



Interview with Melanie Benson Strick

Host: Bart Baggett

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Bart Baggett Interview with Melanie Benson Strick

Bart: Hello everyone, welcome back to another addition of 100 Coaching Tips. I am your host, Bart Baggett, pleasure to be here. I've got another wonderful guest and if you've been keeping track with our guests, you know they've just gotten better and better. We've started to get comments and testimonials. We did a survey last week to find out more about who you are and we're improving every week and we're really happy that you're here.

We've become sort of a coaching resource to help you expand and explore your coaching business. We've had some amazing people, if you've missed some of the previous interviews, see if they're on replay. If you want some directions on which replays are most appropriate for you, please send us an email. I'm Bart@100CoachingTips.com and Steve is at Steve@100CoachingTips.com, Steve's the co-producer.

And one of the questions we had today was, you know, they wanted to buy like all 24 programs, because we give the transcripts. And she said, "Gosh, there's so many, you know, where do I start?" Drop us an email and let us know, you know, what you're doing, what niche you're in and we'll tell you which of the experts had the most pertinent information.

I know some of you have been with me from the beginning and we really have explored some wonderful strategies, any one of them could turn you guys into a six or seven figure business.

Now before I get to my guest tonight, I must say, I'm just thrilled that she has agreed to be on our program. We've really had top-flight coaches and those of you that are new to 100 Coaching Tips, maybe you haven't opted in, I encourage you to go to the home page, 100CoachingTips.com, it's a private member list, and you can get access to the replays. There's a whole bucket load of bonus materials there with mp3s and ebooks and some really great stuff that really has value and it's all as a gift for you for being a member and allowing us to create a relationship as a coach and other coaches. Because this really is just for coaches—coaches, mentors, speakers, book authors, anybody that wants to put coaching as part of their business model. We've explored some tremendously profitable and authentic and helpful ways to make money as a coach or a mentor, as basically a server of other people. It's been really wonderful.

Tonight's guest is of the same cloth, which means just a remarkable talent, we feel blessed that she's with us. Her name is Melanie Benson Strick and she's got a couple of different topics, but I've asked her to sort of talk about what she's known for, which is the MoneyDNA, Automatic Wealth Attraction, which who doesn't want more of that? You know, one of my books is called *The Success Secrets to Rich and Happy*, so Melanie and I could probably talk for hours about attracting wealth, and I want to do that. But what I told her, I said, "You know, after we surveyed our people, there are so many coaches here that have five, ten clients a week, maybe they're just starting coaching," maybe some of you are even just thinking about starting coaching. So I've asked her to kind of to pull back the curtain on her business model and really tell us how she went from, I think it was a very low figure, like from nothing, like she started her coaching practice from nothing, and in 9 months, went over to \$100,000. Now that's a story that I want her to share with you.

I've also asked her to talk about, with coaching, what's right and wrong, who knows if they're in the right niche, what if a coach has too many ideas for their practice? And then really, what three things must we do differently for our coaching practice to survive?

And before I welcome her, let me tell you a little about her. She is best known as America's leading authority on optimum performance. So she's not just a coach or coach's coach but she's worked with some of the biggest entrepreneurs in the business. One of the ones you might be familiar with is StomperNet. A friend of mine named Brad created, was one of the first one or ten million dollar online launches, and she really has been sort of behind the scenes at some of the biggest entrepreneurial start-ups.

I guess my favorite thing about your bio, Melanie, is you're a proud lifestyle enthusiast and spend your time in search of the best spa and best beaches in the world. Welcome to the program.

Melanie Benson Strick: Thank you. You know, it's so funny, I could have all the best accolades, but that's the one that everybody loves the most.

Bart: It's because you're a proponent of live your life and be abundant and have a great time doing it. Like who doesn't want to search for the best beaches?

Melanie Benson Strick: And spas!

Bart: I forgot about the spa.

Melanie Benson Strick: Yeah, don't forget the spa, that's a really important one. I can see which one's your favorite.

Bart: Oh, I spent three weeks on a beach making a movie recently and I'm not a big fan of beaches anymore because they're cold when you have to go in and out for eight hours.

Melanie Benson Strick: That's true.

Bart: So tell me, thank you for being on the call. You have so much to share about coaching because you went from zero to nine figures in nine months, is that correct?

Melanie Benson Strick: It is. And I've been in business 11 years now and ever since I hit that mark, I've been the 6 and 7 figures. And I don't say that from a space of, you know, bragging or that it's something that everyone can do, it's just that I know right now a lot of coaches are really struggling to figure out how to get their business to perform properly.

So I love being able to talk about this because I'm an open book, I will tell you everything I've done, I love being able to help other coaches have a, the impact that they want to have out there in the world, so I'm thrilled to be here.

Bart: Well, thank you. I've been so pleased at the authenticity of the coaches because, you know, a lot of us, we get on stage and we talk to the general public and we've got the story and you've got, you know, the moments when you cried. But so few times, you know where you find this conversation? In the hallway of the marketing conferences when everybody else is inside.

Melanie Benson Strick: Exactly.

Bart: It's those conversations you and I have had for years in the, outside of the hallway, that's sort of what this has become and it's so valuable because that's where all the kernels of gold and wisdom is. You know what one secret is? You should do this. And you go home and you do it and boom – you know, you've made \$6-7,000 in an email.

So that's kind of what we're looking for and that's why—and I want to talk about your MoneyDNA because it's such an attractive topic. But I emailed you and I said,

“Can we talk about what’s behind the curtain?” and you were so open to that, I mean, it’s so wonderful.

Melanie Benson Strick: Well, and it’s a perfect connection because it all fits together, which we’ll reveal as we get through your questions tonight.

Bart: Well, my first question is, tell me your story.

Melanie Benson Strick: Okay.

Bart: You’re now working with entrepreneurs and now you’ve got a seven-figure business. But when you started 11 years ago, you decided, “I’m going to be an entrepreneur,” and you’re going to make coaching part of your business model. I mean, how did you go from 0 to \$100,000 in 9 months? That’s a great path, I mean, we’d all like to do that.

Melanie Benson Strick: Yeah. So here’s how this all unfolded. I actually did it reverse of what you just said. I left Motorola, who I’d been working with for ten years and had, you know, achieved some pretty significant success there, but I felt this calling to have a greater impact on the world.

