



Episode 123: ERICKA'S COACHING STORY

This is the *Become an Unstoppable Woman* podcast with Lindsay Preston Episode 123, Ericka's Coaching Story.

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Welcome to the *Become an Unstoppable Woman* podcast, the show for goal-getting, fear-facing women for kicking ass by creating change. I'm your host, Lindsay Preston. I'm a wife, mom of two, and a multi-certified life coach to women all over the world. I've lived through enough in life to know that easier doesn't always equate to better. We can't fear the fire, we must learn to become it. On this show, I'll teach you how to do just that. Join me as I challenge you to become even more of the strong, resilient, and powerful woman you were meant to be. Let's do this.

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Hi, there, my friends, We have another coaching story for you today. If you have never heard these episodes, you're missing out. These episodes where I have coaching stories is when I bring on clients to talk about what their experience was like coaching with me. If you're somebody who hasn't coached with me, these are great episodes to listen to, to start to understand what people come to me for and what results they get by working with me.

If you do coach with me, I think they're great episodes to listen to, to hear other people's stories and some of the experiences they had good, bad and ugly so that it calms you of like, okay, the story does not have to be perfect to still get amazing results and two, just to hear from other people in the community.

Because after people coach with me for nine months one-on-one then they have the option once a year to join my Living The Dream mastermind group, where I bring together all of my established clients that want to hit some really big goals throughout the next year and we coach like crazy to get them to hit that next level of success in their life. It's great to hear everyone's journeys and get to know everybody before we all come together in that group.



Today I have Ericka, and Ericka and I started coaching together in August 2020. We're actually recording this episode at the end of May 2020, although it doesn't go live until August. Ericka and I are just about to have our last sessions, so I thought it was a great time for us to sit down and really recap what we've been up to the past nine months as we've coached together. Ericka was somebody who came to me. She had a pretty good life and she didn't have necessarily the specific goals that she wanted. Some people will come to me and say, oh, I want to make X more money. Or I want to improve my weight from this to this. Or I want to find a new job or just really tangible goals.

Her goals are more so of like, I just want to feel better. We talk about specifically what she meant by that and it was cool too because Ericka came to me and she had some health stuff going on and she just acted like that's just a part of who I am and it's not going to change. I didn't mention anything else about it during the consult, but there was a part of me that thought, ooh, If I work with this woman, I hope her health transforms because she will begin to see that whenever she's diagnosed with something or something comes her way that she can use her mind on her body to heal that.

That's not downplaying modern medicine. It's just there are certain things that happen in our bodies that can easily be shifted when we start to feel, deal and heal our emotions. Ericka will go more into what those health issues were during this episode. We talk about where her health is at now and all of that she gained from coaching.

I hope you enjoy this episode, and I just want to say before I introduce her too, if you're somebody who feels like it's hard for you to really feel emotion and to really in essence let your wall and let other people in, you'll definitely want to hear this episode because that was some of the biggest things that Ericka gains from coaching with me. Again, without further ado, here is my interview with Ericka. Ericka, so privileged to have you on the show.

Ericka: Thank you so much for having me.

Lindsay: You're welcome. I was actually getting a little sad as I was driving into the office and I'm like, okay, we're having this with Ericka. A part of me was like, I don't want this to be the end. Ericka, it's been so much fun to coach you and it's gone by so fast.

Ericka: Yes, it has.

Lindsay: I still remember where I was sitting when we had our consult call. I remember meeting you and thinking, oh my gosh, I really want to work with this woman. I hope she signs up. It was just so full-body yes for me and I'm so glad we've gotten to do this. Let's



go back to August. It was August 19th is what I wrote on my consult, which is the day before my birthday. You came to me because a friend of yours did coaching with me.

Ericka: Yes.

Lindsay: What was it that you said maybe I want to reach out to this woman?

Ericka: As you said, a friend of mine had coached with you and the results she was getting were just amazing. It seemed like something I wanted a piece of, for sure, but also, it just seemed like I was coming up on this big birthday, big milestone birthday, looking back at life thus far and thinking like there's still some things I really want to do and I'm not sure how to get there. I knew that there were some-- It was really some mind drama going on for me that I needed to clear out and I had done therapy and it just hadn't done enough I felt like to get me to the next point in my life.

