the time when our brains are essentially being lying assholes, then we could just go back faster and faster to just doing the work, the more we can be effective in marketing.

There really are no secrets. There are no genius hacks. It's just showing up, telling people about our work, and making offers to help them. And the less that can get in the way of that, the better our results, the more people we can help. And really guys, this is one of the top things that sap our time, sap our energy, sap us of the brilliance that we naturally have as coaches.

Alright, so coach brain versus human brain. Now, I really want you to literally imagine yourself having two different brains. So one is your coach brain, where you have studied and trained and practiced and you've worked with people and you've practiced problem solving and you know how to have conversations and you know how to give insights, you know how to - depending on your specialty or your niche, you might have special expertise when it comes to certain subject matter things.

And when somebody in front of you has a problem, you know how to go in and help them. Depending on what they say, depending on your experience. It might be like, oh yeah, I've seen that problem a million times, I know how to coach them on it, I know how to help people process their

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feelings, I know how to help people talk to themselves in a more compassionate way, I know how to help people separate their thoughts, opinions, and assumptions from what is the reality. I can help people, et cetera, et cetera.

You can just go on about things that you just know how to do because you have trained your brain to be able to do it under any kind of circumstance. You just know. So pretend you're a nurse and you're also human. You're a nurse human.

Let's say you met your boyfriend at a cafe and he broke up with you. It was totally out of left field. You did not see it coming, boyfriend now says something bullshit like it's not you, it's me. You're devastated, you storm out of the coffee shop, you're sobbing, super upset.

And then as you're just walking on the street in that state, being super upset, you see a commotion on the other side of the street and you look to see what's happening, and then there's somebody on the ground bleeding and writhing and moaning. And they are people gathering around like, oh my gosh, should we call 911, what's happening?

And then in that moment, you cross the street, you go to see what's happening, and then guess what happens? You are going to kick into being a nurse. You're going to be like, alright everybody, stand back, I'm a nurse, I know how to help.

And then you're going to have somebody call 911, while 911 is on their way or while an ambulance is on the way I suppose, you're going to know how to help that person. Alright, I'm not a nurse. I haven't watched enough medical dramas to know exactly how you help somebody in that situation. I would be useless.

But we got to first stop the bleeding. And the nurse in you is just going to know what to do. The nurse in you is going to take command of the situation and you're going to know how to help them until the ambulance comes.

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So I want you to imagine that scenario. You could be super heartbroken, you could be sad, you could be afraid, you could be forlorn, you could be all of these things, but if you're a nurse, you went through nursing school, you went through years of training as a nurse that if you have someone who is hurt in front of you, you're going to just know what to do, how to help.

Now, you being the nurse is like you being the coach. That was not a great sentence, but think of your coaching skills like that too. It's like, I don't care how badly maybe your boyfriend cheated on you with your best friend before he broke up with you. It's the worst soap opera situation ever. You're devastated, but then when there's somebody bleeding on the ground, you're going to know how to help them because you're a nurse.

You might be like, sad while you're helping them, but you're going to know how to help them. And that person is going to be so glad that you were the one walking on the other side of the street to be there, to be able to help them. So think about it like that. You're the nurse.

No matter what you're feeling, somebody in front of you needs help, you're going to know what to do. That's your coach brain. The important thing to know about your coach brain is that once you have developed a certain area of your coach brain, once you have it, it's never going to go back to not having it.

Once you have strengthened your coach brain to a certain extent, it's impossible to unstrengthen it. I hate to use this example because it's so cliché but it really is like riding a bike. You just get on the bike and your body's like, it's like muscle memory.

Think of your coaching skills really as muscle memory because you developed it with real life practice, with real life training. And let's say you are a relatively newly certified or newly trained coach and you're saying, hey, but Simone, I don't have years of coaching people, I don't have years of coaching a practice. I'm all new to this.

I would counter and say yeah, you might just be freshly certified, but it doesn't mean you haven't had so many conversations with people over the

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course of your lifetime where you were helping them. I haven't met one single life coach, and I've met lots of life coaches, trust me.

I haven't met one single coach who hasn't been already helping people over the course of their lives. Their entire lives they've been helping people. Just life coaching happens to be this one particular modality, one particular container that they're calling it coaching but they've been having helping conversations their entire lives, they know how to help. You know how to have helping conversations. That's what a coach does.

My colleague Maggie Reyes says this wonderful thing that I always think about, which is that an expanded mind can't shrink back to its original size. I love that quote so much. I don't know if she got this from somewhere else. I think it might be a Maggie-ism, but it's a great quote. An expanded mind can't shrink back to its original size.