So I wanted to be a coach. And I had this deep desire to give back to the world, to have a greater impact, so I researched and went to school and got my training and left, and I struggled for a year. It was really tough, Bart, it was probably the most humiliating, humbling, like just transformational time. I always say that, you know, your business as a coach and as a transformational leader is always your greatest personal development tool, because it just mirrors back to you everything about who you are and what you need to know.

And so what really shifted for me was the moment that I realized that in order to achieve any kind of sustainable success, I actually had to admit and decide that I was going to learn how to be an entrepreneur. So there was a little bit of a flip there that recognizing that as a coach I had learned how to take on clients for \$350 a month and in order for me to make my goals, I was going to have to see about 40 clients a month, and that was a lot. I just saw that as an overwhelming prospect and I really looked around and said, “So what is working?” And I realized that 90% of the success that my colleagues were having, and at that time I was meeting a lot of really influential, powerful leaders who, you know, were in my industry in this area and I realized that their shift, the way they thought about themselves was they

realized they were an entrepreneur and they had to think and act and choose to do things that would cause them to thrive in business.

And I think what happens, and I know this was going on for me, is as a coach, I was only willing to do things that felt good. And that meant there was a lot of things I wasn't willing to do that I really need to learn how to do. I need to learn how to have an enrollment conversation. I need to learn how to set up a structure for my business that was actually capable of delivering six figures plus. I had to be willing to embrace that some of the things that I was uncomfortable about had very little to do with right and wrong and what worked and what didn't work, it had to do with all these stories that I had built up in my mind about what I was capable of or, you know, what was possible in the world.

And so, Bart, my greatest breakthrough came because, not because I was immersed in all this great marketing training, not because I was learning how to run all these great components of my business, but simply because I had an extraordinary, outrageous mindset shift.

And once I had that mindset shift, and I'm happy to talk more about what that was, but once I had that shift, what I realized was, up until that moment in time, I had been unconsciously rejecting 90% of the strategies, concepts, and possibilities that would actually cause me to be able to make more money and achieve a higher level of success. I literally just rejected, and they didn't exist, they weren't possible for me.

Bart: Some of the books talk about the reticular activator system and how we just delete information, we don't see it. We simply don't see it, because it's not in a reality. So your shift from, "I'm going to be a coach and I'm going to come out with my certificate," to "I'm a business person," is it that you saw more strategies, people told you more? Or literally you just deleted them like, "I'm not a salesperson. I'm not going to do that. I'm not going to learn Facebook. I'm not going to do outbound calls." You just basically rejected them or unconsciously you just thought, "That's not what I want to be." I mean, tell me more about what you rejected because it seems like people are looking for a magic key. Like, "Oh, give me the one email or give me the one system that's going to make me wealthy," and it's not about that, it's about being able to sort and define the proper mechanisms.

Melanie Benson Strick: Right. I think it was multi-faceted. You know, when you have this kind of significant breakthrough in your thinking, there's a lot of things that

happen very quickly. And what happened for me is, I'm just going to tell you a little bit about what happened in that mindset shift.

At that time, I was very unconsciously keeping myself small because I was still in the phase where I felt like I wanted to have a family. And so I was in this internal war and I talk about this in some of the webinars that I do here because these wars are really interesting, that we get into these conflicts.

And I had this conflict between wanting to grow my business and achieve—I didn't even have my mind on 7 figures yet, I just wanted to get to 6 figures, because at that time I was making less than \$1,000 a month. And it just equated freedom to me. And yet, I unconsciously, I kept holding myself back, there was a part of me that said, "Yeah, but what if I end up having a kid?" Or, "What if I end up getting married and," you know, all these what-ifs, what-ifs. And I was just so in this quagmire and it was very, like very much underneath the surface. I wasn't fixated on, it was just this deep conversation going on in the back of my mind.

And so I cleared that out, cleared out a couple other things using my MoneyDNA transformation process and what happened was, I recognized that I had right in front of me, all the resources, all the tools, all the support I needed, but I had to be willing to do it differently. And the first decision I made was, I have to find a model that's more scalable than meeting with 40 people a month for \$350 a month in order to make my financial goals. And there's nothing wrong with that. It's a very powerful mechanism that many of my friends to this day still use. But it wasn't aligning for me and it wasn't the thing that was clicking for me.

So I learned how to create a more scalable business model, I call them leveraged business models. And I realized that what I wanted to do was figure out, A) how to charge more, which I quickly did, I actually, interestingly enough, Bart, the moment I charged \$500 a month, I had 10 times as many clients as when I was charging \$350 a month.

Bart: And that's not big of a jump, but it was huge.

Melanie Benson Strick: It's not. But it was significant in the mind of the people interviewing me, because they saw it as more credible.

And then the second thing I did was, I raised my rates again, and I put into place group coaching. So I basically created a series of ways that people could hire me or engage me to learn from me. And my specialty at that time was getting out of

overwhelm. And the overwhelm was so huge and not very many people were talking about it back then, keep in mind this was 10 years ago—and by the way, that was before Facebook was even a reality. It was like, well, this was before MySpace even. And, you know, it was about really getting that I could create ways for people to engage my knowledge without me having to be present. And that was a revolutionary breakthrough moment. Because for many coaches, particularly coaches that I still, I still work with a lot of coaches today, there's a resistance point sometimes saying, "But if they don't get me, how can I do it?" Or, "I don't know what I would talk about and put it into a program that people could buy." But yet I found that it was the thing that skyrocketed my credibility, it put me on stages all over the world, and it caused me to now have a reputation where people were actively paying me \$15,000 to coach for six months. And it was just like a game-changer moment, being able to have these different ways that people could access me.

Bart: Here's the shift that I'm hearing is, you were taught in your coaching programs, coaching is one-on-one, that's the way. What your breakthrough was is you basically said, "Well, this is a business and this business makes X-amount of dollars." And you did the math, you're like, "There's no way I can work this much and have sanity if I only do one on one." So you stopped exchanging time for dollars and you decided to leverage, which is the word that you did, and you opened the group coaching model and the speaking model and you added that, and that really exploded your thinking as well as your mindset, as your business.

