

DISRUPT YOURSELF PODCAST

EPISODE 321: MAGDALENA MOOK

Welcome back to the Disrupt Yourself podcast. I'm your host Whitney Johnson, CEO of Disruption Advisors, where we help you grow your people to grow your organization -- because organizations don't disrupt, people do. The building block of that growth? It's you. The temptation to compromise on who we are - at least, who we'd like to be - that temptation is always there. Compromise is a good thing, right? It's agreeing to meet in the middle. We get hit with these moments often, where compromising could make things easier for us. Not only can it get you out of a hole, compromising could even make the number on your paycheck... bigger. A better life for you, your family. But like I said, you're compromising on who we'd LIKE to be. Sometimes we have to. Sometimes those expectations were ridiculous to begin with. But when it comes to compromising on the core of who we are, why would you ever meet yourself in the middle? I'd like to introduce someone who's consistently refused to meet themselves in the middle. Meet Magdalena Mook, CEO and executive director of the International Coaching Federation. From the Warsaw School of Economics in Poland to the top of the coaching movement, Magda embodies that idea, that investing in yourself means refusing to compromising with yourself. I've had the pleasure to speak on a couple panels alongside Magda, and she's whip-smart, unstoppable, and unstoppably positive. I'll jump into our conversation, and I hope you enjoy.

Whitney Johnson: So, Magda, we always start our podcast out by asking for a formative story, but this time I want to ask you for a story that isn't your go to for keynotes, a story that doesn't wrap up nicely with a neat lesson about leadership. I'd love to hear something that's anxious and messy. A problem that you had to cut your way through with a machete. Does anything come to mind?

Magdalena Mook: Oh, there are plenty of mistakes in my past. So let me just think for a second about the good one. So, as you know, I'm a native of Poland. I grew up in Poland. I moved to the United States as an adult, and I moved with the job. And it was all great and fun. And after a couple, three years, I decided actually to leave that job. That was my decision. I thought that there was time to do something else. Well, something else didn't come. Something else did not come at all for about two years. So here I am and already an adult with a good career, you know, behind my belt, not being able to find a job. I couldn't find a job. It was either I was told that I was overqualified, or I was told that, you know, I don't have enough qualifications for a special thing. And that was a very interesting time where I was willing to compromise my thoughts, my maybe professional ambitions, if you will, just because I always had a job. Right. And here we go. I was doing all sorts of funny stuff, like doing translations and, you know, things like that. And then I was like, no, I'm not going to do that. I'm not going to do that. Because then I was afraid that I'm going to get stuck into something that I don't want to do, that that was just, you know, something that I thought I had to do but didn't really want to. So seriously, very difficult time. I don't like to remember those couple of years, but now I was just waiting for something that resonated. And I got it. It was not -- it was not a well-paying job. Let's put it this way. I got a significant cut in pay at that moment, but I got a job that was exciting, that was bringing me to work with really interesting people and I was like, That's worth it. That's totally worth it. And you know, long story short, very shortly after I started getting promoted and, and getting a better position, better position for forwarding the mission of the organization I was working for at that moment. And the rest is history. But it was very, very hard to stand back and hold myself back a little bit from making a step that I think in the long run could have been a mistake.

Whitney Johnson: So, in just a moment, I'm going to ask you what that job was, because I'm very curious. But before we go there, I want to ask you this question that I think is really important. It sounds like you were still probably in your early to mid-20s at this point.

Magdalena Mook: Early, late 20s, Late 20s.

Whitney Johnson: Okay. Because one of the things that I think happens sometimes is when we think about the S curve and we're going to talk about that in a moment but think about the S curve when we're at the launch point of that curve. It's very messy as what you described. So, the launch point of your career in many respects. And there could have been, and it sounds like there was this impulse to just take a job to make the uncertainty go away because it was painful for you to have that uncertainty. So, my question for you, and I think that when that happens, that precipitates a quarter life or a midlife crisis. What did you do? What was your head game that allowed you to manage that? Because that was two years in your mid to late 20s Do you remember what you did to manage through that, that that crisis of potentially of confidence?