Lindsay: Yes, because when you came to me, I remember our consult. It was like, life was pretty good for you.

Ericka: Yes, life was good. I didn't have anything major going on. Just the sense of like, I'm about to move into this next phase of my life and if I don't clear out some of this stuff, I don't know if I'm going to be able to accomplish what I want to accomplish.

Lindsay: Yes, and you went to the milestone birthday. You were turning 40, which she just recently did.

Ericka: Yes.

Lindsay: It's so smart of you to do that. We had our consult and I was like, okay, because where you were at I was like, she's just on the tipping point. She just needs something to get her over the edge is what I remember feeling off of you. Also I thought was really interesting as you had mentioned some health things that were going on for you and you just acted like, oh, that's just how I am and what I do. I thought I would really love for her to transform aspects of her health in this process. It's been cool for you to do that. Can we just touch on that to start with?

Ericka: Yes. When I started coaching with you I had IBS. I had been diagnosed a couple of years before starting. Interestingly enough, ever since I was a kid, every time there was some major life transition or big change I would have stomach problems and pretty severely. I was diagnosed with IBS and I just thought, okay, that explains everything and



just accepted that and started changing diet and things. It was somewhat better, but not great. I also had migraines really badly when I started working with you. I would have them anywhere from two to three times a week to the point where I needed to take rescue meds. Now if I need to take them two to three times a month, that's a lot for me.

Lindsay: Wow. What's changed with the IBS?

Ericka: The IBS isn't even a problem. It's like it didn't even exist. I'm confident that having done the bodywork stuff too that you introduced me to that, that was really my body showing the signs of anxiety and stress that I was dealing with.

Lindsay: Because that was one of the big things you came to me with is like, I have this pretty good life, Lindsay, but I can't enjoy it.

Ericka: Yes, exactly. I can't be in the present.

Lindsay: Yes, I just want to be able to have fun. You've worked toward that. Of course, I know we still coached through that, Ericka. That's going to be like some of your life's work because you're an Enneagram one and that's part of it, but also as we coached, one of the big things that I'll take away from this journey is just watching you bring down your wall and open yourself up to your then boyfriend, now fiancé. That's an exciting change and how you guys are moving forward. Can you talk through that journey?

Ericka: Yes, I think that through various circumstances in my life, different things growing up, and also a failed marriage in my past, I really had built up this wall around myself and I knew it was there. People had commented to me about that. They felt like they couldn't really get to know me, things of that nature. We really had to coach through that hard. There were some really hard moments in the journey where it was really uncomfortable for me, but once I finally started to let that wall down, it's been a complete change in my relationship with my fiancé. Just being able to let him love me and just hug me and hold me and, and not having to resist that so much, which has been what I've done for most of my life.

It's like, I don't know. I don't know if I can let you see all of the pieces of me because I didn't love all the pieces of me.

It really was a journey of self-acceptance and that allowed me to let other people in more.



Lindsay: You and I, I remember at least on one occasion having the conversation, we were both raised by very strong women and that generation was we're bad ass bitches and we know it. They instilled that in us, which are great qualities. We are super independent, we're strong women, but yet we realized it's like, maybe not all aspects of this is working for us. We've had to really mold the two of being strong, but being soft. It's so funny because I was looking through your consult notes, Ericka. One of the things you said is-- that you wanted to gain to be the best investment ever was to soften your edges.

Ericka: Oh okay, that's so cool that I said that.

Lindsay: You were aware of it, you knew. I think that was the hardest part. Is there were a couple of lessons we had to just stop the process. You and I coached really hard on, okay, where are you going in your relationship? We talk about like inner mean girl voices, obviously, in some of your inner mean, girls are really fighting of like, "Oh my gosh, I'm going to have to let him in and like put down this wall."

There were times it made it really confusing for you like is this real? Is this not real? What's going on? There were times it got so confusing, it would confuse me. I'd be like, "Ericka, I don't know what you want." I do remember there was just like one moment. It seems like that it just shifted. Is that how it felt for you too, Ericka?