Melanie Benson Strick: Absolutely. Yeah, and I think kind of the paradigm underneath all of this was when I realized that I was an entrepreneur and it included coaching and mentoring people, but I there were other ways that I knew that I was meant to, you know, bring this transformation of, you know, helping people thrive in their business and learning how to leverage their time and energy better, I realized that for me to be successful, I had to think like a business owner, not like a coach. And when I thought like a coach, I kept thinking, "How do I do it?" When I thought like a business owner, I thought, "How can I get other people to help me do it? How can I get this out there in a bigger way?" And it just completely shifted the lens that I saw every opportunity through.

Bart: I think my big shift was when I realized I was in the information business, instead of in the book business or instead of in the seminar business. And then I went, "Wow, people get information," and then I realized, "I'm actually in the change business. I want to create a transformation for people." And when I realized that, especially now because I've got people, I've got a huge branch in India, and I've got

thousands of students certified through some of my programs, and I'm not there. And so it actually took, you know, years for them to create this, and I show up and shake hands and I realized, I didn't do any of this. My intellectual property did this, but it was all based on stuff I did 15 years ago. And I just went, "Oh, my gosh, I'm in the business of creating change and information and I'm not attached at all at the delivery system." And so if I was still attached to one on one, I could never have broken the five figure mark, much less the six or seven figure.

Melanie Benson Strick: Yeah, I had a client a few years ago, who is very **** I think you know him, he's very well known in the dating industry. And this is a guy that just loved coaching his clients, but he was stuck, he'd kind of hit this ceiling where he couldn't go any further because there was no more time to coach and he was frustrated and overwhelmed and he kept seeing all these people like get to the other side, but he didn't quite know how to do it.

And one of the things that we did, and this is so common, I'm sharing it because it's such a common shift that we have to experience to get to the other side, is we started to look at what are the ways he could package his knowledge and capture it. Now, he was so resistant in the beginning, he's like, "No way can I do this," but we mapped it out. And what happened on the other side was, he went from kind of being stalled out to early six figures and he's way into the top six figure earnings now. And now we're working on like how do we get him into the next, you know, paradigm of success? Because he's realized now that every time he liberates himself more and more from the doing, he actually expands his ability to generate income and he can put his focus on the bigger vision, as Timothy Ferriss in the *Four Hour Work Week* calls it, the bigger fish to fry, and allow himself to get, you know, his sales and his income and, you know, more lower-level activities done through other people. That's a really big paradigm shift.

You know, and when we accept that and we recognize it and we get excited about it, then we can start to be open to things. Because what I experienced, and Bart, I don't know if you noticed this, is that sometimes people aren't open to having it be different and how they've cleared out a limiting belief or maybe the story they've created about what's possible for them. Because people make up stories like, "It's going to be too hard, it's going to cost too much, I don't know how to do it, so I don't want to mess it up so I'm just not going to." They believe that, you know, they can't get to that other side of the income bracket because they don't deserve money, or, you know, whatever, there's like a million different things that people come up with. But I feel like that's one of the things that we've all had to do in order to wake up to these bigger possibilities.

Bart: Well, I think a lot of people, they think, "I'll delegate when I have more money."

Melanie Benson Strick: Yes.

Bart: It's like for accounting, like, you know, "I can do the QuickBooks," and then all of a sudden it's Friday night, they're doing the accounting, they're sweeping, they're taking the trash out, very Michael Gerber-ish, as far as the story. But it's not so much you're going to have a big bunch of money dumped in your lap and then you can free yourself. It's kind of the reverse. You have to start freeing yourself and delegating and get a virtual assistant, go buy some people on Fiverr.com, all these ways that you can leverage your time so you can spend it where you get the most dollars per hour.

And I guess what I'm hearing from you and a lot of the speakers is, when people first start coaching, they think, "I'm going to coach one on one and that's going to be my revenue." But then of course, that means they're a one-person, they're a baker, they're a baker, shopkeeper, accountant, door painter, they're everything. And so much of their energy is drawn away, you know, just doing the basic things. And I think that's the distinction that you're saying, "I'm an entrepreneur."

One of the shifts that I made is, I'm interested in films now, you know, you can't make a film for less than \$200-300,000. If you want to make a good film, it's a million. Well, that's nothing I even considered pulling out of my back account. Like, I'm not going to go write a check for a half a million dollars, right? But all of us do that, we're like, "Well, we're going to start a business, but you know what? I can get a coaching certificate for a grand, I can write a check for it." But you wouldn't consider putting a business together like a real business. No, you'd raise money, you'd write a business plan, you'd delegate, you'd hire people. And so I don't think people perceive this as a business as much as like a service. Is that kind of your perception of the word entrepreneur?

Melanie Benson Strick: Yeah, I think that's exactly what it is and I think a lot of people, we get very attached to our calling. We get very attached to this work, especially as coaches. 90% of the coaches that enter that marketplace have entered it because they feel called to help other people. Now, 10% of them are doing it for other reasons, you know, it's kind of been a career path that evolved for them or they're part of a corporate coaching program of some kind. But, you know, 90% of

the people who are in this marketplace feel called to do it. And yet it's almost like if they're not coaching, they don't want to do any of the other stuff.

And I only say that because, you know, and I'm not trying to pick on anybody or make anybody wrong, it's not about right or wrong, it's about really recognizing what's going to work and really making decisions that'll set you up to have the most amazing life possible.

And here was what I found myself doing. I started to see all the different ways that I could grow, but in order to make the bills, in order to get the income, I found myself working 12, 14, 16-hour days, I caught myself working every day of the week, and after about 4 months of this, I literally went and I'm sitting at my computer and I'm going, "Oh, my God, I am a basket case. I haven't had time off in forever, I feel so stressed," I was grumpy, you know, my family's calling me. You know, my family doesn't live far away, they're asking me if they want to come over for dinner, I'm like, "I'm sorry, I can't," they're like, "I thought you were an entrepreneur so you have freedom." And I'm sitting realizing like, "I don't have any freedom, I have a job, I have a trap, I'm doing the same thing I did for Motorola for 10 years," which was work every day for 12, 15-hour days. That's what I did. And I had just recreated that pattern all over again because I didn't understand how to leverage myself.

And so you were talking about delegation and one of the best decisions I made, once I had that mindset shift was, I hired someone. Could I afford them? No, I couldn't. But what I realized was, the reason I was working 14 hours days was, I had a goal. I wanted to achieve that goal. And time and space has a limitation to it at this point in our journey. We haven't figured out how to really melt time unless we're leveraging time. So I realized by hiring someone to do the things that A) I didn't know how to do, and B) that could help speed up my path to getting things done and out and making money faster, that I would have a shorter path.

