

Ep #203: Client-Centered Scaling with Samantha Siffring

Full Episode Transcript



With Your Host

Simone Grace Seol

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Welcome to *Joyful Marketing!* I'm Simone Seol, and I teach you how to get your life coaching practice fully booked without having to pay for ads, buy Instagram followers, or complicated sales funnels. It's not rocket science, and you can do it too. Listen on to find out how.

Simone Seol: Hey everybody, depending on where you're listening from, you're listening to either the *Joyful Marketing* podcast with Simone Seol or

Samantha Siffring: *Online Business Building Mamas* with Samantha Siffring.

Simone: Yeay. And either way, we're bringing you an amazing conversation today. I mean, when do you get to get two, multiple seven-figure coaches together and talk all about scaling? And my hope is that we are going to talk about scaling, and answer all the questions I feel like are not really being, like asked out loud. Because people are scared to, people are just talking amongst themselves in hush-hush tones. And, Samantha and I are here to change that today. Right?

Samantha: Yes, absolutely. I can't wait for this. We have an amazing like peek into our secrets and philosophies and all of that. I can't wait.

Simone: That's right. And I think that if you are in a stage where you might be nowhere close to scaling your business yet, right, you might just be getting your business started. And the idea of scaling your business just feels like it's a million miles away. Can you even do that? Or, you might be in a place where you're actually tactically making the moves to scale.

And if you're in the earlier camp, I know that a lot of what kind of prevents entrepreneurs from getting started and really going full steam, putting all the juice on their businesses, is this fear of like, how far can I even take this? Do I have to build everything with my blood, sweat and tears all the way? And if so, then oh, my gosh, do I even want to really want to do this?

So, even if you're not close to scale, in terms of your numbers, how you think about what's possible in the future can really impact how you show up today. Right, Samantha?

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Samantha: I totally agree. I love how you keep saying right. I agree because I think that there's a lot of people who slow down their growth, because they're afraid of that unknown, or like what they've made up scaling has to look like. So, I think this will be super helpful for people who aren't even in that phase yet, to not have fear about the future and actually have some like, really clear ideas of how they could do it, in a way that feels super true to them.

Simone: 100%. And, if you are in a stage where you are making moves to scale, then we want to answer all of probably your most pressing questions about how to do it in a way that really feels good to you and feels even better for your clients.

And my friends, it's possible. And before, Samantha has a lot to say, and I'm dying to hear from her because she's absolutely brilliant at this. But I want to tell you that Samantha and I are friends and we have really grown our businesses side by side since we were making less than like, \$50,000 a year. Right?

Samantha: Yeah, I feel like we were like making like, four figure month, like \$4,000 a month or something like that, when we first met.

Simone: That was really exciting for me. I don't know about you.

Samantha: Totally. It was. I actually, I think it was when I made \$4,000 a month, because that was like a 50k year if I did that every month. That was like the moment where I was like, now I don't have to get a job when my youngest goes to kindergarten and like, I could just do this as my job. So, I agree. That was huge.

Simone: I remember my first like, I think it was like \$3,500 month. I remember feeling like I made it. Like this is proof that I have a real business. And for some reason, you know, I was like, now I'm in the multiple four-figures like \$3,000 oh, my gosh. And I remember feeling so proud of myself, so elated.

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And very soon after that is when I met Samantha, and we really have been sort of parallel tracks, in the sense that we made a lot of the pivotal business decisions, for our each of our businesses, sort of alongside each other. And, we talked about a lot of it on the way. And, oh my goodness, we have learned so much by trial and error, and we can't wait to just dive in.

Okay, so enough talking about that. Let's dive in. So, I'm going to start with this question. And I'm going to hear Samantha's take, and then we're going to talk about it. Here's something that a lot of people have a fear of, which is, scaling is going to mean that it's going to be just more and more of their time, and more and more of their energy being leached out.

Or, you're going to have to manage a huge team, and that's going to be like, not fun and exhausting for you. Or, when you think about taking yourself out of it and having bigger, you know, bigger client load, more money, bigger programs, without as much of your time and involvement, then you have the opposite fear of, oh my gosh, what if I'm just absent and I ended up under delivering and my people are like, where's the coach? And, they feel scammed, frankly, right.

So, it's like caught between either hustle myself out, die of exhaustion, having a giant business, doing a bunch of things I hate. Or, I'm out enjoying my life, but all my clients are mad at me.

Samantha: Yes.

Simone: So, what is the third way? Does it exist?

Samantha: The third way does exist. And, I think the third way is so much bigger maybe than we realize, I think it's so easy to have this, like all-or-nothing thinking with scaling. And the third way, is how I think so many businesses probably are operating, we just aren't really seeing that.

