

Navigating a Client's Lack of Growth: Episode 239

Elena: Hello friends. Welcome to the Bright Morning Podcast. I'm your host Elena Aguilar, and in each podcast episode, you'll hear me demonstrate how you can lead conversations that build connection and spark change. Today, we're diving into what can be one of the trickiest and sometimes the saddest situations for a coach to have to navigate with a client at the end of the school year.

And I am talking about the painful reality of when a client doesn't make meaningful progress towards their goals. So this topic comes from my new skill session, which is called Gathering Data and Reflecting on a Client's Growth. That entire session is focused on the ways that you can capture growth and then structure an end of your conversation with your client.

Overwhelmingly, this will be the situation. There will be so much learning and celebrating to do, but that isn't always the case. So today I'm gonna share a few suggestions for how to navigate the times when it feels like your client doesn't meet their goals or when they feel like they haven't made progress.

Okay, so you are facilitating an end-of-year reflection with your client and they look at their goals for the year and conclude that they didn't meet them and they didn't make any growth. The first thing that you need to do as the coach is to get curious. And the second thing is to help your client get curious.

You will probably also want to acknowledge their emotions because these kinds of moments can feel painful, but see what happens if you nudge them quickly towards curiosity. You can always come back to the emotions if necessary or if the client really wants to process those first. But see what happens if you ask some or all of the following questions, ask them, what do you think happened?

Where did the breakdown occur? Were these the wrong goals? Were the goals too ambitious or too much of a reach? Did you have too many goals? What came up that prevented you from meeting your goals? And if you could travel back in time, what would you do differently?

So those are some good starting questions, but you can also follow up with asking if you don't feel like you made growth towards the goals that you set, do you feel like you made growth in other areas? And if they don't feel like they

made any growth at all in their teaching practice that year, then ask them, what do you think that's about?

And you know when people say, I don't think I made any growth at all. I actually don't buy it. And so I would encourage you to probe until something comes up. Maybe even just an insight around their state of mind or the conditions in which they were working that year, and those insights would be growth.

And now the other thing that might come up is you may have noticed your client's growth in some areas and maybe they just haven't recognized that growth. And in that case, it is absolutely fine for you to share your observations. But just be sure that your offerings are grounded in data, that they are observations based in concrete data.

So for example, don't say, I've noticed you're just calmer now. 'Cause that's so general. So you could say something like. When I think back to the beginning of the year, I remember you were often scrambling around at the last minute before students arrived to get supplies organized and get your slides projected and so on.

And recently, I've noticed that in the 20 minutes or so before school starts, you're often standing in the halls chatting with parents, and that's a change. That's growth. Okay, I am actually going to stop there for today. So, as I said at the start of the episode, these situations are usually outliers.

Overwhelmingly, there's gonna be so much growth to capture and to celebrate with your clients in their end of year conversations. And if you wanna know exactly how to make that a reality, then check out the show notes for a link to my skill session on gathering data. And reflecting on a client's growth, which is in the Coaching Learning Library, and this is my newest offering that I'm thrilled to share with you.

Okay, folks, if you appreciated this episode today, I'd be so grateful if you would share it with someone who also might benefit from it.

And or you could hop over to Apple Podcast where you could leave us a five star rating and a review. And this helps our show reach new friends. And I also really appreciate your reviews. Okay. Leslie Bickford is the podcast producer and Stacey Goodman does the sound engineering, and you would not be hearing this today without their support.

Take care, everyone.