Magdalena Mook: Yeah. Well, so there was, there was not exactly a beginning of an S curve. That's the, that's what made it actually messier. I already had five very successful years of professional career. I got the job straight out of college. I was still in grad school. I got a great job, you know, and then and then I still held that job when I moved to the States. And then, as I said, that was my decision to leave that job and then nothing. Then the gap. Um. It's yeah. As I said, I don't like to remember that time, but, um. What did I do? Um, perhaps. Perhaps it was the experience of that first job out of college, which was a great job. That was like, I don't want to do any less than that. I don't. I want. I know that I have skills. I know that I have a lot to offer. I don't want that to be lost. I don't want to think about, um, doing something that is less, um, stimulating. That is less important.

Um, and, and it was, you know, it was, well, um, the voice of my dad in, in my head when we were growing up, my brother and I, he told us, he told us, he said, do whatever the hell you want. However, don't be mediocre, just be good at it. And. And that voice was still there. And it's like, Hm, I don't want to be mediocre. I want something that I can truly lend my skills, my passion, my talents, so that I can contribute in a way that is also contributing to my growth and my well-being.

Whitney Johnson: All right. So, in this very moment, where would you say you are on the S-curve of your career and slight modification question is, what would you label that curve?

Magdalena Mook: I think I am seriously getting. To the top of the S-curve. Yeah. I feel very fulfilled. I feel very proud of what I've accomplished and what I've managed to lead the organization through. Um, and I still have tons of energy to do more. It may be something slightly different. It may be in slightly different capacity, but. But I still have tons of energy and passion to move forward. You know, it's a -- it's a really good for me place where you don't feel like you have to prove yourself. You don't feel like you need to like you. You ought to do it. Remember, I grew up in in Poland where the auto culture is quite prevalent. You are certain and it's not because of the economic system. It's a family system where you just ought to do certain things. That's the cultural norm. Interesting. So, this is this is a part of the S-curve where I don't feel like I ought to I ought to do what's right thing to do rather than what may be expected of me. That's a very fun place to be.

Whitney Johnson: Very. So, you will label it. I'm on the S-curve where I want to be, not the ought to S-curve.

Magdalena Mook: Mhm. Mhm.

Whitney Johnson: All right. So, you as a CEO and executive director of the very August International Coaching Federation have a very unique view on the coaching industry as a whole. Since you joined it nearly two decades ago. How has this field of coaching evolved? And I know that's a big question and we would be here all day, but what are the 1 or 2 high level observations that you have?

Magdalena Mook: It evolved dramatically and for the better. You know, there are a couple of statistics I would like to share with you from the time that I indeed joined ICF and now so when I joined in 2005, we had 8000 members, ICF had 8000 members. We crossed 60,000 recently. Wow. We had, I want to say 1200 credential holders. We crossed 50,000 a couple of months ago when we were predominantly North American. 80 plus percent. Now less than half of our membership resides in North America, proving that coaching is truly a global phenomenon. And my favorite statistic is that there were five of us, five staff members running the whole organization, and now that is close, like 95 doing that. So good old days, good old days. But the field of coaching, my gosh, there are so many things that have changed. One, I'll start. What I already said is that coaching truly became a global phenomenon. We have members in over 170 countries and are growing. That's fantastic that, you know, I have to give it to the founders of ICF, that they have this foresight to call it international. From the very beginning they knew that it's going to be a global phenomenon. And it is. Um, there are so many findings from research about, you know, how coaching works, not only that it works, but how coaching works. And all this research can be is being incorporated into coaching education offerings. You know, when I first joined, firms like internal Coaching didn't really exist. Team coaching, forget it. Coaching cultures, what you're talking about. Um, coaching was reserved really for the C-suite and some, you know, affluent individuals. Um, and, and, and now coaching is

