



INSTITUTE FOR THE
PSYCHOLOGY *of* **EATING**
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The Art and Science of Food and Body Coaching Summit Interview
With Sarah Lucille and Ash Johns

Sarah Lucille- Hey everyone. Sarah Lucille here. Director of Student Services here at The Institute for the Psychology of Eating, and we are here in The Art and Science of Food and Body Coaching Online Summit. So thank you for being here, and I'm joined today by Ash, and Ash is going to give us a perspective on her work as a practitioner and her unique way of working with people, and a lot of stuff that I'm excited to hear about such as healing and coaching as a way to engage with the self, and what that actually means. So Ash, I'm gonna turn it over to you, to give your introduction, and let us know a little bit about yourself.

Ash Johns- Thank you so much, and for having me here. I'm so excited. Even after all of our reschedules, we get to get on the Summit, and to share my experience, my expertise, and really the evolution of who I am and how I show up to help people. As you said, my name's Ash Johns. I'm originally from Chicago, and I've lived all over the world in the Midwest, but also more recently Southeast Asia, and now in South Florida. I have been coaching much longer than I ever knew I was a coach, but that's something I definitely want to talk about because to me the journey really changes once you commit and you start getting the credentials that really back up whatever your intuitive way of helping people is. So that's kind of been my journey of leaving corporate America and advertising. Getting some human behavior understanding. Taking that further to connect my spiritual background, Taking that into running retreats for women, which I was not expecting, and then just so on and so forth, and working with various teachers and healers and other coaches. So much I would love to share but I'm just excited to be here.

Sarah Lucille- Yay, awesome! Thank you for that. I'd love to hear more about coaching before you were a coach, and what that experience was for you, and when you really realized, oh this is something that I do naturally.

Ash Johns- Yeah, really as a kid I always listened to people all the time. I was that kid that was always in adult conversations as folks would say. I listened to what they were talking about and then I would always ask questions. The why, or what did that mean, and where are we going, and why would you do it that way? All of these things like that. After asking the questions I would be offering thoughts of what I thought about whatever, and they would always look at me and be like, what is this little girl doing? What is this? There was that aspect, but then as I got older, and I went into advertising, and it is about studying psychology and human behavior and impacting and influence, and understanding humans in order to sell things, but there came a point in that career where it was like this feels really yucky and sticky. I realized I'm hypnotizing people, and there's other things that are happening within this background, or in this business, and I had a creative director who pulled me aside and said, you're more than this. There's something else about you, and I was like yeah, I've really been watching people and I'm chatting

with them about their careers and really telling them what I think or really supporting and holding space when they're having a breakdown, or when they're pressed for time, or what there was some type of a deadline that was just insane, and he's like yeah, I don't really think that this advertising thing is for you, because you have a natural interest in understanding people and being comfort and just present with them, and I started training with him as my very first teacher, in his art studio up North, and I was living in Manhattan at the time so I would take that train up to Poughkeepsie, and sit for hours and understand about hypnotherapy and holding meditative, guided meditations. Transcendental meditation, and it even went into a spiritual space as far as reading divinations and doing card readings and things to help folks get out of where they are and to see the truth that's already present. That our fears and things rock us from, and then from there it just I kept having these moment of showing me who I truly was, but I always felt that I didn't have the validation to do that work without the education or the support, and it seems to me in my experience and my career with this is that every single time I think I know something, I end up meeting someone or getting a new teacher, that shows me another thing that I need in order to alchemize and evolve as a person and then it comes out in my work, and then the people that I work with and who are attracted to work with me.

Sarah Lucille- Wow, yes. If that isn't true. Even just this last Friday, I had this call with someone that shook my world.

Ash Johns- Really?

Sarah Lucille- Oh yeah, it never stops. It never ends, and what it sounds like which I love, because I feel so many can identify with there is a knowing like this is something that you're driven toward, or being pushed toward in a way. Like hey there's a gift here that you have, and you took some responsibility for it, and thought of how to responsibly pursue it, which I think is really important, and really amazing that you had someone in your orbit that was like hey, I can help you with this.