So, I think that there's like a few different things that facilitate finding a third way. And something that I think is really important that I tell my clients, like thinking about, like, your way to scale, is that it's going to be different than

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other people's. So much of this is really figuring out what you want. And the way you want to do things.

Like how you had mentioned, like having this huge team that's exhausting. It doesn't have to be like that. So, anything that you think might be an obstacle, this is totally something that can be solved. So, these are kind of like the different areas that you want to be working on, to do your scaling in this way that is really aligned with you, really amazing for your clients.

The first thing is being really clear on your values. So, the way that I think about values are that it's like, the ideals. Like the ideals you have, the things that are important to you, kind of like the overall vibe of the business.

And so much of that is already built in likely, in everyone's business. Even if somebody's listening, and they're the only person in their business. This is probably already like a culture that they have with themselves.

So, in my business, they're always evolving. Like, when I was like making notes for this, I was like; oh, here's my top three values. But I feel like new things have cropped up for us recently. But inclusive, fun, and resourceful. Those are like our team values. That's how we operate. That's like our guiding ideals I guess, of like how we approach the business. So, that's one piece of it; having super clear values.

Simone: Can I chime in and say what I think mine are? I'm thinking about it just on the spot, but for me, definitely sovereignty, joy, and I don't know, maybe like, permission, or something like that. Right? And, when you look at Samantha's business, when you look at her marketing, you're going to see her three... What were your three, again?

Samantha: Inclusive, fun, and resourceful.

Simone: Okay, so you're going to see those values reflected. And when you see my business, hopefully you see my values reflected. And I think how this works... For example, sovereignty is a really big part of my business. And I even named my mastermind, the Sovereign Business

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Mastermind. And this means that I have a huge emphasis on everybody being in their own power.

So that means, if you try to give me your power, and say, “Hey, Simone, can you tell me what to do? And, tell me what's best for me?” I will lovingly take the power that you gave me and hand it right back to you. And be like; I cannot tell you. What do you want? What do you think is going to be best for you, right? And, that is a big part of what sovereignty means to me. And, I model that consistently in my business. I model that consistently in my teaching and in my marketing.

So, if somebody is really in a position where they're like; I just want someone to tell me what to do. There's nothing wrong with being where they are. And, it should be really obvious to them that I'm not the coach who's going to answer that question for them. It's going to be somebody else. And so, I just wanted to flesh that out just a little bit also, because I don't know.

Samantha: Yeah, I'm glad that you did, because I can like go really high level. And so, this is helpful that you're like, filling it up.

Simone: You're bringing all of the concepts and... Because I don't have them prepared. Because Samantha does. Because she's a prepared person. I'm like, [crosstalk] anecdote. Okay, so please tell us what's next.

Samantha: Okay, so next is ethics. And this differs from values in that this is your guidelines of what is right and wrong, aside from the law. Like beyond the law. And I think... I'm so excited like being with your audience, which is all coaches. Mine is not all coaches. But this is so important for coaches, because it is an unregulated industry.

There are some, like, certifying bodies and regulatory bodies, but they're all self-appointed. Like governments are not regulating this, like therapy or other modalities. So, I think having really clear ethics is so important.

And, I think that can look really different, for a lot of different types of businesses. But I think that this is something we're going to be hearing

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more and more about. And you want to have ethics both for business practices, and for whatever the thing is that you're doing with your clients. So, for a lot listening, that is poaching.

Simone: Can you give us an example of how you center ethics? And how you make that clear in your business?

Samantha: Yeah, so I think that really, like what it starts out with. is thinking about, what are the things that are clearly wrong to you? Like, for me, this is like, the easiest way to figure out what your ethics are. Like, what are the things that really piss you off? I think that that is like such a clear pointer.

Or like, what are things maybe that you see out in the world, done by other businesses or that kind of thing, that you don't agree with? And I think that, like, the interesting thing about ethics is there's going to be a lot of alignment for people. But there might be some things that don't align.

Like I did a reel today, where I was answering a question. Like, I do a Q&A with my audience. And the question was around revealing your prices before a consult call, or waiting until the call.

Simone: I watched that with great interest. Oh, I wonder what she's going to say? I watched it, and I was like; I agree with every word. I would have answered the same. So, I loved it.

Samantha: I love it. But so many people commented on that already, fired up about not disclosing prices in, like in advance. And so, I think that this is for sure, an ethical issue. And by ethical issue, I don't necessarily mean that there is a black and white correct, one way or the other answer for everyone.

But I think that, like, you know, if that's your thing. Like if your ethics is, you know, this is a transparency thing for me, or this is an honesty thing for me or, you know, it's manipulative to do it the other way. Like that, you need to honor that, I think, in yourself. So, that's what I'm talking about when I talk about ethics. What do you think about that?

