

Ep #73: How to Change the Way You Think with Dr. Dana Gibbs



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Kristi Angevine

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Welcome to Episode #63. This is Kristi Angevine.

Have you ever struggled to change how you think about something? To think in a new way with the aim of feeling better? If so, you're in good company. You might intellectually understand that the way you think shapes your experience, and that if you want to feel differently and act differently that you need to think differently. But the reality for many of us, shifting deeply ingrained beliefs is not so easy as chanting a cute mantra.

Joining me to explore the complexity of this is another client of mine, who participated in both group and private coaching with me, Dr. Dana Gibbs. Dana gets really personal and shares what she did to shift the parts of her that felt unlikable, less worthy than others, and like an imposter. I know you're going to find the details of her story, both powerful and relatable. Let's do this.

Welcome to *Habits On Purpose*, a podcast for high-achieving women who want to create lifelong habits that give more than they take. You'll get practical strategies for mindset shifts that will help you finally understand the root causes of why you think, feel, and act as you do. And now, here's your host, Physician, and Master Certified Life Coach, Kristi Angevine.

Hello, Hello, lovely humans. I am so excited because summer is here in Central Oregon, and I just absolutely love this weather. If you haven't been to Central Oregon in the summertime, it's really cool in the mornings, and then the temperature will rise nearly 30 degrees through the day. When you're in the sun, it's really warm. But when you get a little bit hot, you can just shift over and be in the shade.

I don't know the exact meteorologic description for this, but it's significantly cooler in the shade. It's not like being hot and humid and just sliding over to a darker spot and feeling mildly different. It is notably different. It's just so wonderful for me and my preferences.

So today, it's my pleasure to bring you another conversation with a client of mine, Dr. Dana Gibbs. Now, before Dana and I begin, I want to mention

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two things. First, if you're listening to this in real time, on June 21, 2023, you should join me tonight from 5:00 to 6:30pm Pacific Time for a workshop on perfectionism.

Now, if you can't attend live, sign up for the workshop anyways, because then you'll receive the replay. Just go to HabitsOnPurpose.com/Workshop2023 You'll leave the workshop with a better understanding of how perfectionism might show up in your life without you even realizing it, and what you can do to change it.

Secondly, if you are ready to start taking concrete action toward making real life changes with your habits, and you're a woman physician, my small group coaching program is currently enrolling. In the intimate community, capped at 30 women, we take the concepts and tools that I teach on the podcast, and I help you apply them.

Over the course of six months, you get practical, action oriented, cognitive, plus Internal Family Systems informed coaching that helps you unpack your patterns to their root causes. Then you learn how to self-administer tools, so you develop a personal skill set that you take with you for life. Plus, you can get CME and you can use your CME funds. Spots are first-come, first-serve. We start July 11, 2023, so check out all the details and sign up today at HabitsOnPurpose.com/HOPP.

Now, for the topic of the episode for today. Have you ever wondered how on earth you can create a meaningful shift in what feels like an intrinsic part of who you are? Or how deeply ingrained limiting beliefs can actually shift into new ones that are significantly more useful?

Well, today's guest elaborates on all of this by sharing her real-life experience with both private and group coaching, and specifically her experience with an Internal Family Systems informed approach. My guest is Dr. Dana Gibbs. She's a board-certified Otolaryngologist who has been in ENT private practice since 1999. She's now a speaker and the founder of Allergy Access MD.

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As a private client of mine, and participant in my group coaching program for women physicians, Dana knows firsthand the importance of coaching that incorporates cognitive plus body-based IFS informed approaches. I can't wait for you to hear what she has to share. So, without further ado, here's Dr. Gibbs.

Kristi Angevine: Alright everybody, welcome to the podcast. I have my lovely client, Dr. Dana Gibbs, who is joining me today for conversation. Dana, could you just give a little introduction to yourself for the people who don't yet know you?

Dana Gibbs: Sure. Absolutely. I am Dana Gibbs. Now, Clark, as I got married. I am an otolaryngologist. I've been in private practice for 24 years. And I live in Texas. I just retired from my full time ENT practice, and am moving on to, hopefully, bigger and better things. I'm starting a thyroid and hormone management direct care practice in the north Texas area right now. So, very excited about that.