So part of the reason why I was able to jump from \$1,000 a month to 6 figures was I invested wisely in really powerful leverage strategies. I hired someone to help me get my product out and I hired a mentor to help me structure my business and I hired a virtual assistant to get it all taken care of, to manage my clients, to help me get things online, and to do the things that would take me months, if not years, to learn.

And what happened was, I shortened my cycle between idea to implementation to profit. It freed me up to do the things like put the joint venture partnerships

together, to work on getting my signature talk **** and to be able to go and speak at events where I could get those bigger boost of clients. And the turning point was when I was able to get enough of that done, I had my product, and I had a leveraged, I had a group coaching program, and events in one year, or actually it was in less than a year, that's what really was the turning point. I was able to get traction because I was freed up from the trap of like, "I've got to make money to get through this month, I've got to get money." It was, "No, I've got to get the bigger vision out."

Bart: What do you think the first step is, if you're at a coach, and you're wearing all the hats, you know, you're wearing all the hats, virtual assistant, writing a book, I mean, I think that they just get fatigued and like, "Well, I can't afford," which is, I think the biggest excuse I've ever heard is, "I can't afford to hire somebody." I think what Tim Ferriss says or Michael Gerber or one of them were like, "If anything you're doing, someone could do less than \$10 an hour, you should delegate it." I don't know who actually said that, but my interpretation is, well, I'm definitely worth more than \$15 an hour, why am I doing my own laundry? Why am I taking, you know, 45 minutes to go to the bank? And I tracked all that time, I'm like, "Wow, I'm worth \$15 an hour if I keep doing that stuff." Is that the mentality that you just had to sit down with yourself and have a heart to heart?

Melanie Benson Strick: Yeah, there's a couple things. One, my mantra is this: When I teach the Build Your Dream Team program, which is all about how to delegate and really maximize your profits as an entrepreneur, is to do two things. One, you have to first of all understand the concept and buy in fully to, if somebody could do it better, faster, or cheaper than me, and I want you to write this down, because if you're listening in right now and you're stuck in this area, this is going to be a liberating moment. Better, faster, or cheaper, and the faster part is critical. Because you don't have to spend all this time learning all this stuff if someone can help you get it done faster and get it out there.

But I think part of it, the fundamental issue, Bart, is that, you know, we all get that we want to delegate, but people feel trapped by their financial status. And so you said, you know, there's this whole hold back of, "I can't afford it," and one of the things that was the most—the second-most powerful thing that came to me in this whole process was I started to realize that if I kept saying I can't afford something, then what I'm doing is I'm teaching myself to not be able to afford anything I want. You know, I call it your MoneyDNA, and your MoneyDNA is an energy, it's a vibration that you create through your thoughts and your actions. And the thoughts that we think cause us to reinforce a limiting belief or a story that fundamentally we think is

possible in the world, and I'm not going to get into that tonight, because that's a whole thing and I'm happy to share a resource that's totally free if people want it later. But I think the most important thing is to recognize that those messages are key. And so instead of saying I can't afford something that you know is going to help you, a more powerful way to move forward is to say, "What would have to have to happen so I could invest in my business in this way?" And when I started challenging that part of me that always came up with, "Well, I can't afford it, so I can't have it," because you just shut down at that point. A more powerful place to start is, "What would have to happen?"

So, all right, "Well, I need to be able to pay for this assistant." And this is exactly how I hired my first assistant. I said, "Well, what would have to happen?" Well, the first thing I did was I approached her for a barter arrangement, and she was thrilled because everybody at that point was starting to understand my reputation in this area and she knew I was a great coach and she needed coaching. As a matter of fact, I turned her into one of the top grossing, online business managers before online business managers came out and she ended up, we ended up parting ways because she got so busy and she was just so successful that it didn't end up, you know, making sense for us to continue to work together because I didn't need what she was doing in that capacity any more. So the funny thing was, I kind of coached her out of working for me, but what I realized was, is that that bartering arrangement was what gave me the courage to get me started, but very quickly, we were beyond the bartering and it didn't make sense to barter.

So then I had to say, "Well, all I need it 2 clients a month and if she's doing 10 hours or 15 hours of work a week, sorry, work a week for me, and I can take that 10 to 15 hours and invest it in the marketing and the client enrollment conversations and serving those clients, this is a no-brainer." So actually what happened was I ended up with six new clients because of our new arrangement and I was in profit. And that's how it works, that's the very first step to take if you feel like, "I can't afford it," or "I don't know where to start." I want you to ask yourself a more powerful question, and not the disempowering question of "I can't afford it."

Bart: Now, you said you had six clients. What price point were you looking for six clients? Is that once a week? So you have 6 clients once a week so you have 24 meetings a month? Is that kind of how you were breaking that down?

Melanie Benson Strick: At that point, this was about 2 years into it, I think I was charging \$500 a month, and they had 3 45-minute sessions with me.

Bart: So three times a month?

Melanie Benson Strick: Yeah. And so, you know, again, this was a completely different, you know, paradigm back then. But, you know, at that time, what I was finding was is that even that set up caused me to feel in abundance. And being in abundance allowed me to be able to maneuver my time better.

Now very quickly what I did, I feel like it's kind of helpful to tell people how it evolved, is I went from having that one-on-one time to having a group. And so my next step from that was to create a group of people who were paying me \$500 a month for two group calls and one private coaching call a month. And that shift was extraordinary because I had 10 people now paying me \$500 a month for half the work.

Bart: And you had a guaranteed \$5,000 a month income.

Melanie Benson Strick: Yes.

Bart: Kind of like an automatic residual. Obviously some come and some leave.

Melanie Benson Strick: Right.

Bart: But that must have given you a lot of security to hire new people or hire a web designer, because you saw this consistent cash flow.

Melanie Benson Strick: Yeah. The next step for me was to get the products out. And that was the evolution, was to get that so I could financially be in abundance, and then I started getting my product out, and that product was a \$300 product, and now that gave me something to sell that wasn't just my time. And so that's what I would sell when I would go to events and/or, if I was doing a teleseminar for someone who wanted me to make an offer. And then it grew from there, and then from there I started launching higher-end mastermind programs and more in-person retreats, and it just kind of evolved from there. When I hit the six figures, it was because I had added the coaching and the products and I had started selling at live events and I had just started to book one-day private sessions, and that's kind of what teetered me over the edge into six figures. And then when I got into the multiple six figures, it was because I had a variety of clients that were paying me for one-days and private sessions, as well as mastermind groups that started at \$15,000.