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Simone: No, I completely agree. And I think more and more people are being sort of outspoken about their ethics. And, I think that's a great trend. And, I think we can be outspoken about ethics without trashing people who disagree with us, right? I think Samantha and I both model that, I hope; I think we do.

And I think that there are lots of... So, for example, there are coaches or any kind of service providers who will not disclose prices in advance, and for reasons that are very ethical to them, right? And there are others for whom transparency is a really big value, and honoring that is ethical for them.

I was actually talking to my husband over dinner, about the difference between morality and ethics. And I was like; what is the difference between morality and ethics? And we had a little discussion, over some fish, and we came down to the conclusion that morality feels like something that's like absolute, right? It's like absolute to the universe and to just like human beings, being in the world.

And whereas ethics, is a little bit more context dependent, it's more so societal, right? So, for example, what is ethical in a village in Bhutan might be very different from what's considered ethical in Washington DC, right? Just because the contexts are different, values are different, how people live lives is different.

So, because we bandy about the word "ethics" or "ethical" a lot, I wanted to define. It really depends on what your values are, right? Transparency might be a really big value to somebody. And there are times when transparency competes with other values.

And it doesn't mean that if somebody chooses another value that's more important, it doesn't mean they're like evil and untransparent. It just means that they just have different values.

I did want to say this, because I think you can easily go down, sort of like what I call like, a moral perfectionism. Like I have to get this right otherwise,

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I'm just going to be an evil person, and people are going to hate me. And I think there are so many entrepreneurs who are choosing different practices, for reasons that feel good to them.

So, for example, another good sort of example, in terms of policies where you can have ethics come in is, for example, refund policy. Right. So, some people have very flexible refund policies for reasons that feel very ethical to them, right? Stuff can come up; I want to honor that...

And I know some other coaches, some other business owners, who are just beautiful people with so much integrity, and their refund policy's like, no refunds; very ironclad. And their reasoning for it is based on reasons that really serve the client. Like, if you pay, be all in, right? And, part of the way they respect their clients and love their clients, is by honoring them to their agreements that they made, right?

And so, is that better or worse? Is that bad, ethical, less ethical? It all depends. And I want to give everybody the permission. Like, you can choose your values. And other people might disagree with you, your coach might disagree with you, but F* them. Like, they're your values. You get to decide what ethics means to you based on the kind of stuff that that pisses you off, the kind of thing you want to say, "You know what? I stand for this, even if other people don't?"

Samantha: Yes, I love that. So good. The next thing is standards for delivery. And I think, with scaling, this one is so important. This is how do I know that the client got what was promised, or sold to them? What is like good enough, in our business, for delivering?

And I think as you build up a team, this is even so much more important. Because you potentially might have team members who are delivering to clients, and they need to know; what is the standard for knowing that we have delivered what was promised?

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Simone: 100%. What are some ways that you work with standards and make them clear with your people and your business? Just give us an example.

Samantha: Yeah. So, for me, one of the things that I think about is like, response times to clients. So, I have coaches who do written coaching in Mama to CEO. And so, we have like a timeframe of, this is when you can expect to receive a response. And that's communicated to them. That's communicated to our team. Like that is just like one of the standards is, this is the response time that you're going to have for your coaching.

Simone: Love it. I don't have that. In my more advanced container, everybody gets coaching. Everybody who tags me gets coaching, gets a response from me. I think there's, I'm saying how I'm different just so people know that there's not just one right way, right.

And usually, people get a response within 24 or 48 hours. And I tell people, I remind my people all the time, "If I haven't responded to you by then, it's not because I'm ignoring you. It's 100% because I have ADHD and things fall through the cracks. So please tag me and remind me again," and they do.

And there's a kind of, there's a trust that they have with me because of the quality of relationship that I've cultivated with them. In terms of, I'm just trying to think of an example from my life.

Hold on. Are we talking about transparency, right now?

Samantha: We're talking about standards for deliveries.

Simone: Yeah, standards, right. I think that I actually, recently had a very sort of intensive sort of spurt of thinking about this on purpose, and working on this in my business. Because I don't think it was as explicit before. And I highly, highly recommend this for everybody. And Samantha is doing it on her own, because she's a genius.

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But the idea that I should do this actually, came from me working with one of my mentors, who is Trudi Lebron. And when I worked with her, she recommended, I have to give credit where it's due, she recommended I sort of, you know, take the time to write out like, what are the standards for my clients? And, what are the standards for me?

So, to have something I can actually check off and say, "Okay, Simone knows that she's doing her job, if she does X, Y, Z," and I made a list of things. And this is how my clients can know if they are showing up for their end of the bargain, right? Because I'm not doing all the work. Hey, it's your transformation; come get it, right?