Kristi: Oh, that is so exciting. I love to hear about people's new ventures, pursuing passions. So, you're calling in from Texas. Can you share maybe a hobby that you have or something that you're passionate about, that maybe people don't always hear in the first three minutes of meeting you?

Dana: Yeah, I like to restore old airplanes. Like old fabric covered Piper Cubs and that kind of old airplane. So yeah, that's a little bit of a unique, weird thing about me.

Kristi: That is definitely unique. I love that. Well, let's kind of dive into this. We have met through coaching, and we had seen each other's names online, like as a lot of these relationship start. But let's talk about before you knew about coaching, what did you think about coaching?

Dana: Oh, wow. I thought it was kind of bogus. I had an acquaintance who was a life coach. And she was the only person that I knew that had said anything about being a coach. Or, that was my only exposure to coaching. And my thought about it was, "This lady, she has kind of a messed-up life

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and a messed-up way of dealing with the world. How is she able to coach other people?" So, I thought it was kind of bogus actually, before seeking it out myself.

Kristi: I think you put to words what instantly comes to mind, of the caricature of a life coach, for so many people. For sure what came to my mind when I first learned about coaching. Because there's an idea that coaching sort of equates to advice giving, providing strategies, maybe accountability, or a cheerleader for the really wealthy and elite.

And yet, as you and I both now know, life coaching is such a broad and very unregulated and new industry; but it's such a broad thing. What are your thoughts about it now? What's shifted for you?

Dana: Maybe I ought to just tell a little bit, briefly, the story of how I decided that I needed coaching. Back in, I don't know, 2018 or 2019, I was working on our company 401(k). And so, I was looking for financial advice, basically. I was surfing the internet, and I stumbled on *The White Coat Investor* podcast. And I was like, "Wow, this is interesting." I asked questions on their forum and everything. And then started listening to the podcast.

One day, he had Bonnie Koo on the podcast. Bonnie Koo is a coach. For people who don't know, Bonnie Koo is a coach who focuses on finance and money for women. And at that point, that was kind of my first legit coach that I was exposed to, was Bonnie Koo. And so, that was interesting.

I started listening to Bonnie. And at that point, she went on a podcast with a lady named Carrie Reynolds, and they were interviewing women who had side gigs in medicine. They interviewed Katrina Ubell, who is now pretty famous in the coaching world. But Katrina Ubell, for those who don't know, is a weight loss coach. She trained at the Life Coach School, which is where a lot of physician coaches now have trained.

I started listening to her stuff. I'm like, "Yeah, I can stand to lose 10 pounds. Let me listen to what she has to say." And she started, on her podcast,

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explaining this idea that your thoughts create your feelings, create your actions, create your results. Which is kind of The Life Coach School philosophy. And I was like, “Oh, that's really interesting.”

I did what she said about losing weight, and I didn't really get the mindset part of it at that time, but then COVID hit. I was in so much stress and distress. I was like, “Oh, I need this mind thing.” And so, I tried on my own. I went and bought a book about coaching. I tried to coach myself and I tried to change how I was thinking about things. And I was like, “This is not working.”

Then, I finally said, “Okay, I'm going to have to drop some serious coin,” and I joined a coaching program. And it really did help me. I realized as I went into that, that I have this huge impostor syndrome. And I don't really like myself very much. All these thoughts started coming up, it was like opening the can of worms. And here came this snowball of ‘Holy crap, my life is really messed up.’

Because it was a group program that I joined, I started seeing other people's wins and other people's transformations. And I was like, “Wow, this is really real. This stuff really helps people. It's really amazing.” And so, I started speaking up. I started really trying to do the things that they encouraged people to do.

And it worked for me to a point. But part of coaching is that you have to think new thoughts in order to get different feelings, in order to get different results. I couldn't make myself believe the new thoughts. And that's where you came in. So, at this point, I am gung-ho, all-in on people getting a coach. I just think it's essential.

Kristi: Well, lest anybody think that I have some magic pixie dust that just hypnotizes people and gives them an internal lobotomy, and they can just believe new things magically, that is not actually how it works. I think what you just said, Dana, that's so important is that number one, coaching for many of us, until we actually experience it and see how practical, tangible,

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actually applicable it is in our real life, it almost seems like too good to be true.