You can't lose your life coaching brain. Once you know how to coach, you just know how to coach. It's like riding a bike because it comes from your muscle memory of having helped people, from having had tons of helping conversations.

Now, the other part of your brain, super important, the other part of your brain is your human brain. It's your human brain that has human things happen to it. That means a human brain is always going to experience pain, a human brain is going to experience vulnerability, anxiety, fear, anger, immaturity, pettiness, you name it.

A human brain's going to human brain. I don't know how else to put it. Let's say you were driving and then you just flipped off a random other driver on the road because road rage got the better of you. That wasn't coming from your coach brain. That came from your human brain where you're like, F you.

Or you just snapped at your kid and you yelled at them after you taught your masterclass on calming yourself. You snapping at your kids didn't come from your coach brain. It came from your human brain. COVID hit and lots of coaches found themselves really deeply afraid and feeling

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deeply vulnerable about their lives, about the most basic things that they were taking for granted, and a lot of them found themselves kind of a nervous wreck and in a meltdown.

You know what was creating that response? Their human brains. Now, I'm saying all of this to convey the point - really the point is that all of this that I just described is supposed to be happening. No life coach doesn't not get to have a human brain.

All of us have human brains that one, is going to experience lots of discomfort and all of the what we call "negative" emotions that we'd rather not feel, the not fun emotions that we're not going to feel. There is allotted quota of unpleasant, painful, scary experiences in life that not one of us is immune from.

We can't opt out of it. We all have to experience some of it. I know for a fact that I'm going to be feeling a certain amount of grief in my life because guess what, I am a human being who has a heart. I care about people, I love people, and I'm going to have people that I love die. Fact of life.

There's going to be grief. There's going to be heartbreak, there's going to be situations, things, whatever, people that I love that I'm going to have to say goodbye to that's going to hurt profoundly. Because I am a human being, there are times when I am going to feel jealous. There are times I'm when I'm going to feel petty.

I used the road rage example like it was somebody else's example, but really it was my example. I have really bad road rage. You do not want to be in the same car as me when I'm driving in Korea. It gets really bad.

And I started thinking about coach brain versus human brain because I just spent the weekend with my mom. We went on a mother-daughter getaway and we checked ourselves in to a five-star hotel and I really wanted to take her because she was having some health scares.

My mom is in her mid-60s and she just went to the doctor and she's getting tested for something. And we don't know anything yet, but it could be

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something not fun. And she was scared, and we were due for a kind of - my mom and I hang out, and we were due for a mother-daughter thing.

And I said, mom, let's get your mind off of this, I'll coach you on whatever's on your mind and we'll just enjoy, we'll get away, we'll be at this hotel, eat beautiful food and take walks, go get massages, we'll have a nice weekend together.

And she loves hanging out with me so she was like, yay, best idea ever. And we spent those three days, I was just basically coaching her and being a good daughter, by which I mean really being her friend. We have developed a friendship over the years that wasn't really there when I was a kid.

But now we're really adult friends and it feels really wonderful. And she really asked me to coach her because she had so much fear of her future. She had a lot of anxiety in her personal life and she said, hey, this coaching thing, let's give it a try, I want you to help me. So I did.

So when we weren't just enjoying being at that nice place, I was teaching her how to name and feel and process emotions. I was teaching her emotional responsibility. I was teaching her all of these things, how to decouple all of your thoughts from what is and all of this.

And guess what, she loved all of it so much. We bought a little notebook for her on this trip where she wrote down everything she learned about self-coaching and how to do models by yourself. And she was an excellent student and a client.

And at the end of the weekend, she said I feel like you vacuum sucked all of the anxiety out of my brain, I feel so peaceful, I feel free and light in a way that I haven't in a long time. And it was beautiful. And those were the times when I was like, the most gratified to be a life coach.

Because I'm a business coach and a marketing coach and I sometimes forget that just plain old life coaching just for your daily thoughts and emotions, for you to just feel better being alive as a human being is a



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miraculous thing that saved my life and it's going to save the remainder of my mom's life.

It's going to save our experience of being alive. It's beautiful. And so the reason I'm telling you this story is because I want to let you in on the reality of what it's like to be human is that I was at this five-star hotel, having these beautiful experiences with my mom, whom I love so much. I was coaching her the whole time and guess what, for the three days that I was there with her, somehow my brain decided to be an asshole.

I was in a crazy bout of anxiety nonstop. It wasn't about anything. It was just like, one of those times when just a cloud of anxiety descended upon me about nothing in particular. And I just felt really bad the whole time.