So, I wrote out a list of things for them. And when I did that, it felt like, it was like a soul exhale, you know. Just because all those things might have been implicit before. And, you know, I would hope that most of my clients like intuited it. However, it's such a difference when it's written out.

And the clarity I think, is what like supports the ethics of it. Right? When it's not clear, somebody can say, "Well, that's what you should have done. We thought you were going to do X, Y, Z. Why didn't you?" So, I think the clarity, in itself, is a big service that you can give your people.

And so, yes. Standards, as much as Samantha and I model; like this is something that you definitely evolve in, right. You learn more about it as you go along. And you can't see her, but she's nodding. And, you can revise your standards and policies as you go along.

But it's also okay to let your clients know that your standards are evolving, right? Because why wouldn't they? So, they have permission to do the same in their businesses and their lives. And, we have experiences so that we can learn, so that we can keep updating what we live up to.

Samantha: Yeah, I want to add something to that, that just like popped in my mind when you were talking about, like, a lot of these things are probably implicit. And I think with all of this, I think the values, ethics, the standards with all of it, I bet everybody listening has these things already.

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Like deep inside of them, in their mind, and you just have to take the time to get them out and make them explicit.

And it reminded me of; I recently took a trauma and somatics program. And the instructor, in the onboarding, was talking so much about making the implicit explicit. And like, just the things that you think might be assumed or might be known, just like actually stating them. And it creates so much safety and trust.

And I think, when you are scaling and wanting to do it, in this very client-centered way, safety and trust is so, so important.

Simone: 100%. I think a lot of entrepreneurs, a lot of coaches especially, can get burned and do get burned, even if they had the best intentions. Because with their best intentions, some things, misunderstandings happened. And when there were misunderstandings that happened, if there wasn't clarity beforehand, if there weren't standards that were explicitly laid out and agreed upon by mutual parties in advance, then it just becomes hurt, right.

And so, I think that's a really brilliant way we can avoid that. And while you were talking about it, I was like; oh, I want to make another point. And now I forget what it is. It'll come back to me.

Samantha: It will. But while you say that, I want to say, that you may not avoid misunderstanding and hurt.

Simone: Oh, that's another important thing. Yeah. Totally, yes, yes. So, I think this is a really important, like rule of business, that if you remember, is going to save you so much heartache. Which is, there is no such thing as like doing it perfectly. In a way where you can avoid all discomfort, all awkward conversations, all instances of clients ever getting mad at you. That's not a thing.

All business just involves... As long as you're working with human beings, there's going to be weird parts. There's going to be parts that are crunchy,

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and ouchy, and misunderstandings happen and hurt happens, there's no way to prevent that.

And if you think that there's some magical standard of perfectionism where you can rise to and prevent that, then you're going to suffer so much, all of your life. So, the point is, shit's going to happen, you're going to learn from it, and you're going to keep iterating, and you're going to keep getting better. The point, the goal isn't perfection and total, you know, whatever. The goal is, shit's going to happen, and you're going to learn from it. Right?

Samantha: Yeah. And I think, like, really, one of the best things that you can do is to spend time really thinking about how you respond to things. And sometimes, like even thinking in advance. Like, how do I want to respond if this particular thing happens? Because what will happen in our business is that some misunderstanding, or hurt, or something like that is going to happen. Our nervous system is going to get activated. We're going to want to be in some kind of self-protective mode, some attack mode, you know, like something, whatever our default mode is.

And if you kind of have this practice, or thought about, in advance, it's so much easier to then say, "Oh, here's my standard for when there's conflict. Here's like, what my value is around human relationships." Like, whatever it might be, tap into that, and then have that guideline for how to show up in that situation.

Simone: That's fucking brilliant. I'm sorry, I don't know if you cuss in your podcast, but I do.

Samantha: I do. We just like mark the episode when it happens. So that they know, if their kids are around.

Simone: I think that is so, so, so important. And really, I think not enough people talk about it, right? Because a client is going to get mad at you one of these days. It's literally inevitable if you keep working with human beings. Somebody's going to accuse you of being out of integrity.

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You could have your perfect, you know, set of standards and policies. You can be like; oh, I'm so proud of them. And, have someone be mad at you for the standards and policies that you've put so much thought into, because they don't agree with whatever.

You can just say something and somebody's going to misconstrue it. So, all of this is going to happen. And so, and it doesn't mean anything about you. It doesn't mean anything about your business. It literally happens to everybody, at every level.

So, what's your procedure for self-care, right? How are you going to take care of yourself? How are you going to make sure you have support around you, to take care of your nervous system? Because when it happens to me, and of course, it happens to me all the time, because I have a business. And, that's what happens when you have a business, right?