Ash Johns- Yeah, yeah. You know what I think, is even the moment when I pushed it away, it always kept coming back to me, and it was my choice if I said yes or no, and so in those moments of being receptive to it those people come into my life and it still happens. Like I literally just sent an email about a week ago, maybe two weeks ago, being like I'm so glad you dropped into my life. What you're doing in helping me personally is so important for me, but also just generally in the world in the evolution of our culture right now. What I do say though, I talk a lot in all personal development, is that we all have our own past to initiate, right? You're responsible as you said to your path, and there are people and teachers, and support and programs and stuff that come in and out but you're responsible to say yes, to do that work, then to take a pause and test yourself, and massage it in, and get it all marinating, and then you'll come out into the world, and then the next thing goes. I think of it as this dance. This accordion dance if you will.

Sarah Lucille- Yeah. What was it like for you, when you more formally owned that this is what

you're going to pursue, and then you started to pursue it? Was there a change for you personally and your own kind of transformation?

Ash Johns- Yeah, because I'll tell you, my first official certification was becoming Reiki attuned. I knew I was already spiritually connected and highly intuitive, so I wanted to go into energetics, because I also had a psychology background and sociology and social work. As minors to my advertising degree, so it was like let me get more into the spiritual because I have some of this mental and cognitive support, and it just so happened when I left my career, I ended up moving to Indonesia and Bali and being hired to run a women's retreat, which then ended up spinning out and doing my own thing, so in that moment it was, I wasn't formally set up to support that kind of space. I had to go from business and my intuition and then what I knew from behavioral studies and running focus groups and holding space for folks and there were moments where I would pause, and be like I love this conversation, but I've gotta actually call someone else for this. I know someone. Hang on a second. I'll see you for Reiki or energy and things, but I'm gonna send you to this person for that. Once that happened a few times I was like okay, it's definitely time for me to pause with spirit, well not pause, but that section is good, and now let me move into more credentialing that helps me with the psychological experience of human behavior, and mentality, right, and processing change and all of those things, and I'll tell you when I started pursuing the more credential role it was really hard, and I'll say because as what's really popular right now is NLPs and the weekend workshops, and I got a referral from someone who, this is actually my first time talking about it so this is funny. I got a referral for someone who was running a program. Is it okay to talk about this? Can I be like really transparent?

Sarah Lucille- Yes, yeah, of course.

Ash Johns- Okay, hold your seats people. I had a referral, and at the time in Bali, there's always workshops and trainings and certifications coming through so these are pretty frequent. This is my first time signing up for this, and when it was an NLP practitioner certification. It was three levels and you get the sample and I was oh okay, this sounds great, and I see it happening. Yet, halfway through that seven day experience, it was absolutely traumatizing, triggering, unstable. Space was not held and I could feel it energetically, I didn't understand the depths of what was going on psychologically from the manipulations and the way that the space was, and it was really terrible. I was the only one really. Someone else was kind of feeling weird about it, but they were too afraid to say something, and I was like I'm pulling fully out of this, and that was when that particular situation became even more triggering, because I was being attacked by breaking up the groupthink essentially. I ended up leaving and being very mentally unstable, and I had to call upon my community to really reground me, and that was my first experience of being like everything for coaching and healing and stuff, is not just all good. You really have to vet, and you really have to make sure that folks are credentialed and have references and not just references that people have taken in their program and also been sold the pill, but there is an organization. An actual board organization, who are looking after and making sure these folks are legit, because you are dealing with emotions, energetic, spirit,

ancestor, and just the capacity of our actual human brain is so big and you can put yourself in a very vulnerable situation. It took me awhile to get through and to heal from that and to trust again, and to be more intentional and careful and listen to my full gut from the very beginning when I did decide to go and get my credentials as a board certified coach, and yes, I'll take pause there, because I think this industry is growing so quickly and everyone thinks it's fantastic, and you're looking for is it good? Is it fun? Is it cheap? Is it, whatever the price is, and then yeah, you can be, put yourself in danger and also put a lot of other folks in danger.