It just can seem a bit like somebody sort of peddling something that's like, hyperbolic and bigger than life. And then, when you actually get into it, you highlighted the importance of actually doing the work. And actually applying the concepts in your real life, not just sort of passively consuming them.

Because a lot of the ideas, they sound great. "Oh, if I just think differently, I'll feel differently." It's true. And at the same time, unless you know how to do that, which nobody teaches us, that will have no impact on your life. Right?

What was it for you? I sort of get the sense that you went through this journey, but what made you want to sign up for individual coaching? You had a group experience, which we know is its own unique thing. But what made you want to do something more private?

Dana: I heard some stuff about this mind-body connection. And I thought, "Well, I wonder if I need to get more into my body in order to..." So, the problem that I was having was, okay, these new thoughts are all good and well, but I still really believe these old thoughts. It's really hard for me to just say this new thought over and over again, and eventually believe in it. It wasn't working for me in a lot of areas of my life.

And so, I started asking around. Okay, what other systems are there? What other ways of doing things are there? And then, actually, what the real kicker was for me, was that I heard this podcast. Folks maybe know Tim Ferriss, he's a very popular podcaster. And he interviewed Dick Schwartz, who started Internal Family Systems, and actually went through the process while he was live on the tape.

He said later, "This was so profound for me that I almost didn't publish it... but people need to hear about this." And so, he published it. I was in tears by the end of it. It was so profound. He uncovered some stuff from his background that were really disturbing. I'm pretty sure I don't have that, but

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what amazed me was, by the end of doing that process for 20 minutes, he was able to say, "Oh, I can let go of that part of me that believed that I must do this thing, or that I must believe this thing."

And I was like, "Wow, I need somebody who knows how to do this." And I didn't want to do it in the concept of hiring a psychologist. I really wanted to do it within coaching. And then, I found out that you did that, and I was like, "Sign me up."

Kristi: Yeah. For everybody listening, what Dana's referring to, is in Internal Family Systems, there's a particular methodology and psychotherapy, that works beautifully with coaching. We'll link that Tim Ferriss interview in the show notes. So, people who want to listen to that can go there. Because that's like the tip of the iceberg of how powerful it can be.

But for you, let's just talk a little bit about Internal Family Systems and that process for you. It's not your average approach, right? It's very unique in its own way. It's quite popular. But what was it like for you to sort of experience it?

Dana: I don't visualize things in living Technicolor the way Tim Ferriss was on that interview. But I can imagine me, and project myself into 'past me,' and feel the feelings that 'past me' felt. And so, that was kind of what was necessary to basically go back and rehash scenarios from long ago, that sort of ingrained in me this idea that I'm not good. That I'm not good enough. That I'm always going to be the butt of the joke. Or the one who's not as, I don't know, energetic, or not as likable or whatever.

So, I was able to, with your help, project myself into my 'past me' and see that that 'past me' has been, not purposely sabotaging, but trying to protect me from... It's hard to even explain what I'm talking about here. Protect me from being humiliated in those ways again, in my life. And that I don't need that 10-year-old or 12-year-old Dana to pull me up into a turtle shell and hide me from the world. Because those ideas that I'm not good enough are wrong.

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And I can look at examples through my life and go, "Oh, no, I don't need that anymore. And thank you for trying to protect me. But we've moved on from that.

Kristi: There's so many things about what you just said that I think we could probably talk about for hours. There're a few things that I just want to really highlight for people listening. Number one is, when you explore your system, you explore all beliefs, things you've learned, thoughts, parts, any bodily experiences of things, everybody's experience is different.

Some people really do have these very visual memories and experiences. Others of us think about things more in words, or can picture a younger version of ourselves. And it doesn't really matter how you do it, it all can get you back to where you want to go. And for those people who are listening, who are hearing what you're saying, and they're thinking, "Oh my gosh, I thought I was alone in feeling like I was unlikable," this is me and Dana saying, you're totally not alone.

This is, I don't want to say universal, but this is an extremely common sort of set of beliefs that many of us carry, and don't let other people know that we have. So, you're not alone. When you said it's hard to put into words, I think that's just such a really good thing to say. When you do some coaching work, sometimes it is hard to put into words.