Ericka: Yes

Lindsay: I don't remember specifically what it was, do you?

Ericka: We had had a session where I knew that there was something that was bothering me. It was really this, I always say, like, I think what screws me up the most is like, I have this idea in my head of how something's going to go. Then it doesn't quite go that way or doesn't go that way at all. Then it's like, it's that expectation hangover thing, where it's like, "Ugh, this is not what I thought was going to happen. This is not what I wanted. This is totally different", and for me with that perfectionist vacillator combination of my inner mean girls, it's just like, it would stir me right up.

I had to do a hyper vent on this is where I thought I would be at this point in my life, and this is where I actually am, and mourning, where I thought I would be versus where I am.

Lindsay: Okay, now it's all coming back to you. When you did that, in essence, you released is what we call it, but really when we're saying that to people who don't understand is like, she really just fully felt the depth of "my life did not turn out the way I thought it would at



age 40". For you to fully accept, wow, It didn't, but look at all these blessings. Because your brain was so focused on what it wasn't, that it wasn't being able to see all the good stuff.

That's what you were like, what am I doing? My life is great, It's not what I wanted or I thought I wanted, but it's even better in some ways. Because once you got past that, it was just like you could finally start to accept your life was good. Then that's when everything started to go in your direction, you got engaged, then you realized you were going to move in together. That shifted, I felt like there was some other stuff that were going on, but those are the big ones. Am I missing anything?

Ericka: That's the big stuff, yes, for sure.

Lindsay: It was right around your 40th birthday.

Ericka: Everything all at once.

Lindsay: The other thing I want to touch on, on your journey is, so the first three months of the coaching process are really hard and for a lot of people. Because we're dealing with the stuff that needs to be healed, right? Then we get to this place where we call it a release. Where people go away and they have two days alone and they go and they feel, deal and heal in essence, and you're release did not go as planned. In fact in all of my clients I've ever had, Ericka, I think yours was probably the crappiest release that happened. Do you want to tell that story? I think it's funny.

Ericka: Well, this house that I live in now, I've done a lot to improve it. It happened to be that that week we were working on the bathroom, and there was this plumbing issue we ran into where there was literally no water in my house come Friday night. I was planning to stay here for my release. We had to have a plumber come Saturday, long story short. Again, expectation hangover. What I wanted to happen and what was happening were two different things. My release ended up being like an hour-long, just completely lose my mind vent session, where I was just angry about everything. By the time I coached with you the following week, there was so much unresolved there.

Lindsay: Yes, I was like, "Did you do this stuff?" You're like, "No, I totally messed up." I'm like, "Oh, Ericka, oh, we've got to go do another release." Oh goodness, you could have easily quit at that point because I was a little like, Oh my gosh, because you did not feel good. We had unearthed stuff, but you weren't able to do the upswing that was needed. I remember that call too. It's like you left that call and you had emotions.



Ericka: You were like, "You need to go cry", and I did, I just cried for a good hour because that whole release was just the anger part of things.

I think that's a good metaphor for how I dealt with my emotions up to this point in my life. It was just like anger, anger, anger, ticked off, but never like taking a minute to grieve. Let myself feel the true depths of those emotions, just be pissed off about it and not really resolve it. It was really uncomfortable for me to just be like, okay.

Lindsay: Well, and two, I think it's so interesting that it did have an expectation hangover piece, which was like, what you had to really deal with in this process was, nothing's real-- Because you're such a planner, Ericka, you love everything planned and realizing of like, I really can't plan for much at all other than how I handle it mentally.

Ericka: Yes, that's exactly it. That's been a huge piece of this for me is just silencing that critic piece of me that wants everything to be just a certain way.

I've finally realized, okay, there's a lot in life that just doesn't work that way.

Lindsay: Yes, just going with the flow and having fun. Okay, tell us where you're at now. How is life different? We've talked about some of the results, but how are you feeling on an everyday basis compared to before?