Bart: That's amazing. So I'm looking at some of our surveys, and if you didn't take our survey, we would love you to take a survey, check your emails from a couple weeks ago. But over 50% of the people that are on our membership call that are surveyed, are making less than \$10,000 a year in coaching. Which means they're beginning, they have less than five clients a month. Another 17% are making, you know, up to \$25,000.

So a lot of people, and I can't think, and those are people that are smart enough to opt in, Melanie.

Melanie Benson Strick: Yes.

Bart: Think about the rest of them that are like, you know, "Coaching for business, I'm not sure."

The step and the sequence is so interesting because you've got the one on one. The next step for you was a one on one group hybrid, which is like a product number two. And then the thing which I think is, seems so difficult, is making product and speaking, but there's sort of a catch-22 there. People don't necessarily want you on the stage if you've got nothing to sell.

Melanie Benson Strick: Exactly.

Bart: Because that time is valuable, so there's a "you scratch your back, you scratch mine." And the other thing that I think is important is, it's not so much that a book or a CD makes you the money, but you build a relationship with the listener that you've never met, and then they come back and hire you coaching. So it's like a two-way street, like it kind of feeds off each other and it becomes very incestuous in a very positive way.

Melanie Benson Strick: Yeah. And I think there's a credibility boost. There's something about having something published that people see you differently than not. And, you know, I want to talk to something and I know, this is one of the questions you asked me if we could talk about, so it's like a perfect segue here if it's okay we jump into it.

Bart: Yeah, yeah.

Melanie Benson Strick: But I think a lot of the reasons why coaches are kind of tapping out at \$10,000 a year or haven't necessarily found this ability to expand

their income is two things. One, you haven't learned how to, how people see your value. So you aren't charging what the value of your coaching is yet. And I think quite frankly, there's a third one, too, but the second one is that, a lot of people are doing this part time, they're not doing it full time, and so it's hard to really get any traction that way. So you haven't really made the decision to have this as a business, it's more of a hobby, or something that you do on the side.

But the third thing that I think is really critical is that you haven't really learned how to clarify your idea of what you do. And one of the things that I personally struggled with for so many years was, you know, I got lucky. I really, I'll just say I got lucky. I came into this industry at a time where there was a lot of wealth and a lot of knowledge and a lot of stuff that was kind of coming fast at people and they were so overwhelmed. Like every time you turned around there was an email, this is when social media was just getting started, Twitter and Facebook were not even in existence, this was, you know, MySpace was starting to kick in, and you got events that people are going to every weekend and they're being told, "You got to do this, you got to do that," and people were overwhelmed.

So my biggest turning point on the marketing side was having a specialty that people needed.

Bart: So wanted and needed. You were wanted and needed.

Melanie Benson Strick: Yes, wanted and needed.

Bart: And you happened to pick a right niche. And give yourself credit, you picked that, and you're an expert in that.

Melanie Benson Strick: I was an expert in that, and that was really fortunate was that it was something I understood and I had trained in. Remember, one of the things that's different about me than a lot of the other people out there, is that I actually have a credential as a licensed and certified coach, as well as I have multiple project management certifications, like, I had all of this stuff that was left brain, but I also had a very authentic, deep, spiritual understanding of how the world works. So I was blending this right brain creativity with this left brain logic and people just ate it up because that's what creative people need, they need somebody who gets them, but also who can challenge them and help them structure their concepts.

So this question about, "How do I know if what I'm focusing on is the right coaching practice for me?" What I would say is, is that you have to pick a lane. I have a

woman that I've been working with for about six months, and she was a coach, she went through coach training, and she was having a really hard time getting coaching clients. And she had kind of stalled out, like she'd had a successful, you know, it's like 6 to 10 clients she worked with, but none of them were reenrolling. She was going through a transformation and really frustrated. So I worked with her to pick a lane and said, "We need to figure out what your niche is and how you're going to help people understand what you do." Because what happens is we say, "Well, I can help you achieve your goals." Well, that's great, and we know what that means, but to the other person, often times they're like, "Well, so does seven other people that I just met at this networking event, so how are you different?" And it becomes vague and unexciting.

So the first thing I would invite people to do if you're really struggling and you want to grow, is to find out what is that core thing that you do well and who do you do it for? I have this thing called the Marketability Factors, it's in one of the programs that I teach, and, you know, what I find is that by understanding what we do, who it's for, and how our genius really like magnifies when we're doing this process, what happens is people become more magnetic, like they're like, "I need some of you and I want it right now." And, you know, price objections tend to melt away, marketing, you know, what I call vanilla marketing, like everybody starts sounding the same, it starts to expire, and you start thinking like, "I want to know what that person does." So I think that's the first piece that many people have to do to really know if they have the right idea or the right focus in their coaching practice, is to really understand what is it that's unique about you, and then the second thing is, to build up your messaging around that so you're not talking to everyone. I promise you, not everyone—everyone is never going to buy your stuff. So give it up.

Bart: Everyone is not a prospect.

Melanie Benson Strick: Everyone is not your prospect. If you call me up and you ask me to coach you and you say, I say, "Who's your target audience?" And you go, "Well, pretty much anyone I can help," okay, we're done, because it's not going to work. You cannot talk to everyone and really get successful. I want you to be confident in getting your message to the people who need you the most. And that's why this marketability factor piece, I think, is so helpful, to really understand where that magic point is.

Bart: We have, on our survey, we had 35%, and I only gave them a limited category, so if it wasn't their niche, but 35% are generally a life coach. And the next big category was health and wellness coaches. I think the life coaches struggle the

most at finding an identity because it is a general fix-all. How do you take someone that has, or that was trained and has all these great skills as a life coach, because it includes time management, organization, goals, purpose in life, how do you help them drill down to find out what not only moves them, but also gets in front of where the wanted and needed traffic is?

Melanie Benson Strick: Yeah.

Bart: Because, you know, I spent years selling stuff that nobody wanted and I'm like, "Wait a second, this is too much work." You know?

Melanie Benson Strick: You're like, this is not what an entrepreneur does.