But what you described so nicely, is that if there's a part of you from a long time ago that felt like you weren't likeable, and you develop sort of a pattern of going through the world to protect you from feeling all those feelings, protect you from feeling humiliated, as a younger person it makes perfect sense. It was the best, most resourceful thing you could have done it at the time.

And when you see that coming into your life now, you can, once you see it for what it is, you can look and go, "Oh, okay, I might want to change this." If that younger operating system was running, and it was there to protect you from humiliation, what types of things were you doing, in modern day

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'you' life, that you were like, "Oh, that was a part of me trying to protect me from being humiliated." Was it not talking to people? What was it for you?

Dana: Well, a particular instance comes to mind. So, for example, when I would get into a situation where I was being criticized for whatever, even if it was constructive criticism, but a lot of times when it was snarky and a little bit hateful and a little bit mean, I would really just completely go into full fight-or-flight mode. I would just completely freeze, is what I would do.

My brain would just freeze up, and I would be unable to articulate my point of view. I would be unable to justify my action or my diagnosis or my treatment plan, stick up for myself in any way. I would just freeze. Because it's like, oh, here's that bully again. And the only thing you can do to get away from them... They're two years older and 40 pounds heavier. And if they decide to hit you over the head, or punch you, or do whatever, you just make yourself as small as possible and run away as soon as you can.

And that scenario would play out for me over and over and over again. I'm thinking during residency, during med school, thinking about the first time I sewed on a human being; and I'm a doctor. First time I had to sew up a human being, and the resident who was supervising me made fun of me for crying.

I'm thinking about being on rounds. And I had a condition, at that time, where I would get lightheaded. And I would need to sit down. I squatted down in the hallway one day, because I was fixing to pass out. And having people say humiliating things to me about my behavior, which was trying to keep myself from passing out and hitting my head on the floor. I totally couldn't defend myself and say, "Hey, look, I have a condition where if I don't sit down, I'm going to pass out." I couldn't even defend myself.

So, all these things. And it's funny how front of mind those things were for me. It was like they happened yesterday. And they just kept coming up, they just kept coming up. Every time something similar would happen, it would be the same thing. It would be the senior partner's angry at me because I don't want to work full time anymore, or whatever.

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And I literally could not have an intelligent conversation because I would get so hyper defensive.

That has, over the time that we have been working together, that has really faded away. And that same partner said some humiliating, snarky thing to me, and I said I'm not going to be bullied anymore. I just called him out. And he got all huffy, "Oh bullied?" I'm just like, "Yeah, bullied." I called him on it. And I never could have done that before. Never could have done that.

Kristi: That's what I was just sitting here thinking, gosh, given that shift, what has changed for you. You're able to articulate. In the moment, instead of freezing and not being able to speak, you're actually able to say, this is what I'm experiencing. And I'm not going to do this anymore.

When you think about the impact of the work that you have done with using coaching for yourself, the impact that has had on relationships, on work, on your life in general, are there any other things that come to mind?

Dana: Well, I mean, truly, it has changed the trajectory of my career, for example. I mean, I'm getting ready to open a cash-based practice that's not directly in the field that I trained in. I know I'm going to have to go out and I'm going to have to market, and I'll have to do webinars, and I'm going to have to go on TikTok and tell people what I do. And there is no way, if you don't like yourself, and if you don't believe in yourself, there is no way you can do that and come across genuine, there's no way.

And so, there's no way I could be doing what I'm doing now if I hadn't dug into that and gotten that back to okay, I am worthy of existing on this planet. I am just as good as everybody else on this planet. And I've always said to myself, you're no better than anybody else on this planet. Deep down, I always believed I wasn't good enough. And it's like, what is enough?

You're enough just when you exist on the planet. Everybody's enough. Everybody's equally enough. I was two years into coaching, and I still didn't believe that. I didn't deep down believe I deserved to take up as much space as everybody else on the planet.

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Kristi: I love that you just said that, because I think, having experienced that myself and seeing in many people who they hear about coaching, or maybe they do coaching for a while. But the shifts that maybe, these big A-Ha epiphanies that maybe they hear somebody else has that maybe they don't experience.

And sometimes things do just take time. There's just a process involved. It's not you read one fancy quote, and all of a sudden, everything shifts. It's a process. And it's also not a process that ends. It's not like you get to the destination, where you're like, "Okay, every single day I wake up feeling amazing. Because I had the shift, and I now know I'm as worthy as anyone else." It's a meaningful shift, and also, life is still life and presents us with challenges.