being offered to the much greater populations and therefore the impact is so much greater. Um, I remember the early years of my tenure with ICF, we defined coaching by what it was not, it is not counseling now, it is not consulting now, it's not mentoring now. We had to find the language to describe what coaching is and this is where the definition of coaching evolved. Um, it was, it was considered more of a fad. We had to defend ourselves all the time. You know, when, when somebody said, I'm a coach, oh, sports are you coaching? And I was like, No, it's not about sports. Oh, oh, Then big busses, right? The coaches. Not exactly. Then it was like now that fashion industry, that company coaches the bags now. Well, now, when you say that that somebody is a professional coach, it was like immediate, instantaneous recognition. Um, the other interesting evolution was that early on, universities were quite skeptical about, um, embracing coaching as, as the elective for their students or as means of supporting their students nowadays. Big names. Ivy League universities offer coaching, training and education and also offer coaching and means to support their students. That's again fantastic. And maybe the last point I make is that even in the early years when individuals, you know, this big C-suite people or celebrities, sports figures when they were using coaches, it was very hush hush. It was like, I'm not gonna talk about it. Um, and now people proudly say, my coach and I or, you know, I have that coach and because of that I was able to so from, from either secretive or almost remedial coaching became means of truly supporting people in reaching their highest potential. That's a humongous mind shift and again of course music to my ears because that's what coaching is.

Whitney Johnson: It's so funny. Listening to you talk about, um, I was having a conversation with Mike Sursok, actually, who you and I know, um, at Barings Private Equity in Asia. And we were talking about, you know, if you want to grow your business, you grow the market. And this is a classic example of you grew the market and the, you know the growth of ICF took care of itself. It's very, very interesting. So, question for you on that is what role does the ICF play in the business of coaching and how do you interact with the industry at large?

Magdalena Mook: I think that we have three predominant ways of influencing the field and interacting with the marketplace. One is that is known as a gold standard for the coaching profession. Um, ICF early on introduced standards for education and, of course, the credentials. And that process has been revisited several times with a very, very rigorous process. So, our credentials seriously are a gold standard for the profession. And you know, some people think that credentials are being issued as, as a means of, um, recognizing the expertise of a coach. And for sure that is a part of it. However, typically credentialing programs are established to protect the public. In other words, when a client is seeking a coach and they see that that coach is holding a credential from a reputable international organization, that is a certain level of certainty for them that they are buying professional service. And that's very important. You know, you can't grow the market if the market is suspicious or not sure about the quality of the service they are receiving. So that's very, very important. And it is a credentials and it is also our standards for coaching, education and superbly important, the ethics, the ethics of the coaching process. The other part is that we feel great responsibility, I would say, is research, and we've been partnering for years now with PricewaterhouseCoopers, with the Human Capital Institute and several other coaching research organizations to see how the market is evolving, to see what are the trends, because not only that gives us a better picture based on data rather than assumptions of how the market is evolving, but also it gives us insights into what is needed for the marketplace and for our coach practitioners to thrive. So, looking to the future, anticipating the needs and trying to have an answer as quickly as the question is being asked, rather than only then scramble for that for that answer. And the third one is that education of the marketplace, because as we said, you know, still

we do this study with. PricewaterhouseCoopers every couple of years. And this is a global awareness of coaching. That's one of my favorite studies we've done. First 1 in 2010. And you know, the saying that the good lawyer never asked a question they don't know the answer to. Well, we didn't know the answer to that question. And yet in 2010, the response was about 50% of the surveyed individuals. And they are just regular people, not coaches, said that they were aware of coaching. Having said that, when we dug deeper, they still were not sure what's the difference between coaching and mentoring in particular. So, as I said, we repeat this study every couple of years, and the most recent one indicated that at this point, 72% of people surveyed and they were surveyed in 35 countries are aware of coaching. That's a phenomenal job. We, in fact, ask our colleagues if they've seen because they do this kind of studies for many different industries and professions, we ask them if they've seen that kind of a jump. And this is nope.

Whitney Johnson: You credentialize, you do research, you're anticipating what's coming next, and then to educate and build awareness in the --

Magdalena Mook: Marketplace which go, which happens in many different ways. It is, of course, the regular PR and marketing campaigns, but we also are working with organizations and corporations we're working with not for profit, just bringing that knowledge about coaching to those who may think that they don't need coaching, or they may think they can't afford coaching their all assumptions, they are not necessarily based in facts and in data. So, we are trying to bring that message to those populations. You know, in the US, the US federal government is a huge, huge proponent of coaching, creating centers of excellence in many agencies. We have we have the community of practice, of coaches working in government, and that's a huge influence. The US Army is engaging coaches, you know, huge not for profits right now are engaging coaches so that that marketplace is growing. And you know we think we had something to do with that because we are promoting quality coaching, we are promoting what coaching is, but also super important, how to find a qualified coach. Right? What questions to ask and how do you know the coach is what you need? Yeah. You know, several years back I would say that there was a little bit of a danger when coaching started being popular that coaching will become a silver bullet. There are certain situations when different modality or different intervention is much more appropriate than coaching. So that was that was also a really interesting piece of balancing the opinions of a marketplace. And anyway, I mentioned those three, but of course we're supporting our professional coach coaches in their journey, in their professional journey.