Bart: Oh, no, I can tell you the horror stories, you know, I did a lot of radio shows and TV shows and everybody thought I was just great. You know what? It's good for ego, but if they don't want it and need it and are going to pay big money for it, it's just going in circles and doesn't end up in your bank account. So I'm smarter now that I'm older.

Melanie Benson Strick: Yeah. Well, you know, and from a very authentic place, I've struggled with this, too. And I think it's important that people know that, you know, you can be really good at what you do and you can still kind of fall back into old patterns. And because I love mentoring and coaching and really seeing people transform so much, it's very easy for me to slide into a place of like, "I should create this because that's what people want!" But I call that bright shiny object syndrome. And the idea of bright shiny object syndrome is that because you have a great idea, you think everybody else wants it, too. And that's not necessarily really valid.

The research that I do now is, when I'm going to create a program or a product or an offering of some kind, is I do a lot of research and I find out who are the people that I want to work with? And this is a really important question to ask yourself. Because again, as I was saying about this client of mine that's a newer coach, and, you know, she really wasn't aware who she wanted to coach at first. So we did this exercise to think about the people that she had coached and which ones did she enjoy the most, which ones were happy to pay her fees, and which ones paid on time and showed up properly.

And I think as a coach, this is a real important question to ask. Because we'll often times attract a lot of people that are really not that fun to coach. And you don't have to coach them. There is no rule that says you have to coach somebody

because they want to pay you. You get to decide who you want to mentor and coach. And then you get to decide how to build up more of them.

So I would say, "Who do you love coaching the most? Who's willing to pay what you want to charge? And now, what are the biggest challenges and issues and concerns and desires that they have?" And there's a very deep process that I take people through around this, so I'm kind of taking the slice, Bart, because I want to get some important pieces out. But if you do this process properly, you will actually go very deep into the awareness of who this person is and what's up for them in the world. So when you start to message your marketing copy, when you talk to them, you ask them the most provocative questions that are really, you know, pulling out the challenges they have so they can understand that you get them.

Because here's where the third turning point was for me. I understood the psychology of someone overwhelmed so well, not only because I'd been there, but because I was coaching a lot of people who were overwhelmed. And I could stand on a stage or get on the phone and I could say words, not because I was trying to, but because they just understood it, and I would say, "This is what it's like to feel overwhelmed. You know, you sit and you have dinner at your computer because you're still trying to get that report out or you're trying to catch up on those emails. You haven't had a day off in ten weeks." And I would literally have people call me up in tears saying, "Oh, my God, you were talking to me, did you read my diary or like, were you reading my blog posts? How did you know that's what I was going through?"

And when you understand the psychology of what they're experiencing and you can message your email or your web material or your blog post or your speech to that pain point or that desire they have, now they want you. And then it's about understanding how to create a package or a product or a service that they're eager to invest in.

Bart: I think you said something, in fact, you're the first expert to use the word pain point. And we often sell all the benefits – you're going to have free time, you're going to be so nice, you're going to lose weight, you're going to be thin, you're going to have your relationship. But people don't often buy, they don't often move toward what they want, but they will always move away from a hot iron, they'll always move away from fire. And you're the first one in all these calls that said, "What is the pain point? Get authentic," because you know your clients and if you've been doing this a while, you know what hurts them. You know, some of it's living a lonely life, it's being inauthentic, it's having it all and feeling empty. Whatever it is that's your

specialty, you've suggested that they get to know it, figure out the words, create a perfect—it is an analogy or a metaphor? Like you're painting a picture of them at their computer.

Melanie Benson Strick: It can be both, by the way.

Bart: Yeah, my English, I've written lots of books, but spelling and editing, not my strength.

But that's so smart, Melanie, because you're saying, what is the pain point and you've got to paint that picture. And I know when I've read sales letters and I'm totally guilty of not doing this, because I don't like pain, so I don't want to go there. I want to paint all the benefits and you're going to have fun, I'm going to make you laugh, and yet, they don't buy for all those reasons. They'll buy because I can get them out of pain.

Melanie Benson Strick: Yeah.

Bart: That's why I think hypnosis is such a great little tool in the tool belt because people will buy hypnosis to get out of, you know, addiction or pain, I mean, it's such an easy little solution because it's always marketing toward the problem. And a lot of other industries just don't market toward the problem.

How did you come up with like marketing toward the pain, and did you stumble upon this or it was so authentic because you knew what they were thinking?

Melanie Benson Strick: So I guess the way I uncovered this was really trial and error, and studying with people who were very successful with their marketing endeavors. And I want to be really clear, I am not somebody who really loves the idea of stirring up someone's pain in order to get them to enroll in my program. This is not something that I find exciting.

Bart: No, it's not fun for us. It's not fun at all.

Melanie Benson Strick: Yeah, it's a human psychology, and I freaking fought this forever because I'm like, "No, I do not want people to hire me to get out of pain," but here's what I realized. And by the way, this is why I created many of the programs that I have created, and one of my bestsellers is MoneyDNA Mastery because when people are in pain with their money, they are like, "Oh, my God, I have to have this solved!" Like, "Make me rich!" Like they want to get this fixed.

So, you know, understanding that people are more motivated to avoid pain than they are to accept pleasure—except in one circumstance, and this is really important to understand—it depends on the person you're most wanting to mentor. If someone's very evolved in their life and they are kind of already healed from a lot of their pain points, they are now looking to deepen their ability to experience pleasure. So that's why it's so important to understand the psychology of the person that you're wanting to attract in. But most of the people who are still in pain, and that's why life coaching really needs to understand those pain points, because people in life coaching, they're not going to hire a life coach to have a better life. They actually hire a life coach to stop having a sucky life. So, that's what I realized.

Bart: Yeah, well put. So if someone's looking for like a meditation teacher to, they're retired and they're looking for a deeper meaning in life, that's a different niche altogether, that may not be the sales point, but the fact that you should at least know the pain points, and you should be able to articulate them clearly, and especially if you have an opportunity to spend 30 minutes on the stage talking about what you do, it would make complete sense to talk about where they were, what the frustrations were, and how you walked them out of that.