Dana: Yes, yeah. You bring up a really, really important point. You can say, "Okay, I'm done with imposter syndrome. And then something will come up. And it's like, oh, I'm not done with it. I have to work on this some more." That kind of thing.

Kristi: So, let me just ask you this off-the-cuff thought on this. When something that you've worked on in the past and kind of resolved comes up again for you, what do you currently make it mean that it comes back up again?

Dana: Well, one thing I don't make it mean anymore is that I suck. Knowing some of the science behind it, those brain pathways are deeply entrenched. It takes time. And anytime a new situation comes up that's unexpected or sudden, or pulls you back into that childhood.

For example, when I'm interacting with my mom, she pulls me back. And I'm saying, 'she pulls me back,' but my brain pulls me back when I interact with her, because I've interacted with her in a certain way for so long, that sometimes it takes me by surprise. I'm like, "Oh, here we go again. Here's my brain doing that thing." So yeah, that's what I make it mean, is that those pathways take a long time to change.

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And that there's nothing wrong with me because I haven't 100% erased that way of being, after being that way for 55 years of my life.

Kristi: And that's such a profound point. I was just curious your experience of it now. Because oftentimes, when it's my experience, and what I see a lot of my clients go through, is that they get resolution on some really important aspect, like likeability, worth.

And then something happens, they get retriggered, reactivated, they have a big response that seems out of proportion to what's going on. And they think, "Wait a second, why is this coming back up? I thought I had solved for this. Oh, there must be something wrong with me."

As opposed to, "Oh, of course, based on what we know of how the human mind and how brains work with neuroplasticity, yes, there are things that can change. And yes, we will sometimes have old things come back up just as intensely as they were five years ago, before we did any of our work. And yet, it doesn't mean anything's gone wrong."

But just to hear you speak about it, instead of saying, "Well, my mom still always triggers me," you're like, "Oh, because of the patterns, when I'm in this very familiar set of circumstances with my mom, this is where my brain goes. And that's just what it does." That's such a different approach than, "My mom makes me feel this way, and that's just the way it is," right?

Dana: Right. Right. And it's funny because that, of course, is now in my head. It's your voice in my head saying, "Of course."

Kristi: Gosh, I don't know who I heard it from first, to be honest, as I think about it. But it is such a powerful thing. For me, when I use it for myself, because I use it for myself all the time, it will come in different people's voices, depending on the situation. Whether it's my friend or sometimes my kids, they'll say, "Well, of course," and I will hear their voice or a certain coach.

Just "of course," it's a way of saying, "And this makes sense. I make sense. Of course." It drops a lot of the natural resistance and judgment and what's

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wrong with me, and what's my problem, why have I not figured this out by now. It sort of diffuses that so quickly.

Dana: Yeah, I use that all the time. "Of course, my brain is doing me this way again."

Kristi: If we're going to leave listeners with something super practical, it would be that right there. This week, anytime something happens that you're curious about, or you get triggered by, or something's just not working how you'd like, try "of course," and find all the ways that actually does make sense.

The other thing I want to talk to you about is, we did private coaching together, and then you were also just a lovely participant in the Habits on Purpose for Physicians Group Coaching Program. So, we know group coaching and private coaching, they're their own unique things. But what was your experience of being in that group like?

Dana: Okay, well, first, I was a little uncomfortable always being the one who speaks up first. Just because, one, I had done a lot of coaching before. And so, I kind of know what you're supposed to say in any given situation. And the other participants in the group were pretty new to coaching. My impression was that they were all pretty new to coaching.

And so, I didn't want to just be like, "Oh, I'm the A student superstar. I know the right answers to everything." I didn't want to be that know-it-all person. And so, I spent a lot of time kind of hanging back. Going, "Oh, I'm going to push the button." But not because I wanted other people to see the thing.

With group coaching, I really do feel like everybody learns from everybody else's experience of the coaching. One of the reasons that I am able to speak up and be vulnerable, and say stuff that I would not say to my doctor colleagues here in my town, or whatever, is just because of example. Because I saw it happening in front of me, in another group.