Sarah Lucille- Yes. Woo! This is such an important conversation too and most people don't want to have it, and I yeah, I think we get a lot of questions on that, on how do I know if something's legit, and of course we know there's a lot of bureaucracy to certain regulations, and one point there is just how important experience is with the people you're learning from. Whether their gifts are something that has been a lifetime of honing in on their craft and being very responsible and intentional with it, or they are someone who is credentialed and has been practicing, and we just had an event here, which is why I was so exhausted last week, and it was such a brilliant reminder. I do, I very much admire watching Marc David hold space and this is someone whose been doing his work for 40 years and I noticing he knows how to listen and to hear what the person is saying, without inserting, here's what you need to do, and there's one where there was just no answer. This person, there was no answer for her question and he's willing to say, I don't have an answer for that, and I've been at those NLP experiences, where it feels the opposite.

Ash Johns- Yeah.

Sarah Lucille- It feels like I have the answer. I'm gonna tell you how your thinking is wrong and make you right.

Ash Johns- Right, just reframe it all.

Sarah Lucille- Yeah, just reframe it, and then what you're speaking to is so important because people do get traumatized. They get retraumatized in those experiences. Do you in your work with people, do you confront that a lot? Individuals who have been jaded by, or harmed or hurt by the coaching industry, from individuals who don't necessarily have the background or credentials to hold space for what they needed space held for, or where a referral would have been really important? Is that something that you notice, or do you have words of wisdom for people on how to really discern between, is this my work or is this where I need to send this person to someone else?

Ash Johns- Yeah, that's a really good question. I don't experience it a lot. I've had conversations with people during an intro or a consult, and they're like yeah, I had a coach, but it didn't work out, or I got weird vibes, or it was between you and these two people, and this is the reason why, but I really I just reemphasize to people, trust your gut. Do all the vetting, sit with it, and even if you thought about it, feel about it. There's times where people have said to

me you didn't send a followup right away, and I was like I did that on purpose, because I want some time to go by for you to really settle, and to evaluate and continue checking for me because I truly, I know it's in the language of coaching and websites, it's like let's see if we're a good fit, and I really am, a really good fit, because it's true, to your point, it's not about giving you the answer or fixing you. It is about holding space and supporting you as you unravel, and when you ask for nudges, give you that little nudge, or when you're like oh no I can go more. I'm like, I think we, and we get that with working with someone who has experience and then doing your own work and then exercising a few times within a small community of usually from whatever coaching program you've gone through or whatever training you go through, you work with peers for awhile, before you actually go out and get your first clients. That process is really important. I will say, I'm a both and, as far as time to get experience, and also just depth, because what I do know if we look at culture and what's happening energetically in the world, we're in such a need for healing in every direction, and we don't have the luxury of everyone doing four years, because we're in such a need of whatever is happening. We're all cracking at different areas in this world, and so I believe in meeting the talent and the intuition with the structures that can help you be safe and in integrity. Yeah, I think that's really important.

Sarah Lucille- Yeah, you had mentioned your community. Like you had a community to come to and say I need help with this.

Ash Johns- Yes.

Sarah Lucille- What does that look like for you, and what would be a community, I guess I feel a lot of people are lonely and feel disconnected from that From who are my people? Where do I go with this, and how do I know this is a safe space? Do you have any insight into discerning what is a good community for you?

Ash Johns- Yeah, that's a really good question. I'm still learning about right relationships, but I'll tell you the story of how I learned what being in community even felt like, because growing up in Chicago and in a big city and in the culture that I grew up in, I'm very Black American, right? Like we lived, as much as everyone says Chicago's very diverse, it's actually very racially separated and segregated, right? So one of the things for me, was growing up not trusting people. Being like yeah, we're friends that's nice, but not too close, or only when it's fun. Not when I need help, and it wasn't until, my personal story, it wasn't until I left America, and lived abroad for a long time. Not three months, not just backpacking, I moved to the other side of the world and immersed myself in a new culture and was on sovereign land, and was able to shed the identity of systemic oppression, and being African American in this country, and all this other stuff. Just away from all the politics of being an American and just got to be Ash. That's when I found the vulnerability, the strength, the courage, to be brave. To even accept safe space. To then ask for help, and to trust that people were doing their best to show up for me just as much as I was doing my best to show up for them. I think that finding community and safe space which is also brave space to me, really requires us to go inside of ourselves, and sometimes in order to do that really and depth you have to create separation, or disassociate with all the

things that make you feel unsafe.