I used to struggle with it so much more, but now I struggle with it less. I still struggle, because I'm human. But I struggle with it less because now I know, first order of business, take care of my nervous system, right? Because my nervous system is going to respond as if somebody is like trying to come kill me, right? It just goes to like danger alert, fight-flight mode.

And when I remember that, that's all that's happening, then it becomes so much easier to take care of myself. So much easier to get to a place of calm, where I can make rational decisions in the best interest of my business. And with a true, like care for the other human being on the other side, right.

And it took me a lot of trial and error to get here. And I'm not going to say I'm perfect at it now. But knowing what the procedure is for myself, knowing how I react, giving myself the support I need, has made all of the difference.

And I know that we're kind of making it sound scary right now, and I'm not... So, you might be like; oh my god, all these terrible things are going to

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happen. And so, if you're worried about it, and I think Samantha will agree with me, your capacity to deal with this kind of stuff is going to increase.

It does always happen. But it's also a minority of all the things that happen in your business. I think Samantha and I will both say, we have very, truly wonderful, joyful businesses that we enjoy so much. And then, there's a part of it, because that's how life is.

Samantha: Yeah, yeah. And I was thinking too, like, it's not just in business, like this happens in human relationships. I had a similar situation with a friend recently, where something I said got their nervous system activated, and then their response back, setting a boundary, got mine activated. Then we both recovered, and had a conversation about it.

And, and I think, you know, when you have that awareness of yourself and that willingness to have that kind of open, vulnerable conversation about it with someone, I think that is like such an incredible way to be in relationship with people. Because this is going to happen. And I think, you know, with our friends, with our clients, with the members of our team, with our kids, right? And, with all of these people.

I think for the most part, this other person wants to make things work with you. This other person wants to have a good relationship with you. And if you can see, like; there's this problem that the two of us are working on together. Even if it feels like we might be against each other. And you know, sometimes that is a more intense situation like, than that.

But I think a lot of the time, especially with clients, like they want you to succeed, they want things to work with you, they want to have a good relationship with you. And it can be really hard to remember, easy to forget, when we're in like the heat of the emotion.

Simone: Totally. And even when things do get intense, at the end of the day, it's always a human being who's in a nervous system reaction. Right? I try to remember that. I'm not always successful. But when I do remember that, it helps a lot.

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Like somebody could be so mean to me. Again, it's not a business thing, it's a human thing. Somebody could be still mean to me, and it's 100% because they're not feeling safe. There's something happening with them. And when I remember that, it's easier to have compassion for them. It's easier to have compassion for me, reacting to them.

Samantha: Yes, absolutely. One thing that I'll say about this, that's helped me so much, as kind of like a little defense against this a little bit or like, at least it like slows it down, is I don't have like a public email that like anyone knows, Like, all of my email goes to my team before it comes to me, and they can kind of like filter and sugarcoat as necessary. Or, just not tell me about certain things, as necessary. And that is super helpful, as well.

Simone: That's one of my favorite things that I can now do, because I have a team. Is that [crosstalk].

Samantha: This is like the reason number one to scale.

Simone: So you don't have to read all the hate mail. Just kidding. I don't... Hate mail, whatever it is; it's angry people. It's always a minority. But yeah, you know, I had a friend who was a writer and a novelist, whose book was out on Amazon and whatever, and they told me that one of their writing mentors told them to just like; never read your reviews, right?

So, she just never goes to her Amazon page. She never reads any review, unless like somebody brings it to her, and is like; this is a very positive review. Right. And apparently, that's like a thing writers do all the time.

When Samantha and I talk about being human and being vulnerable, and being willing to have difficult conversations, and remember, the other person wants to make it work with you. All of that, yes. And also, you can be smart about protecting your nervous system.

Because we can only process so much at a time, right? As a baseline, when we feel taken care of, and when we feel okay and safe in the world, I think we have so much more capacity to process the discomfort. As

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opposed to feeling like you always have to put your nervous system in the line of fire to be whatever, right?

So, I make sure and nobody deserves to, like be in their hate mail 24/7. Like, that's not right. So, make decisions that you need to, in order to protect yourself and to, protect is not even the right word. It's kind of like take care of yourself. Right? And trust that, that is a step that you can take that is going to support you in making decisions that are in integrity with your values.

Samantha: Yes, absolutely. I love this. Let's see, what else did I want to talk about or bring to you?

Simone: Everything so far... I just want to say, you guys, everybody listening, you really did come in for a masterclass. And if you're thinking; oh my gosh, this feels like a whole like six-month experience that I need to like unwind. Well, guess what? You can do that. Where can they do that, Samantha?

Samantha: They can come do that in my mastermind. So many of the things that we've talked about today, are the things that I do with my clients, in my mastermind. It's specifically for scaling and doing it in a really sustainable way. A way that is really aligned for your values and ethics. Helping you even, figure out what those are to begin with. Figure out even, what you want.