I didn't really show it or talk about it because I didn't really need to. And the difference between before and now is before when I felt really bad and I felt these clouds of anxiety pass through me, that's what it feels like, I used to make it mean that something has gone terribly wrong.

I used to burrow into and get lost in it. And now what I do is I just let myself feel it. I just let myself be in the anxiety, knowing that it's not going to last forever. And I know that sometimes it's just, I don't know, hormones. Who knows what it is?

But I have experienced the reality of something wonderful happening on the outside and on the inside feeling kind of like a wreck. And just the whole time I was just not feeling good. I just felt bad the entire three-day weekend. This kind of thing happens, I don't want to say often, because it used to happen a lot more often - it happens once in a while for sure.

This is a recurring thing in my life where I am just crazy anxious but for no apparent reason for days. Sometimes I'm crazy anxious for very specific reasons for days. And it's important for me to tell you this because it's important for me to tell you that I have a human brain who sometimes when I describe these states, it doesn't actually help me to try to self-coach to try to get out of it.



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Less I try to get out of it, the better it is, the faster it passes, the more I process it better. So I was thinking about the paradox of me being in this anxious state and then helping my mom at the same time. Because you better believe I was anxious as fuck, and you also better believe that I was really helping my mom.

Because when she talks and says I'm so scared that I'm going to get sick, I'm so scared about my future, I know how to coach her on those thoughts. Because why? I have my coach brain intact. I can have that coaching conversation where I can point out her thoughts to her. We could run the model, I could help her feel her feelings.

All of that, it's there. It doesn't go away. It doesn't diminish. And I've got to be honest. Sometimes when I'm just really feeling bad, over the weekend a couple of times when she would say okay, now that we've eaten this beautiful lunch, let's coach again.

And all I wanted to do was just kind of lay in bed and play Candy Crush because I was anxious and I didn't feel like this confident let me help you, it'll be so great, I did have to kind of take a few deep breaths and remind myself okay, I can do this. I'm a coach, I know how to do this. I did have to do that a few times.

I had to remind myself. I had to get in the zone a little bit. I had to okay, remember, I know how to coach. But then once I started coaching, I did know how to coach. It was in me. And it just reminded me of the importance of remembering that both my human brain and my coach brain are valid. The two don't cancel each other out.

I get to have both. I get to live the reality of my human brain and not resist it and give myself grace and love for my human brain and not let my coach brain rust. If I just checked out on coaching my mom because I felt anxious, then she wouldn't have been helped the way that she really has been.

Her life was transformed over this past weekend. So I have coached my clients on what to do when they are going through something in their

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personal lives and they're just angry all the time. How am I supposed to coach when I'm angry all the time?

Well guess what, the part that's angry is your human brain. You get to have your human brain and show up with both your human brain and your coach brain to your coaching calls when you serve your clients. And you just get to coach them using your coach brain while your human brain's angry.

You really can do that, I promise you. And the big mistake that so many of us make, that I used to make a lot in the past is I used to think that I needed to get rid of my human brain or scrub my human brain of its imperfections and its moods and its weaknesses. That's what I thought it was. "Weaknesses," and to be able to show up as a perfect avatar of the transformative power of coaching when I am coaching my clients, when I am marketing.

And I realized that's all bullshit. We're not supposed to show up as anything other than the human being that we are, who also have our coaching brains intact. The part that helps is the coaching brain. The part that shows up is the human brain.

And contrary to what you might assume, clients hire us for the human beings that we are. They don't want to hire us because we're perfect and because we're like robots who, I don't know, have everything figured out perfectly and never experience negative emotion and never have meltdowns and never are severely anxious for days and never have their lives be messy and their emotional lives be confusing and messy and turbulent and all of that.

They hire us because they trust us to be human. I don't want to work with a coach who is perfect. I don't want to work with a coach who somehow thinks that they have transcended their humanity. I want to work with a coach who is deeply in their humanity, deeply accepting of their humanity, and who know how to skillfully and gracefully go through life with their full humanity so that they can teach me how to do the same.

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Because I can tell you, I'm just speaking for myself, that my humanity is never going to go away, which is a very nice way of saying my life is always going to have some darkness. It's always going to have some messiness, it's always going to have sides to it that aren't angelic, positive rainbows and daisies.

And that's just the nature of life in general, and then there's also the nature of growth. We life coaches, we are suckers for transformation, for growth, for self-development. We just love evolving. I haven't met a single life coach who doesn't.

And because we're always wanting to evolve, because we're always wanting to grow, we're going to always be willingly putting ourselves in the path of discomfort. That means that sometimes after we resolve one layer of mind stuff, we go to the next level and work on resolving the next level of stuff.