Sarah Lucille- Yeah, that sounds a little more intentional than there's a big popular conversation around cut those people out of your life, or cut ties and being that sometimes a very important action, as being an LGBT individual, I understand the value in saying, you're not a person who can be in my life, and I appreciate, it feels like more of an intentional, actually figuring out though, how do I know what spaces are good for me, and where I can also show up and contribute as a part of that community? It feels more reciprocal. I was afraid I was gonna mess that word up and it came out.

Ash Johns- Totally, totally. By all means when I say separation, it was me physically being away, but obviously my heart and my relationships, the long distance and two opposite time zones, made me actually have space for myself, but now that I'm back stateside, I'm able to nurture those relationships differently because I now know what it means to be in community, and so to your point, there is this regardless to who I am or what I'm doing, I belong. That's like, I'm still working through that belief, because it's so many layers and layers and layers, but to literally leave a very traumatizing experience, drive past my own home to stop it. Those friends, I call them family. Homes to ask for help, and then them seeing me in that very vulnerable psychologically unstable space, and being able to hold me in that, it just solidifies the abilities and it wasn't just me. There's tons of other people who've had things and we showed up for them. It's this like, in the good, in the bad, in the indifferent, even in the hurt feelings, let's take a moment. Let's breathe it through. Are you ready to engage yet? Everything becomes this, again a dance. It's not set it and forget it, where your relationships are always safe. It takes tending to.

Sarah Lucille- Yeah, wow. I got goosebumps around the belonging statement, because that's a really important thing to remind yourself when you feel so disconnected. We see that a lot with the work that shows up with body image in the eating psychology world. Where you're seeking belonging though trying to make your body fit what would seem like acceptable. Yeah, it's an icky thing to express, and it's an experience that people can really relate with. Like my whole life has been waiting to belong until I can get to this result, and then I will feel I can walk into that room or I can go and sit on that beach towel and not feel scared, or feel like I need to shrink the space I'm taking. That's more of a commentary than anything, but I would love to hear more about your work. The way that you work with people, especially you talk about engaging all the aspects of stuff, and I also really appreciate you don't take culture out of that, which seems to be a piece, that in a lot of coaching relationships is set to the side. Like it's not relevant. I would love to hear more about the way that you work with someone and what that looks like.

Ash Johns- Oh my God, yes Sarah. Let me tell you. I feel a lot of coaching. There's two things. A lot of coaching is trying to get to an outcome and it's like go on the journey and see what happens, right? I really believe in that process, so that is one thing I want to call out, and then the second one is that there's multi layers to this, so a lot of the times the approach is just on the person, and again, what their outcome is, but you've got the person. You've got the inner child. You've got the psyche. You've got the super conscious, the unconscious. The higher conscious

going on in here. We've got your ancestors behind you and what they think, We've got the cultural aspects in which you live within, and this is my gripe. I'm very honest, my gripe with NLP stuff too is just because you think differently around it doesn't change what's happening around you, and there's only so much time before those stimuli, and that way you look at it, or how what's happening in the collective, then permeates and comes back into this again and you're in the back. You're just putting another bandaid on it. For me, it's been a journey of, not even a journey but an offering. A journey and an offering. There we go. Weaving spiritual, spirituality, energetics, ancestral healing for cultural change, and you see the change through the coaching that holds the psychological framework if you will so that you can stay stabilized in your mind and you can also do things in lock step to help support whatever it is that you want to change, switch up, empower, grow. So it's in every direction, and I mostly work with folks, one are of color or are very aware of all the cultural aspects that are happening in the world and want to be part of the change within themselves, within their family, and then within community and culture. Then also people who are healers, coaches, entrepreneurs, do good. They have some type of a good business. A business that wants to do good in the world, because there's no separation between what you're going through spiritually and personally, and why you've burst your business. Whatever your business is. They are interlocked. A lot of that conscious business and branding. It's an alchemical thing, because I don't walk away from my original roots of spiritual knowing that's related to ritual. There's just as much as we can do steps to help you activate whatever you want, your output or whatever it is you wanna do, coming out of your coaching sessions. There's also energetic activations that support the spirituality of who you are too. You've got the left and right brain, or the multiple parts of you engaged in whatever your evolutionary becoming is.