Ericka: There's just a sense of, I can handle this, I guess is the feeling now. I really am a pretty emotional person. I don't really, at least in the past, I haven't really let a lot of people see the depths of my emotions. I would hide that away and deal with it on my own. It would wreck me in ways because I wasn't talking about things. I wasn't being honest with those closest to me about the way I was really feeling.

I think on some levels, I expected, especially my partner to join me in my misery when I was upset and things like that. That was not helping my relationships obviously, but now there's just this sense that I have these tools. I have my journaling, I have the bodywork, I have meditation. I have these various things that I can do to deal with my stuff and then be in a better place to talk about it.

If I want to talk about it with people closest to me, but not so much expecting them to join me in my misery, and was just a sense of like also curiosity about my emotions. My critic used to be like, "Why are you feeling this way? You shouldn't feel this way because this person has it worse" and this and da da da da. Just a feeling of,



I would guilt myself all the time for my emotions. Now there's more of a sense of, okay, why am I feeling this way? What is actually the emotion I'm feeling and why am I actually feeling it? Just that curiosity piece has really calmed down that mean girl that would come at me and make me feel-- make the emotions worse by making me feel bad about them too.

Lindsay: If we just think about that shift alone and you're denying your feelings, not letting people in, it's no wonder you had migraines and IBS. Your body was like, I can't hold all of this inside.

Ericka: That's exactly it.

Lindsay: I remember too. When we had that consult your energy, you were like, oh-- and you weren't sleeping well. Remember that Ericka? How has that shifted?

Ericka: Sleep is better for me sure. It's interesting because sleep always for me is the piece where I know I'm dealing with something. It's the first thing to find a way to go if I'm really dealing with something. Now again, tools, if I wake up in the middle of the night and I'm not sleeping, it's like, "Okay, mind, what's going on?" I'll even come out and I'll just journal out all the bad thoughts that are running through my brain because lying there isn't helping me. Then just take some deep breaths and eventually I'm able to overcome that. That's what I found for me is my thoughts are just spinning when I'm not sleeping.

Lindsay: When you're talking about that, it reminds me of a time when you and your partner, where you guys were just having a normal weekend and he, I don't know if you wanted to tell this whole story, but he didn't connect with you in a way you wanted to. I don't know if you remember this and you, I think we're near the beginning of the coaching process, Ericka, and you made that mean something. Your thoughts started to spin, but I think you were aware enough at that point from what I remember to be like, "Oh, these are my thoughts. This doesn't have to be a true story."

Ericka: Yes.

Lindsay: It's so crazy because now we look back on it and it's like we don't know any different because we know our thoughts create our feelings and all that. Before that, you don't know that stuff and so you do cause a lot of problems in your life in relationships of, "Well, you did this and you made me feel this way" versus just thinking, "Oh, these are just thoughts that I'm creating that really aren't even a problem."



Ericka: I can remember you at one point saying to me-- I spilled my guts about some major circumstance that in my mind was major. It really wasn't. You were like, "Well, okay. So what are you thinking about that?" Literally, my inner mean girl was like, "How is she so calm right now? Did you hear me?" "Okay, so what are the thoughts?" I'm like, "Ugh." I wanted you to be upset with me. As we talked through it, I was like, "Oh my goodness. This is that thing again."

That was the moment where it really clicked for me of like, "I'm the one assigning meaning to this. I'm the one making it mean something. It's hard because in the moment those thoughts feel so real to you when your nervous system-- I know that now and it's a really powerful realization. That feeling of my nervous system being amped up. It's like everything feels really real. Whatever you're feeling in that moment, it feels like it is the truth and it's only when you breathe and calm that down that you are able to really look at it objectively.

Lindsay: It reminds of an email you sent me recently. You were like you had a moment where you went back in that which we all do, especially with our cycles, which you and I have talked about. It's like I've mentioned to you that time was like, "Where are you in your cycle?" Because I know for me that week before I start my period, that's when the thoughts can really go. You happened to be in that week in your cycle. You emailed me all these things and I wrote back and I said, "Okay. What's the problem?"

[laughter]

Ericka: You were like, "this is your brain doing that thing again". "Okay. Got it."