Melanie Benson Strick: Yeah, and so I love that you brought up this meditation teacher, because that's an interesting niche in the sense that meditation is a commodity in the sense that when somebody's looking for meditation, they've been taught at some point—and this is a whole other thing that I teach people, is how to get people to understand what you want. I learned something very valuable from a friend of mine named Adam Robansky 10 years ago. And Adam is this extraordinary marketing mentor, he really understands all of this. And one of the things that he taught me is that, you know, you have to understand that you're going to, every person who you touch may or may not be ready for you, but you have to figure out, if they're ready for you now, what actions to take. And if they're not ready for you now, you got to have a different set of actions to build the relationship, build the rapport, build trust, built the connection, and when they're ready down the road and you're continuing consistently to be in front of them, they'll be more likely to buy. And that's another reason why coaches are challenged, because they don't have those mechanisms in place.

But back to this meditation teacher idea, you know, when somebody's looking for meditation, who's the first person they find that's interesting for them or they feel trust with to teach them meditation? Which is different than somebody who is recognizing they're in pain and they go to this educational experience or they run

across an article or something that said, "The way I learned how to have peace of mind and have serenity in my life was meditation." Those are two very different entry points. And when we learn how to build up—and by the way, this is not for everyone, this is a machine that you build, it's like the coaching, or, you know, the content that educates people why you do what you do and why they need you, what is the problem you solve, versus the "When you're looking for a business coach, this is how you hire me." Those are two—I hope I'm not getting too confusing, but it's just very different marketing to do. But we have to do both. And I think that's, you know, we were playing around with this question of like, "All right, so what do we have to do differently so that coaching practices can thrive?" I think anyone who's a coach, from the minute you realize that you have to equally build rapport and educate through knowledge and have a way for people to hire you when they go, "I need a coach and I see you as a good fit," and then that's when things start to really take off and have another level of momentum.

Bart: I totally get it. I could talk to you for five hours, you're really—

Melanie Benson Strick: We should do a whole series, Bart.

Bart: This is awesome. I'm going to give you a URL, 100CoachingTips.com/Melanie. Now you put together something about your MoneyDNA, and if you're online, please click to there and check it out. There's also a button for a webinar which you can learn more about this, but I want to go through your MoneyDNA and I've gone through every program in the world and I want more. I just can't seem to get enough about how to reprogram our brain around the idea of money.

So tell me more about this particular program and how you came up with the MoneyDNA, which by the way, is a brilliant title, kudos to your copywriting skills.

Melanie Benson Strick: Well, you know, interestingly enough, it came because my own struggles with money and success were always rooted back to recognizing that I had a vibration that I was putting out into the world, which was a combination of the thoughts that I think, which generated emotional, you know, response in me, that caused me to either take action or not take action. And so a lot of the actions that I wouldn't take for the longest time were because I didn't feel good about them.

And when I realized that a lot of that was driven by very limiting beliefs that were not my truth, they were junk that I'd been dragging with me from my family or from like programs I was running out of my old Motorola days or whatever, and I was able to plug in and really what I call upgrade my success program, things changed.

And by the way, I've done this multiple times. You know, when I had my first shift and I was able to go from 1,000 to 6 figures, I cleared out some junk that I didn't know was there. But then when I became more aware, here's what happened. And I talk about this on this webinar and I give people a really profound experience of this kind of shift as well as like a little bit of a formula of how to do this differently. Consistency of how you feed information into your thought process is everything. And what happens is many of us know what to do, but we don't do it. And it's like this, I have this analogy and, Bart, I don't know what your philosophy is, but I don't like to go to the doctor, right? I mean, the only time I go to the doctor is when I'm sick, really sick, and I can't do it naturally. I can't take the right combination of herbs and I can't quite get my eating back and it's just like, I've gone over to the edge. And that's what happens with people with their relationship with money. We don't do the proactive things that we could do to keep our vibration high and to keep ourselves at that high money magnet level all the time. And so we deteriorate our MoneyDNA and cause ourselves to slip into a money coma, where we cannot create high levels of success, no matter how hard we try.

So that's why I teach the webinar because it's actually very liberating to understand that you can shift this, it doesn't have to be something outside of you, it's not about marketing, it's not about sales, it's simply about learning to have a consistent practice and to do the right things and release and eradicate those things that cause you to get blocked.

Bart: I'm reading the page here at 100CoachingTips.com/Melanie and it talks about your story in 2008, which is interesting, because we talked about your beginning and all of a sudden, you know, you've hit the six-figure mark, and they're going to think, "Well, if I only did that, it would be easy road." But you mentioned in this letter, it kind of went south in 2008 and you had another shift.

Melanie Benson Strick: Yeah.

Bart: What was that big shift and is that where the DNA, the MoneyDNA came from?

Melanie Benson Strick: Yeah.

Bart: Like that shift, you're like, "Wait a second, I'm not done yet, I have my growth."

Melanie Benson Strick: Yeah, I stopped doing what worked. And I'll be totally honest, I got in my ego. You know, and I've never been a really ego-based person, I feel like if you asked any client who's worked with me and as you said earlier, I've worked with some of the biggest leaders in this industry. And, you know, I think one of the things that people keep coming back to me for is I am a very authentic person, like I'm very real. But I got very caught up in the effects of being a millionaire. And it wasn't that I didn't care, it's that I started to lose touch with my intuitive voice of what was going on. And I got into a whole pattern of creating—saying yes to things to take care of other people, rather than doing what I knew was right for me and to serve my clients.

So that was kind of a whole long story, but the thing that I realized was, is that the reason why I lost touch with myself and I kind of got caught up in all this stuff, was because I stopped doing what worked. I stopped having a consistent spiritual and physical practice with my money. And I let things take over that should not have been running me. It was a very profound moment and very humbling moment to realize that the simplest thing was I stopped doing what worked, it was like I knew what worked and I stopped doing it.

And so that's one of the reasons why I really love being the kind of coach and mentor that I'm able to be today because holding accountability and creating this formula for people and teaching people how to do this is profound, because it's so simple. But we just don't do it, because we either don't know what to do or we don't do it because we kind of get caught up in our lives.

So I'm excited for you to do it, I can't wait to hear what you think about the webinar.

Bart: Well, you know, it's so funny because when people have products, I mean, even our series, it's \$97, we got 24 hours of coaches, and some are like, "Oh, I can't afford that." If you can't afford the MoneyDNA program, you're probably just exactly the person that probably needs the MoneyDNA program.

Melanie Benson Strick: It is very affordable, by the way, we set it up in a way that, you know, there's payment plans, it's like, again, it goes back to that stop saying "I can't afford it." That is the most constricting, the most derailing thing you can ever say to yourself. It may feel true right now and I totally understand it, by the way. But ask yourself a better question. "What would have to happen so I could do it?"