Sarah Lucille- Wow.

Ash Johns- That was long.

Sarah Lucille- No, that was awesome, and trying to package that up into a tagline doesn't sound like you could ever do it.

Ash Johns- Let me tell you, and I'm a writer. I've been in the business. I do branding, and at the end of the day, I'm like I'm a guide. I don't. I just hold some space and we see what happens and every single person's stuff comes up differently I think that's another thing for people interested in coaching, or helping. I call us professional helpers. Is that yes, some folks, this kind of gets into the business of things, so let me know if this veers off topic too far, but it's I don't personally believe in these frameworks of here's the package and this is the steps that's gonna get you to whatever. It's kind of like, this is who I am, and these are tools that I offer. I'm not sure which one is gonna activate with you, but they're all present, and let's just see what happens. I'll be here with you along the way.

Sarah Lucille- Yes, I really appreciate that, and when we're engaged in a conversation with someone who is wanting to go into eating psychology coaching or they might have other

practices under their belt, but this is the missing piece for them. Especially when we see a lot of people, who are dieticians, nutritionists, and even counselors who wants that perspective for their work, and one of the questions we'll often hear, is do you give templates? Ways, like a templated exercises, or conversations or sessions, and it's funny to answer, because the answer is no, but you'll understand why once you're in the training. It makes, you'll realize, it would devalue the entire relationship with your client to try to come at them with, okay we did question one. Now question three, and it takes, I say our newer coaches, mentorship is really important for good reason. There's that fear of screw it up, or not asking the right question, or like laying awake at night, like why didn't I ask that? Just the experience of being new at any career is challenging. Did you have that experience yourself of like going through the discomfort of those earliest sessions you had with people, and do you have any advice or words of wisdom you would pass on to a new coach?

Ash Johns- That's really really good. For me, I really think of coaching, as the cocoon that holds the magic. I really do, and so whenever there's that moment of fear if I'm asking the right questions, or if I'm leading the right way or am I present enough? What if I say the wrong? All that stuff. Just come back to the humanity of you, because I truly believe that about 80% of what we do is because of who we are as human beings and being able to relate and see someone and someone being seen, and the point of the coaching and the credentials is to have that watch outs, and to be able to not insert yourself and get all blended up and add to the issues. As long as you've got those things and you bring yourself and get really present and in these moments I really remember this one. I remember being like I don't know what to say next, and I literally said, I don't know what to say next. I'm just going to hold for a moment and breathe and you can join me if you'd like and let's see. Being human and not thinking that you have to have everything scripted and rigid is really what makes it such a powerful modality in whatever way yours looks like, but I truly think that that's what's making us so drawn to it as an industry.

Sarah Lucille- Yes, that was a great response. It comes back to that. There's a lot of trust that goes into it. Trusting yourself. It's almost like you as a coach, you can't not do the work too that you're asking your clients. There's that, you have your own stories and your own trauma, and your ancestors, and everything is showing up, which is very different. I have a lot of this. A lot of our individuals were coming in from, they want to leave counseling to do coaching, and that's the hardest part, is the counseling world teaches you to be a blank slate for the most part. It's changing some, but still there's that, you need to be a blank slate for your client, and that's an interesting conversation to have because there's a lot of questions, of how do you know how much of yourself to offer, or especially and you know a lot about advertising, that's a popular marketing model is vulnerability and telling your story, and a lot of people will feel uncertain of what's appropriate? How do I establish a boundary for myself so that I don't suddenly feel like my whole world is opened up? But also be real for your clients, in a way that's actually supportive to them. Do you personally, and I've asked this many times, because it's really interesting to hear everyone's different answers, but do you have a personal boundary established for yourself, or this is what I give publicly, and this is for me, and do you have thoughts on how to discern what is appropriate in the client coach relationship?

