

# How to Coach BIG Emotions: Episode 262

**Elena:** If you've ever had a, what do I do now moment when a client is overwhelmed by intense emotion, then this episode is for you. Hello, friends. Welcome to the Bright Morning Podcast. I'm your host Elena Aguilar, and in each podcast episode. You'll learn how you can lead conversations that build connection and spark change.

So today we're talking about one of the most complex and often uncomfortable aspects of coaching emotions. You know the situation, you sit down to coach and your client starts crying or they shut down and go silent. Or they get stuck in endless venting or they say, I don't wanna talk about feelings. And you're left wondering, what do I do now?

So in previous episodes, I've talked about the first go-to tool in these situations, which is my ACE Emotions Framework. In today's episode, we're going beyond ACE Emotions. We're diving into what to do when your usual strategies don't work. If you are new to this topic, then I recommend that you listen to Episode 88 and then hop back to this episode, and I've linked that one in the show notes for you.

So most coaches are prepared to talk about teaching practices, goals, and data. But when emotions show up, we freeze. We don't know how to respond. Sometimes we might either get stuck in therapist mode or we might avoid the emotion entirely. And in both cases, we miss an opportunity. So what I want you to know is this: you can coach emotions skillfully.

You just need some strategies. Maybe you try to be supportive, but you don't know how to bring the conversation back to teaching. Or maybe you feel pressure to move on quickly, or maybe you're just scared you'll say the wrong thing. So all of that is normal. But if we don't learn how to be with emotions in a way that is grounded and effective, we can't help our clients grow.

When I first started coaching, I would sit across from teachers who would sob and sob and sob, and I had no idea what to do. Sometimes I handed them



tissues, and I would try to steer the conversation back to curriculum. Sometimes I stayed in that supportive friend zone for far too long and neither of these approaches worked, and that's really when I began developing the Ace Emotions Framework and later strategies for when ACE isn't enough.

So for example, when a client is completely overwhelmed and crying, ACE won't work right away. First you need to help them regulate. That might mean helping them ground in their breath or guiding them to notice their surroundings. It can sound like right here, right now you're safe. Let's take a slow breath together.

Or maybe you're working with someone who avoids emotion completely. And in that case, you might say something like, I'm hearing a lot of frustration and I wonder if it might help to name what's underneath. It's your choice.

Doing this work around emotions is nuanced and it needs to be slow, and it can be really powerful. And you don't have to do it alone. So in our Skill Session that's called Beyond Ace Emotions, I walk you through five common emotional coaching scenarios. A client who won't stop crying. A client who refuses to talk about feelings, a client who uses the session only to vent a client who is emotionally flat or resigned, and a client who is stable but not thriving.

So in this Skill Session, you get exact phrases to use. Downloadable tools and practice prompts to help you grow your skills. If you want me to guide you through this and 47 other common coaching challenges, you will find a link to the Skill Sessions in the show notes. Okay? Here's your challenge this week.

Think of a client who has been especially emotional or shut down and then write down two or three phrases that you could use next time you're in that situation and practice saying them out loud. Let your body register what it's like to say something hard and kind and real. So remember this coaching is emotional work.

You don't have to fix the feelings, you just have to know how to be with them. Okay? In this show notes, you'll find a link to the Beyond Ace Emotions Skill Session. It is included with your coach learning library subscription. So if you're not yet a subscriber, then this is one of those sessions that will expand your



capacity in incredible ways, and you'll find a link to our upcoming free community webinars also in the show notes.

And thank you for tuning in today. If you found this episode useful and you are listening via podcast, then consider sharing it with someone who you know who might benefit from it. Okay. And you could also hop over to Apple Podcasts and leave a five-star rating and a review to help others discover it.

And I do read all of the reviews, and they do mean a lot to me. And if you're watching this on YouTube and this video sparks something for you, then give it a like, and also share it with a colleague. If you're not watching on YouTube, then if you would like to come over there and join us and you'll find links to the channel in the podcast, show notes.

All right, friends. LesLee Bickford is the podcast producer and Stacey Goodman does the sound engineering. Take care, everyone and be well.