By the way, last time I offered MoneyDNA, I had a couple people say, "Melanie, like I want this so badly," and I said, "Then set a goal, make it happen. Start working the

process now.” The minute people enroll in it, I teach them how to start making money immediately.

So, you know, it’s a consciousness shift and really it’s about being willing to stop being the person who’s stuck and just make a decision, I’m not willing to be stuck any more. I’m going to do whatever it takes to get to that next level of success, wherever you are.

Bart: I don’t want to let you go here, you’re so interesting.

Melanie Benson Strick: Well, let’s just keep going. I got all night.

Bart: You know what? We’ve been keeping this to 55 minutes, but I want to ask you another question, one of the things that I didn’t expect out of 100 Coaching Tips, is I didn’t expect to get coaching clients for myself or Steve, that was an odd thing, because one email’s like, “Hey, you’ve interviewed all these people, can I have an hour with you to figure out which one would be the best coach for me? Like, I’m not a coach yet but I want to be a coach.” So we’ve been sort of a clearinghouse for some of the speakers to get personal clients. I thought that was really interesting and I didn’t expect that at all. I was just looking, you know, to create this kind of behind the curtain view.

Do you take private clients and if you do, who’s the best person that would say, “You know what? Out of all these great speakers, I want Melanie to be my client.” So first of all, do you take it and if so, what person on the phone might be a good fit for you?

Melanie Benson Strick: Well, again, I’m a great study in how to create a diversified income flow for coaches. And I have very few spots, I have five spots that I keep open for private clients and then I have a mastermind group that I take clients who have already created a business but want to make that business more powerful. They’re looking to supercharge their results and really get into that, what I call that space of optimum performance.

And then what I do for newer clients is I have some group coaching programs that are really powerful and very targeted to exactly what you’re going through. And so depending on where someone’s at, if they’re struggling with money, I put them through MoneyDNA first. If they’re really, kind of got the money thing handled but they’re wanting to get clear about, “Okay, I got all these ideas and, you know, I don’t know which one it is and I don’t know how to really super charge my idea,”

then we put them through, I have an Idea Incubator Process that helps people learn how to do that.

So yes, I do take clients and it's on a case-by-case basis and, you know, me being available. And most of the clients that I work with have their idea pretty clear, but they really know in order to get lift off, they need someone to help them sort out how to put the leverage and be able to be in, what I call "right action," doing the things that have the greatest impact and the highest return on investment for your time and money.

Bart: Thank you. I didn't expect us to be referring coaches, but this is really interesting because so many coaches need a mentor. Especially the newer coaches. And you and a lot of people that have been, you know, guests have been doing this over 10 years, some 30. And they're, you know, they are at the pinnacle of their career. And all the mentors that I've had, there's no way I could've done the things that I've done without proper mentors. So I think that's awesome. And so yes, you're available and yes, you have five spots and of course you can always contact her through the website as well.

Melanie Benson Strick: Yeah. And I just want to leave with this thought, is that as a coach, you cannot be a powerful coach unless you have a coach. And anyone that thinks that they're going to become a coach without getting coaching, you're going to find that your impact and your trajectory is much smaller than it could be. And there's a couple of different reasons. One is that most of the coaches that I know, there's a lot of stuff you're trying to figure out. Even though you only have to be a couple steps ahead of your clients, you're still trying to figure out your stuff. And, you know, you're going to get in your own way every day. Every coach that I coach, we laugh about it, because I'm like, this is why you as a coach are hiring a coach because these are the kinds of things that trip you up.

So you just know that you can continue to do things on your own, but it's kind of like you're taking the snail pace. But when you really find a mentor that you really resonate with and it's important that you resonate with them and you feel like they get you and they're really, they're going to call you out, but they're also going to be really authentic and really, they've got your back. And that's what you want. You need someone who's got your back and will totally challenge you to play the biggest game that you are ready to play. And that's what I look for.

Bart: Thank you. And I love the idea of playing a much bigger game and we all get caught up in our fears and our limitations and what can be done and not the biggest game possible.

Again, Melanie's website, it can be clicked through 100CoachingTips.com/Melanie, M-e-l-a-n-i-e. Melanie Benson Strick has been our guest. You're the author of too many books to list, but I want them to click through and check out the MoneyDNA. If it's something you're interest in, click through and buy it, that'd be great. If you don't have the money, at least click to that website and click on the free webinar button and get, start to build a relationship with Melanie and what you do, you got an opt-in letter and they can keep in touch with you, of course.

Melanie Benson Strick: Absolutely. Yeah, we'll make sure that we take very good care of you and, you know, there's a lot of really great ways that you can start building momentum now and we've got some great free resources to support you. But, you know, the webinar's a great place to start. If nothing else, I had people tell me they had such a huge breakthrough on that webinar, they couldn't believe it. So it's a great way to start.

Bart: And you know what? If you can create that much value in a webinar, that's such a great way to build long-term relationships and I think that's what one of the coaching models really is, is create value, build relationships and over long term, you both exchange value, whether it's money and time.

I want you back for Season 2, I'm going to ask you ahead of time.

Melanie Benson Strick: Okay. I'm in.

Bart: You guys are great! This has been Bart Baggett with 100 Coaching Tips. Our guest is Melanie Benson Strick, her website is 100CoachingTips.com/Melanie.

Melanie, thank you for your authenticity and your kindness and your generosity and do you have any final thoughts or things to leave with us?

Melanie Benson Strick: You know, I just want to say I believe in you. You know, if you have stepped into being a coach, I know what kind of commitment that takes and I also know that you are in this dance between working out your own stuff and in giving it back to the people that you most want to serve. And I applaud you, I believe in you, and I just want to see you thrive, I want to see you soar. So make

the commitment to soar and then do the things, make the investments, make the decisions to support you in that. Whatever those are for you where you are now.

Bart: Well said. Everybody, have a great night. Talk to you, we have two more weeks of 100 Coaching Tips, some amazing interviews, an evening with John Assaraf and some hot seats, you guys will get some personal coaching from John. So please, check your emails, check 100CoachingTips.com website, and Melanie, thanks again for a great interview.

Melanie Benson Strick: Thank you.

Bart: Good night everybody.

Melanie Benson Strick: Good night.