Ash Johns- Great questions. I feel those boundaries and those rules moment to moment, client to client, and even moments in my own life, because if you go right now to my Instagram you'll see that I've taken down all my posts. I've just been like, don't need any of that anymore. We'll see what I want to share with the world next, and I think that you have to truly feel into essentially, if what I'm going to share with you helps support you in this exact moment. There's been times I've had a client or clients that were like, I'm just too afraid to say anything. They were kind of frozen, and I was like if I shared a little bit of how I'm feeling you, and how I can kind of understand from my own experiences where you might be right now and you can kind of tell me, if I'm right or I'm in the neighborhood. Am I off in another country? I'll share the story and then that brings some relaxation and opens them up again to be able to say what they needed to say just because of whatever was being shared. In those moments if they can be a way of letting someone know that they're seen by them seeing you, then that's great. However, this is, I will say, as someone who a lot of the times, I'm coaching conscious business and branding for healers and coaches and such, going into the basement of your life and your feelings and your breakthroughs in order to connect with people, or for your marketing to be effective, I think is a gross manipulation, and so I think I'm telling people you have to feel it for yourself that if you are reaching, you can feel the energetics of reaching and trying to pull, and the energetics of I've put it here and there's no attachments on what happens. It's just a share in the world, of why I wanted to write this narrative, or share this narrative. I think that's what makes my practice different because that's not something I was taught. That's directly in me, of what is the energetics of what I'm saying, and what I'm doing, and what I'm writing, and how I'm holding the space, and I guess if you're not as spiritual or in tune with the intuitive side of yourself but you're a coach, that might be you really setting the tone when you come into a room before. Making sure there's no other emails open. You've put your dog running away, or your phone call to your mom, or whatever out and you're just completely present, if you will. I feel like that veered off to the side, but I think you got what I'm saying.

Sarah Lucille- No, that was great, and I like that there is that, because there are individuals who are excellent at coaching in their own way and they're not necessarily, they're more thinking and intuitive. They're more like thinking, and sometimes they have the right information at the right time and there's this insecurity that they have to show up very woo, is the word. Very much, and it doesn't feel nat to them, and I love that there's space for all kinds of ways of working with people. I've had my mentors who are very matter of fact, very direct, because I needed that from them, and then I've also had those who challenged me to be more embodied. To feel feelings and all those things.

Ash Johns- Yes, I believe in that though. I was just telling someone the other day that the coach you had a year ago or three months ago or four years ago isn't necessarily what you need right now. Just as much as we change as humans, we need different people coming in to support us and one big tip I can share, very strongly, is that if you're the person, whether they're a coach, a healer, a tarot card diviner, a somatic practitioner, whoever, any human helping another human, in personal development growth and so forth, I they're not working with

someone, they don't have their people, I'd be like watch out. Step away. I need to know. I don't need to know what you're working on, but I need to know that you are drinking the koolaid for yourself, and that everything isn't contingent on my relationship as a client to you. If someone is like, I don't have any teachers anymore, I'd be like where your teachers at? When was the last time you were? Where's your community? We need checks and balances, and to continually grow.

Sarah Lucille- Yeah, is that even a question you would encourage someone to ask if they were looking for a coach, and a consult with someone?