Like, we, at the very beginning, talked about what's that middle way. Like identifying that and then creating that. That is what we do in my mastermind. And you can find out all about it on my website, SamanthaSiffring.com/mastermind

Simone: That's right. And, put your name on the wait-list. Can you always sign up or...?

Samantha: So, it's recently shifted, that now we do quarterly enrollment. So, you can pretty much almost always sign up. Right now, that we're

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recording this, I'm in the middle of an enrollment period. So, for enrolling for the fourth quarter of 2022.

Simone: Perfect. Okay, so go check it out; go sign up. I feel like it's such a wonderful opportunity to be able to get, to really hash this out for yourself and get your own answers. Which is going to be different from another entrepreneur's answers. Fantastic container led by Samantha Siffring; what more can you ask for?

Samantha: Thank you for this little commercial.

Simone: I just want all the people to know where all the good resources are. Okay, so, I feel like what we have covered already is so freakin' rich. Did you have anything else in your notes?

Samantha: The other thing that I had was around boundaries. And just as we were thinking about, like, I think we covered a lot of the like how to not under-deliver and be scammy, side of it.

But I wanted to talk a little about how do you stay away from just like continuing to give more and more of your time and energy, and being depleted? So, boundaries are part of that team. It's also part of that delegating things out. But what I was thinking in particular with boundaries, is really being aware of the resources you have to give, and using those wisely.

Like, your time, your energy, being major resources in the business. Like what are the best, most effective ways to spend those? And, I think a big thing that can come up with my clients, I'd be curious if it's similar for yours, is people-pleasing in this area. And people-pleasing clients, being like a huge boundary issue. So, that's about it.

Simone: I have so many thoughts about it. I have to just repeat one of my favorite, great Kara Loewentheil quotes. And Kara Loewentheil, if you don't know who she is, she is an incredible life coach for feminist women. And she said, "Leadership does not mean people-pleasing a greater number of people."

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Samantha: Yes, that's so good.

Simone: I thought that was so good. So, I think on a more micro level, if you conflate caring for someone with people-pleasing them, and you don't know, you're not super skilled with those boundaries, I think it can really easily be the case, where you have a scaled business and more and more people are coming to you, you keep thinking you have to care for those people.

And the way you think you should care is by people-pleasing them and doing what they want you to do, even though you don't want to, and you feel resentful, right. And so, I think that I had an easier time with this. Because early on in my coaching journey, I did a lot of work on myself to sort of separate out care with people-pleasing.

And I learned that, I mean, not that I've been perfect with it. But what I learned is that it's not authentic care or love, if I am doing something for someone else that's against my own priorities or preferences, or values. And it doesn't even have to get as fancy as values. It can just be like, something I don't want to do. Right?

So, somebody could ask me to do something, and it could totally be fine with my values. But I might just not want to, because I just want to; hey, I don't want to do that thing for you because I would rather watch Netflix. Like, that is worth honoring, right?

Yeah, your desires are legitimate; they are worth honoring. And anytime a line that you don't want to be crossed, and you end up crossing it on behalf of someone because you want them to not be mad at you; that's not care, that's not love, that is actually just manipulation. Because you are trying to manipulate them into having good feelings and thoughts about you, by doing things that you don't want to do.

And in the end, it's not actually kinder to them, because you end up resenting them. And it's not kind to you, because obviously, you're not happy. So, that lesson I learned deeply early on in my coaching journey.

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So, when I started having more clients, when my business started growing, it was sort of easier, not completely easy, but easier for me to draw those boundaries and stay true to them. And let me tell you, it's not always easy, but I do have people who just get mad at me for honoring my own boundaries and the boundaries of my business.

And at the same time, I feel so gratified for having made the decisions that I made. Because people get such an example out of what it's like to be a powerful woman who's a leader, who's honoring herself. And I've had so many clients, thank me, for my example. Thank me for putting yourself first, because it lets me know that I don't have to exhaust myself, deplete myself in order to be of service to others.

And so, that's something that I'm proud to have done. And if you can choose between, like, making sure everyone has nice thoughts about you, which is like impossible anyway. But choose between trying to get more people to have nice thoughts about you and you honoring yourself, I hope that you will always choose honoring yourself.

And also, know that for the kind of clients that you want to work with, that feel good for you to work with, they probably want you to make those decisions, right? Like they want you to model what it means to put yourself first, and have it be a loving thing. And when you're doing that, and you show up to serve, you're truly serving from a filled cup, and you're truly serving and giving because you want to, not because; well, I'm going to give this to you, so you better like me now, right?

Samantha: Mm-hmm. Yeah, there's so much good stuff in there. And I feel like the thing that like really stood out to me, was how you specifically use the word "preferences". And, I just wanted to like validate that as a way to make business decisions. So, that you can just make business decisions based on your preferences based on...