And I was able to finally get my courage up and raise my hand, and say, "Okay, I want to talk about this." And realizing that it's a completely safe

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space. That nobody's judging you. Everybody has common experience. Everybody has lived through either something exactly the same or similar. And so, there's no reason not to raise your hand.

But just to see the progress that other people make, and the fact that they're able to finally get comfortable and open up and talk about stuff that they're maybe ashamed about, or whatever, and realizing that it's a no judgment zone. Nobody's going to make snarky comments. Nobody thinks that they're better than you because of whatever's going on. So, you can really take the maximum advantage of the group situation.

I also really liked going through the workbooks and all that stuff. I don't think I really finished them.

Kristi: None of us ever finish those workbooks.

Dana: And it's just like, "Darn it, I really want to get as much out of that as I can." But at the same time, you've got a life to lead and only a certain number of hours per week to work on it. And so, you've got to get as much as you can, out of it as you can. When you go into a group situation, it's just like, okay, I'm committing this many dollars and this many hours and get what I came for, basically.

Kristi: That really puts to words, when you come at it with a perspective of 'I'm getting what I came for,' it can help you really invest in doing the work. Even when there is that uncertainty of is this a safe space? Is it okay to share? Because when you first come to a group, it takes a little bit of time to know; you really don't know.

And so, one of the things that crosses my mind is, based on what you're talking about, about being the one to speak up, and also recognizing that being vulnerable is how we create connection. Some people when they come to a group, they really worry about feeling like they're going to belong, feeling like they're the only one with the problems they have. They worry about connecting with others. What was it like being in a community specifically of women physicians?

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Dana: Well, I mentioned that I said stuff in the groups that I never would have said to somebody who's in my town, who is a referral source to me, or is a competitor to me, or a colleague to me. God forbid, my partners. I wouldn't say any of that stuff to them. The only reason I was able to do that is because I didn't know any of those people personally.

And none of them live near me. Actually, that's not true anymore. Because, my circle has... Before I started into coaching, I had maybe 30 Facebook friends. And I think I have 800 or 900 now. And most of them are people that I met and interacted with through these coaching programs that I've been in.

And so, that's another benefit of it. Just broadening your social circle into like-minded people that are not going to be snarky, are not going to be critical, and not going to take what you say and turn around and stab you in the back with it. Because I'm sure that that's what a lot of people think when they go in. Is, "Oh my gosh, I can't say that out loud. Somebody's going to turn around and stab me with it."

Because if you're in a hospital system, and they offer coaching, you know all the people in the group with you. It's like, "Oh, no, I can't speak up in here. This is not a safe space."

Kristi: Yeah. Psychological [inaudible] I mean, it's absolutely essential to really explore things.

Dana: Yeah, you really have to feel like you're safe before you can do that. And for some reason, I now feel like I'm safe in these women physicians programs like what you have.

Kristi: So, I guess we're kind of wrapping up, is there anything about your coaching journey, about either private or group coaching, is there anything about how it's impacted your life? Or anything that, as we, reflect on what it's been like for you, anything else that you want to share?

Dana: You know, when I first started into coaching, this was pretty early in COVID, and never felt like I was depressed, like clinically depressed. But I

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had a lot of sleepless nights. I had a lot of hopeless thoughts. I had a lot of holy cow, what's going to happen to me? And I did end up leaving the job that I was in.

I make it sound like, oh, I retired, blah, blah. But truthfully, I left under duress. And I would never have had the courage to do that without coaching. I never would have felt confident enough in myself to think, "Okay, I can go and do something else. I am valuable. What I know is valuable. What I offer to people is valuable. And I'm smart, and I can go and figure this out." That would never have occurred to me before.

Kristi: That's really powerful. Just for anybody who's listening to this, who's like, "Gosh, where's the line where coaching ends and therapy begins? And getting a consultant or more of a professional mentorship position? How did those interact?" I just want to be the first to say, that I think all the ways that we interact with other people, where we can feel psychologically safe, and we can explore why we think and feel and what we do, whatever you call it, whether you call it therapy, coaching, consulting. All of them can be super effective.

I just happen to know the most about coaching, and your experience has been coaching, but almost any place where you can feel safely seen and heard, and explore why you do what you do, can be useful.