Ash Johns- Absolutely, and it is how you word it though, because if you're like, do you have any teachers or coaches, they would be like are you trying to get my people to work with them, or you want to work? That can be misconstrued, but I think I would pose it as, I really want to work with someone who also is very vulnerable in their own personal development and healing and growth, and I just like to know, are you working with someone? Do you have a couple? What's your community look like, and how do they support you, so that you can super support me? I know earlier on, when I didn't know the things I know now or have some of the training that I have now, it would get really when you start first coaching your friends and stuff, those lines get blurry. You're like oh you're my first clients. I'm just doing it for practice and stuff and next thing you know, you don't know who is coaching who and what's going on. You want to have it in the moment where I'm here to really hold the space for you.

Sarah Lucille- Yes.

Ash Johns- I've got my people to do the things that I need.

Sarah Lucille- Yeah, one of my first clients was my aunt, so I totally get that, and those experiences were important too, and I coached my former best friend from high school who I hadn't talked to in forever. She just saw, I kept talking about things, and was like can we talk, and we worked together for free, and I wouldn't do it again, but I don't regret learning through that and it was a very transparent relationship. I'm learning. I'm new. I'm not an expert at this, and I think that's so important and there is this. There's this pressure. I just spent at the event we had, it was five days, of lots of conversations with our new graduates and some of our alumni came down too and we do it every year and on Monday we did a full Monday business intensive for those who just wanted to talk. How you even make this into a business. From your onboarding of clients, to calendars. All the details that aren't as fun to talk about, and there's this relief that would happen, when my approach is, I don't recommend you go and find your niche and your ideal client when you're new at this. It's gonna be uncomfortable, and a little more scattered as you're getting experience, and I still don't recommend it, and I get pushed back on that in my different mastermind and the business circles and I still stand by it. I guess, you have different ways of working with people, and you have an ideal client, in the sense of if you're healing, if you're a healer or you're in a healing business, then this would be a good match. What was it like for you though in figuring that out? Who your people are that you work best

with, and the work that you enjoy doing, and how did you know when you got there?

Ash Johns- Wow, I have to say this is actually a loaded question, because I don't believe in ideal model, ideal customer models at all, and that's again, because of my deprogramming of marketing, advertising, and just capitalistic manipulations of business growth, and what I believe is, who I am and how I communicate out into the world, how I show up in the world, how I behave in the world, brings people who are ready for me or who want to work with me to me, and sometimes that's in the grocery store line. Sometimes that's on the interwebs. Sometimes that's through a referral from a friend or a family member or something I wrote online. A place that I showed up. My people come towards me, and what my job is, in order, as a business person, as a person who is trying to make a living over here, is to have the things available so they can be in touch with me, so that's my email list, and how to get linked to my emails or sending a DM or whatever it might be but I stopped doing ideal customer work because I realized I was isolating a group of people who needed me and didn't feel like they were accessible. I felt like I was writing pain point marketing to again agitate the emotions and the psychology to motivate you to come to me and really when you start to unpack it not only energetically but psychologically that method, in my opinion, negates the work that we actually want to do as coaches and healers, and people helping the world evolve. I trust that when people learn more about coaching and they come across me, and they say you know what? I do see this reoccurring pattern or I do want to create. There's something in me that wants to come out, that they will say and engage with me or someone else when they need to. They might talk to me one day, and I'm not for them, but something I said leads them to someone else, and that to me is a much more compassionate. We want to empower people. I don't need to push you down a funnel to come to me, and that does mean that businesses grow a little bit slower in my experience. Like when I was doing that other marketing, stuff was happening really fast. You can also do ideal client, and still they come in. The algorithms are all right. The targeting is all correct. They loved the ad. They found stuff. They came to the webinar. Whatever, and they still they weren't ready. You know why? Because they were responding emotionally to the triggering, and that's hitting nervous system making them come forward, when really it wasn't time yet. I talk a a lot about this in other ways. I could easily take another 45 minutes on this topic, but yeah, I identify that people, me being my true authentic self in the world and talking about what I am learning, what I'm seeing, writing thought pieces, just to articulate my point of view, and what the universe has gifted my soul to share, is enough to allow folks to come towards me, and my job is just to continue that.