Simone: Just because you want to. Period. End of story.

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Samantha: Yeah, like your personality, what feels good to you, what works best for like how you are, that is valid. Like that can be the criteria for like the offers, like how you structure your offers. Like, you know, you and I had recently talked about this.

I changed my mastermind structure and got rid of weekly group calls. And now, they have weekly one-on-one calls with somebody from my coaching team. And then, they have Slack® with me, where they can reach out for anything that they need, any coaching or anything like that.

And for me, being available to them on Slack, just like in a more casual, flexible timeframe where it's like, I can wake up in the morning and like drink my coffee in bed and be coaching you in Slack. Versus like, this is the day, this is the time, and like, if I'm out of town I need to have a sub or work on my vacation. You know, like, my preference is just the flexibility.

And, I know that my clients get the value that they need. They get the coaching that they need, either way. Like, that's that standard, they're being delivered to and supported. And, the decision is totally based on my preference.

Simone: I also made a similar decision, in my more advanced container, and I got rid of weekly calls. And, I also have Slack instead. And this was for very similar reasons. I was like; You know what? I enjoy myself so much more when I am responding to coaching on a flexible schedule. And, I think I give better coach...

I mean, I don't want to say better, because, you know, all of my coaching is amazing. But you know, I get to go into really great depth. I get to have ongoing back-and-forth, you know, written out between my clients and I. And, it gives me such a freedom in my body, where I feel like I can be really thoughtful and generous on a different level.

And, I feel like I could have never discovered that if I had just like locked myself up in this 'should' of like, this is how you have to deliver, this is what it should look like. Right?

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Yeah, let me give you another really short example of me honoring my wants. So, I do mostly all of my own social media. And I leave tons of people's DM's unread; I don't respond, I'm not going to respond. I love you, if you sent me a message. I could have like received your message, so much gratitude. I do, for the most part. And, I'm going to leave you unread and I'm not going to respond.

Because I don't want to. Like, I don't need to respond to you just because I read your DM, to prove that I care about you as a member of my community. Right. And I am bringing this up because I had a couple of clients like talk to me. They were like laughing about it, about this conversation they had.

Being like; I can't believe Simone left me unread. How can she just leave me unread? And they're like; I know, right? I had the same thought. And I was like; Yeah, because I don't want to not read your messages. But also, I want to honor what I want, which is to not have to respond all the time.

I only respond when I want, and so that way I'm very happy when I respond. Every time I respond to somebody, I am very happy. Right? So that's another example of having a policy just because you want to. You can, whatever. Can I do that? Yes, you can. Just because you want to. You'll be amazed how that is such an empowering like. rippling effect on everybody who's observing you.

Samantha: I want everyone listening, to like brainstorm some 'can I do that?' things that they want to do, that they think they can't do. And then, just receive our permission right now, to do, wherever they are.

Simone: If your brain is fighting you really hard, literally just like post it on Instagram® and tag us. And I'll be like; yes, I give you permission. You can do that. We will do that for you.

Samantha: Yeah, it's so freeing, I think. I feel like I always have those conversations with my life coach, where I'm like; oh, my gosh, I can do that thing that I want to do.

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Simone: Exactly. Yeah, you can go on maternity leave, because you want to. You can, you know, leave people unread. Whatever it is, like, if you're being consistent and transparent about it. Hey, you know.

Samantha: Absolutely. I love this. This is so good. Is there anything else we didn't talk about?

Simone: I think maybe you should save some of it for a part two. I feel like it was a lot, what we talked about today.

Samantha: It was a lot. Here's like the one thing that I think we should talk about before we end this one, and then, we can for sure, do more parts, because this is fun. I know that we really wanted to talk about client-centered scaling.

And I feel like a lot of this has been around like, mean comments or disgruntled people. And so, I feel like there's something more here, around the client centeredness of it, that we can touch on. Does that make sense?

Simone: Ooh, okay, let's talk about it. But I want to say one thing that popped into my mind when you were saying that. I just want to tie a couple of things we were talking about together. Client-centered scaling does not mean client people-pleasing, scaling. Right.

So, whatever you want to say after that, I want to make this very clear. Centering the client does not mean babysitting them. It does not mean doing everything they want. Does not mean becoming the version of you, that you think they want you to be.

Centering the client also means centering them in their power, and in their resourcefulness, and in their sovereignty. So, please know that. And if you thought that centering your client means just giving them whatever they want and people-pleasing them, consider that that's actually not, probably not, in their highest interest either. Right?

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So, think about the balance between like, your client's own power, their own resourcefulness, their own sense of agency, and how much they get to grow from that.