Lindsay: Got it, yes. Ericka, what I love about your story is even with these bumps in the road like a release that did not go as planned to a point where I was like, "Oh crap. I've never really had to deal with this before. I hope she can pull through and I hope I can coach her through that to that," to us-- So many times in coaching sessions I'd be like, "Ericka, I can so relate to what you're thinking right now or what you've gone through." That sometimes can, what's the word? Make my coaching maybe not as clean because I'm just like, "Yes, what you're telling me as thoughts is like I believe as thoughts too," so having to hold that space for you.

Then challenging you at times and being like, "Okay, you've got to decide and you've got to go all-in on this. You've got to stop vacillating" and having those hard boundaries with you. There were times that you could have just been, "Peace out, coaching. Peace out, Lindsay," but you trusted the process. You trusted me enough. You started to trust yourself



enough to be like, "Okay. I'm going to do this. I'm going to listen to this what we call authentic self voice," and you just kept going. Thank you.

Ericka: Yes. Thank you. It wasn't all easy that's for sure, but it's been worth it.

Lindsay: Is there anything we didn't touch on today about your coaching story? The one thing is that we didn't really talk about career because you came to me, you're a teacher, you're pretty happy with your career. It was more so-- I'll go back to what you said. It's like the best investment ever just so make sure we said it all. I said, "What would make this the best investment ever?" You said you want to make peace with your past. Do you feel like you've done that?

Ericka: Yes.

Lindsay: It goes back to what you said earlier. It's like letting go of how it should have been, right?

Ericka: Yes, absolutely.

Lindsay: You want to be fully-integrated into the future. You don't want to feel stuck with what's next.

Ericka: Yes.

Lindsay: You want to take the steps forward and know what to do next, what you're doing. And then we said soften the edges.

Ericka: Yes.

Lindsay: Wow. You did it, Ericka.

Ericka: It's really cool to hear you say all of that stuff because, yes, that's the work. We've done the work. It's an ongoing process. It's really cool because I think at some point I thought, "Okay, I'm going to do this coaching and then I'm just done and everything's just perfect ever more." Talk about perfectionist or Enneagram one. I've come to finally accept that this is just the work. It keeps going. It's just--

Lindsay: Yes. New level new devil.

Ericka: Yes.



Lindsay: I felt the same way, Ericka. I was like, "I'm going to do this a couple of months and then life's just peachy."

Ericka: Yes.

Lindsay: Then you're like, "Oh, no."

Ericka: No.

Lindsay: No.

[laughter]

Lindsay: Now, you said it so well is you have the tools-

Ericka: Yes, exactly.

Lindsay: -always to go back to the tools. Whenever you can't coach yourself through it, that's where you have resources of Lindsay or another coach of like, "Here we go. Let's take this to the next level," which is so cool. Last question for you. Somebody is saying, "Hey, I think I might be interested in investing in coaching." What would you tell them?

Ericka: I would say, "Invest in yourself. Nobody's going to do it for you. You're the person living with you the rest of your life. You're stuck with you. If you don't like you, you can't really expect anybody else to like you. Girl, do it."

[laughter]

Lindsay: It's so cool because like you said you've fallen in love with yourself over this process. Even the times when you're like, "Oh, here I get to that critical, perfectionist mindset," you know where she's coming from and she's trying to keep you safe. It's almost like a little kid version of yourself.

Ericka: Exactly.

Lindsay: You're able to see love for that too.

Ericka: Yes. I've been able to integrate all those parts.

Lindsay: Yes, so fun.



Ericka: It's really cool.

Lindsay: Thank you, Ericka.

Ericka: Thank you.

Lindsay: Oh my gosh. It's been such a fun journey.

Ericka: It really has been. Thank you so much. [chuckles]

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Hey there, Miss Unstoppable. Thanks so much for tuning into this episode. If you enjoyed it, share it with a friend. Send them a picture of this episode via text, via email, share it on social media, I'm sure they would be so appreciative to know these strategies and tips on how to accomplish your dreams. If you are ready to guarantee you're going to accomplish your goals and dreams, then it's time to start coaching with me.

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