Sarah Lucille- Yes, I love that. Not on my personal website. I think there's actually a bit of copy, that almost literally says what you just said. Who you are and how you communicate, is what attracts the right people for you, and the whole marketing approach that is more of poking at someone's fears and worries results in also working with people that it's a very frustrating experience for both individuals, and it's so special when you attract someone because there was so much resonance, and it was a good match, and it goes back to that trust thing, because it takes trust.

Ash Johns- Absolutely, absolutely. It's the opposite. I think that's what makes this industry and what we are doing, who we are, so amazing to me, because it's emerging. We can make it any way that we want, and we're saying we really want to help people. We don't have these confines, but we need these confines, right? How we create a real opportunity to have fresh energy, fresh thinking, community building? This soil is completely ripe for that development. I talk a lot about pricing too. Is it scale? Is it? When I hit these numbers, then I'm able to take these numbers? How? It doesn't have to be. Oh my goodness, you're getting me so excited. I'm just rolling over into thoughts, but this bit of the MLM, the multi level marketing, online marketing, all of that, rolling into the coaching field, so they're now intertwined a bit. A lot of us, our businesses are online essentially. We're coaching people from all over, and so when we're using those same frameworks to then attract and work with people, really when you start to unpack it, because you're selling at the very end, you're closing these sales. That's what that industry is from.

Sarah Lucille- Yes.

Ash Johns- Those who will remain unnamed right now help to create that as an industry standard, and it's like what is this? Where did that come from and why?

Sarah Lucille- Yeah.

Ash Johns- Look at it, as you said.

Sarah Lucille- It's even as a coach, because I'm checking myself when I was new. I was in a situation where I needed to get out of a relationship. I had no money. I had no control over the money and I was very much triggered by this sense of urgency. Okay, and they're making it look like security, ease, and I was so in my own trauma at the time. The idea of relief was so appealing, and so I actually went in that direction, initially because of the same thing. What we're saying, don't do this to your clients, notice when people are doing it to you, and attracting you to these business models that intuitively when I slowed down to listen, I was like this is not for me. This will never work for me, because it was never something I am here to do. At least not in this way. Yeah. Yeah.

Ash Johns- That's so amazing to hear you say that, but yeah, it's something to truly think about because I do see, talk about trends in the industry as people are deciding to come into coaching, is that escaping from the job or the career that you had before to come into this, if you carry, again this is why you have to do the work for yourself, because carrying that in, I know people who used to be in sales or marketing or finance or business or whatever and then they apply that same stuff again in their lifestyle, how they work, so it's like I don't want to go to that office and deal with toxic this. I'm still running my coaching business in the same way.

Sarah Lucille- Yeah.

Ash Johns- We want to, yeah.

Sarah Lucille- Wow, so do you on a, swinging in a different direction, have a favorite story or favorite experience that just you love reflecting back on it or it's just a reminder of this is why I'm doing this?

Ash Johns- That's a great question. Honestly, I think that every time I have a session I'm like this is why I'm here. Every single time, and I can go back to being about nine years old in the self help section of a book store, checking out and buying books on self help, and personal development and mindfulness and now fast forward now to my early 30s, being like of course this is who you were all along. All along. Every single time I have a conversation and I feel how I feel and I see that person, I'm like this. I can take, not that I do this, but they said if you have to take a 3:00 AM client, take this 3:00 AM client, I would be like sure. Rolling out of the bed, no problem, just because I just truly believe in this work. I think it is going to help heal humanity, and when I meet other coaches and get a chance to work with them or witness them and I see how I feel meeting a peer or seeing a peer, it just again, the same rise in me comes up. That's the only story I can share, is every single time that these things happen and I get to witness what this work can be, it just makes me happy.

Sarah Lucille- Wow, that, I got chills again. So true. It's so special. Ash, this has been such a good conversation. I loved it. There's so many pieces that could go on forever and I really appreciate you being very open and transparent in sharing everything you did.

Ash Johns- Yeah, thank you so much for having me. I'm so excited about this entire summit and everything you guys are doing. Just thank you, and thanks everyone who listens to this.

Sarah Lucille- Thank you everyone who took the time to be here and we'll see you in the next one.