Some of my favorite stories, from my own clients, they tell me like a year after the fact, "Simone, I was so fucking angry at you. I hated you so much. When I came into your mastermind, you wouldn't fucking tell me what to do. You wouldn't tell me the answers. And I was so mad at you for like five months. And then I realized, 'fuck, she thinks I'm her equal.' I hate that. And I realized I was just being powerless this whole time. And then everything changed." I was like, "Yes, I do think you're my, equal, you know."

I love my clients have that transformation. And if I deprive them of getting to find out that they're my equal, that they can trust their own answers, by sort of catering to them anytime they thought they needed something for me. To me, in my definition, that wouldn't have truly been centering the client in their full power and sovereignty. I just want to say that; super important.

Samantha: I love that. I love how you said that. That is really good. And, you know, I feel like probably for all of us, the thing that our client would really want from us, is that we come live in their home and like live life next to them. My clients for sure, would like me to be the CEO of their business.

Simone: [Crosstalk] all the best decisions. Yeah.

Samantha: Yeah. So, I totally agree with that. Like, you have to draw the line somewhere, of the like, unlimited things that the client may want, that you just can't deliver. So, that is the reality.

Simone: And there are amazing, integrity filled, heart-centered, super over-delivering coaches, at every part of that spectrum. You know, there are coaches who give a lot and who are very high touch, and very accessible. And then there are coaches who are not very accessible at all.

And as long as you have, what Samantha talked about, your ethics, your values, your standards, all clear and transparent and laid out in advance,

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there's no right or wrong. There's no right amount of high touch or low touch. There's not how is it accessible...

It's not like more accessible is more virtuous. And less is less accessible. It's all about the kind of business you're building, the standards you're holding your clients to, right?

Samantha: Yes, absolutely. I think the way that I think about client-centered scaling is very focused on them as a human, like seeing them as a human. And, being a human to them. And, like, the relationship aspect of it.

Simone: Same. Yeah, to me, that's so brilliant. I wouldn't have defined it that way, but now that you said that, I am going to define it that way. Right? Like, really caring for the whole person, of the client, because it's kind of easy to compartmentalize out.

Like, this is a service you came to me for. This is what I'm accountable to deliver it to you, and beyond that is none of my business, right? Of course, there's a degree to where, you know, that's true.

But also, when it's easy to be transactional, and to see a client as just a customer of my business, to me, it feels so much better to consider the client as a treasured human being, a child of God, the way I think about it. Somebody's beloved sister, daughter, son, gender neutral human who is important and beloved.

So, to me, that is what it's all about. And, that's what I aspire towards. I don't always succeed, but I'm succeeding more and more and more, because I'm learning from all the ways in which I fail at that.

Samantha: Yeah, I like that. It's like the perfect way to close it out. It's like, so much of this stuff, we have learned from failing at it, from getting it wrong, from hurting someone, then making amends, then figuring out how can I not repeatedly do this?

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Simone: There have been many conversations, probably even between Samantha and I. We're like; what is happening? What should I do? Did I mess up? Coaching each other, you know.

Samantha: Totally, totally. And, you know, I teach this stuff and I'm still making mistakes with it. I'm still learning things about it. That's just how it goes, there's no like destination.

Simone: One, because we're all imperfect humans. And two, also because we, you know I love to talk about this and I know you do too, because we've inherited, like very patriarchal, you know, very supremacist systems of thinking and being. Where a lot of that is just stuff that we all have to actively detox from. Right?

So, we're not always going to get it right. Because we are sort of healing ourselves and learning, and unfucking the systems that we've inherited, all at the same time. So, I want to have grace and compassion for all of us. Because this shit ain't easy.

If you're going to grow your business and just prioritize more and more money, more and more growth all the time; that's easier than if you are putting the human being at the center at every step of the way. It might take more time and thought and energy.

But is it worth it? 1,000,000%. I know Samantha would agree. Because I think this way, we really create businesses where the more money we make, the more profitable we are, the more good it actually adds to the world.

Samantha: Yeah, I agree. So good.

Simone: I would have killed to be able to hear this when I was starting.

Samantha: Oh, my gosh, I know. This would have been so helpful. You're welcome, everyone.

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Simone: I love it. Okay. So, if you love it, if you're one of my people, you know, and you're like; oh, my God, I want to check out Samantha's mastermind, do that.

And if you're one of Samantha's people, and you're like who is this crazy Korean lady, you can check me out.

Samantha: Follow her, check her out.

Simone: I love it. Thank you, Samantha. Always a blast.

Samantha: Yes. Thank you so much for like, you came up with this idea. So, thank you so much for... Yeah, you reached out and were like; let's do this thing. Thank you, because it was amazing.

Simone: Perfect. I agree. All right, my friends. We'll talk to you later.

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