So, for people who are listening to this, and they're thinking, "Okay, so this coaching thing doesn't sound as crazy as maybe as I thought. Wow, it does actually sound really interesting," and they're considering either private coaching, or they're considering group coaching like I offer for the women physicians. What would you tell somebody who's on the fence or thinking about something like that?

Dana: I would say, go to people you know who have been in coaching programs, or who have worked with a coach, and get a referral. And don't necessarily give up just because the very first coach you interact with doesn't click with you. There's lots of coaches out there. Find somebody who resonates with you, listen to...

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Most of the coaches I've worked with have podcasts. Find somebody who resonates with you. Listen to what they have to say. And then just choose. I mean, it's not the end of the world. If you choose one person and you're like, "Okay, this is not working for me. I can never choose another coach." Well, of course, you can.

Just keep looking until you find somebody that you really click with. That's one thing. The other thing I would say, is that if someone is really having a lot of distressing thoughts, and feeling like they might be distressed, just go online, give yourself a PHQ-9. Or have your family doc do a PHQ-9 for you. And if you are depressed, if you're clinically depressed, go see a psychiatrist. Really, really just do it. Just do it. I'm starting to choke up again, because we've lost so many doctors in the last few years to suicide. It just breaks my heart.

Kristi: Many people, in many careers, do this. But in particular, physicians are really, really motivated to hide seeking any sort of services for mental well-being. They don't want anybody to know. And it could be career ruining in their minds. And so oftentimes, we won't seek the help that we actually need. And when we look at suicide rates amongst occupations, they're quite high in physicians, and they're disproportionately high in women physicians.

So, that's what Dana is referring to, is that there are many women physicians, and men physicians as well, who have died by suicide. And it's becoming so much more known. And so, it is absolutely essential that you know that you have resources.

Know that you're not alone, if you're feeling depressed or panicky, or you're having catastrophic thoughts. Absolutely not alone. And there's nothing wrong with you if that's what's going on. Nothing wrong with you. Meaning, nothing unfixable, defective. It just means you're a human who's experiencing those things. And there are so many people who can help.

Dana: Yeah, it's absolutely true.

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Kristi: Let's sort of take the 90° turn to the exciting things that you have going on. You are doing some really interesting new work. Is there a way that people can find you online and learn more about what you're up to?

Dana: Sure, absolutely. So, I have my blog on my website, which is DanaGibbsMD.com. And I am on TikTok now, DanaGibbsMD, and Facebook and Instagram. And I do have another business, which is AllergyAccessMD.com where I'm training other docs to do allergy in their physician offices. And that's been a huge challenge and lots of fun. I'm about halfway through my signature program. And it's going well. I'm enjoying that.

But that's not where my main focus of excitement is, right now. My main focus of excitement is on this new practice that I'm starting. And I'm starting to go out and go on other people's podcasts and talk about stress, and the hormonal changes that come with stress, and how high cortisol can actually make you depressed, and it's not something that's your fault; it's a physical manifestation. And so, I'm just so excited about that.

And every day I jump up, and I get to my desk and bang away furiously. I'm having a lot of fun with it, and excited about where that's going to go. I mean, I can't really see where it's going to go right now. But I know that I'm excited about work for the first time in a really long time. So, that's it.

Kristi: I love that. Everybody, go follow Dana, learn about what she's doing. And for those of you who really love to geek out about all things hormones and allergy, Dana is your person.

Dana: Oh, and I have a course for that too.

Kristi: Good. I love it. So, we'll have all that in the show notes. And I just want to take a minute and just tell you, it's so moving for me to see you do... To have been able to coach with you and see all of your progress. And then, just to hear your reflections on it right now, it's amazing.

And I really appreciate all the thoughtfulness that you brought to this conversation, and for taking the time out of your day, when you could be

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banging away at your keyboard. Instead, you come on here to talk to my listeners about what coaching has done for you, so thank you for your time.

Dana: Thank you for having me. It's been really interesting and fun. And really, what you have done for me, I can't even say how much it's helped me.

Kristi: Well, thank you so much, Dana.

If you're a woman physician, and you're ready to start taking ownership of your experience, to change habits like perfectionistic thinking, second guessing, self-criticism, compare and despair and more, enrollment for the HOPP Small Group Coaching Program is open now. We start July 11, 2023, and we meet weekly for six months.

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