Or we think we have healed an old layer of trauma, only to find out that there's a whole new fresh layer of trauma that you never even knew was there, but boom, hello, here I am, got to deal with me now, got to heal this shit.

And life, the minute that all of this healing and coaching and developing, when all of this is over is when you're going to die, which is another way to say for as long as you are living, you are going to be in the discomfort of growth. You're going to be in the reality of being human where you come face to face with our mortality, with our fragility, with our vulnerability that we have as these animals walking on planet earth. That's what we are.

And trying to navigate life with all of our "imperfections" intact. This is what we have. That is the truth. The more you honor the reality of your human brain, I think that actually feels into the wisdom of your coaching brain. The more you resist your own humanity and your human emotions and the messiness and the darkness of being human, I think you're depriving your coach brain of growth.

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Learning all the tools and learning all the concepts to become a coach is one thing, but I think the depth of insight and the - it's kind of funny to say this about myself but I really believe that I'm able to coach at a soulful level. I can truly see people at a deep level and love them and help them in a soulful way 100% because of all the shit that I've been through in my life and survived.

I have been through trauma. I have been through abuse. I have been through divorce. I have been through addiction. I've been through severe depression. I have been through suicide ideation. I'm saying this only to convey to you that it's my experience of my own humanity that I didn't skip over experiencing for favor of some kind of spiritual bypassing.

That has what has given me the wisdom and the depth with which to serve my clients so much better. So what if you trusted that embracing making space for and allowing your human brain is not only going to make you a better coach, it's not only going to give you a better coach brain, but it's also going to make you a better marketer.

That's what I really want to say. I truly believe that your humanity makes you a better marketer. We're often primed to think the opposite, to think that if you want to be a good marketer, you have to be in a certain mode all the time where you know the perfect things to say and you are always believing in your own value 100%, and you're 100% confident.

And I don't know, maybe if you are a multinational corporation selling detergent, maybe that's what you need to be. But we're selling life coaching. We are selling this whole thing where you teach people how to do life better. I don't think that transcending your own humanity sets a good example for other people to love their own humanity.

So this is what I fold into what I talk about so often about just being honest with your people, being transparent, being vulnerable. Not from a place of wanting to spread your pain, but from the place of modeling what it's like to not be afraid of your own humanity. Modeling what it's like to be present

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with your work and to be present with the way you serve the world, even when you're not feeling 100% like your feet are on solid ground.

That is the nature of being alive. So this is what I want you to leave the podcast knowing is that you're never not going to have a human brain until the day you die. Hopefully everybody listening, you don't die for a really long time. You all live really long, healthy lives.

So that is a long, long way in the future. So when you feel some kind of mind drama, something is preventing you from wanting to show up and market and wanting to tell people about what you do and make offers and serve people, ask yourself, is there an actual problem or am I having a human brain?

Am I just being human today? Am I having human problems or is it something else? And I can tell you, it's 99% of the time, you're just having human brain problems. I don't even know what the remaining 1% would be. Just ask yourself, is this me being a human being problem or something else problem? It's always going to be the human being problem.

And from that place, I want you to remind yourself, hey, I am allowed to be 100% human and in every moment that I'm being human, I am also 100% a coach. I 100% always have my coaching brain intact. It might sometimes feel harder to access.

Now, that's just a thought. It feels harder to access, I feel like I've forgotten it all. A lot of coaches tell me that their brains give them these thoughts. I mean, my brain sometimes does too. And that's your human brain lying to you, saying that you don't know how to coach, you've receded or regressed and you're too much of a mess to help other people figure out their problems.

Remember the image of the nurse getting broken up with and then crying and finding that person bleeding on the street. The nurse knows what to do because they're a nurse. It's been drilled into her muscle memory and her brain and the grooves of her neural pathways in her brain. She knows how

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to bandage up a bleeding person. You know how to help somebody with mental, emotional pain. You're a life coach. That's never going to go away.

Paradox and the beauty of having both. Coach brain, human brain. You've got both. I love you. You are the superhero that we need to model to all of our clients how to both exist in the zone of our brilliance, zone of our skills and genius, while keeping our humanity soft and supple and open to experience whatever life or the universe or god has in store for us to experience and grow through.

Alright my friends, that's my message to you. I'll talk to you next week.

Hey, if you want a shot of fresh inspiration and actionable tips to improve your marketing every single week in your inbox you'd better get on my email list. Sign up to receive my free e-book called *20 Unsolicited Copy Tips*. It's been known to get people to come out of the woodwork and ask to work with you. So get on that. Link in the show notes, and I'll see you in your inbox next time.