Whitney Johnson: Oh, I love it! All right. So, I want to come back to actually, no, I don't want to come back to you. I want to ask the question right now. So, when people are looking for a coach, what is a question you would recommend that they ask right out of the gate?

Magdalena Mook: So, there are some, you know, very pragmatic, very practical questions. One is, where did you get your education? Are you a member of a professional organization? Are you credentialed? And if credential is certified, by whom? Is there a code of ethics that you adhere to? Could you give me a couple of references that I can speak to? These are very simple. One would think simple questions, but people don't ask them. When you choose a lawyer or a doctor, you do check their credentials. Why wouldn't people check the credentials of their coach? So that's something very basic. Um, and then of course, you know, some deeper conversations around the style about the alignment. Um, it is, it is true. And few people seem to remember that it is an equal decision of a coach and a client to work together. The coach has the same right as a client to say, I don't think it's going to work. I don't think I'm the best person for you. I can

recommend you to somebody else. So, um, some questions about, you know the coaching process. So, one comes coaching with. Right. Expectation. Of what could be the outcome, what coach will and will not do. You know, I'm a coaching junkie. I'm a trained coach, but also, of course, work with the coach myself and am the worst client ever because sometimes I will just come to a coaching session and I would explain what I want to talk about and my coach would say something, oh, so what would you like me to do here? Right? And I'm jokingly, I was like it, right? And of course, we know the coach is not about fixing things for people. So that expectation is very important as well. And that's a good question to ask the coach.

Whitney Johnson: So, as you have just said, there's been this massive trend for people being interested in coaching and we had the pandemic and I think that accelerated things because people started to turn inward. Some economists called it the great resignation. We called it the great aspiration. Have you seen a similar influx of new coaches? Meaning are the, and you're an economist by training, is there a match of supply and demand or is there more demand for coaches than there are coaches? Are there too many coaches? What are you seeing in the marketplace?

Magdalena Mook: We think that we have a pretty nice balance, that being because as we said earlier, the marketplace for coaches changed pretty dramatically when you had, as we said, when you only had, say, C-suite type of people engaging coaches, that demand was limited. Now, of course, coaching is open to so many more, and I think that coaching offered in organizational setting is one of the fastest accelerators of the use of coaching. You know, the research about the ripple effect of coaching. And when somebody experiences coaching, say, as a as a onboarding tool or as a development tool within their career, even if they finish that particular relationship and engagement, they already are exposed to coaching. They may engage a coach on their own, or they may recommend a coach to somebody else who's struggling with something. So yes, we have a huge influx of new coaches. As I said, we are over 60,000 members around the globe and during the pandemic we grew dramatically. We grew a lot, which is fantastic. And then, you know, some people will say, well, but those people who are newly trained and they make a living being coaches, well, my answer to that is, is not any different than any other profession. When you fresh out of school, unless it's highly specialized, something you start. At the fairly low level and make your way up. And when you think about career coaching is very popular as well. Right. So, when you think about somebody fresh out of school who is wanting to chart their career, they will not have tremendous resources to pay for coaching and they are beautiful match for those coaches younger in their professional development and so on and so forth. It's, you know, ICF was created less than 30 years ago. It's still a very young profession, but we are only for the first time in the last. 44 years observing two trends. One, that there are people who started this organization retiring, the first crop of coaches, they are retiring and there are younger people. We see younger generations being interested in coaching. As we said, universities started offering degrees in coaching. It is it is a completely different crop of coaches coming to the marketplace, which is great because what we know from our research is that younger, younger clients, younger people are more aware of coaching, and they are more willing and ready to engage in coaching relationship with that comes a little caveat because they would prefer to work with a younger coach. They are very respectful of their managers, their mentors, and for a coach, they want somebody that they don't have to explain their reality to. So that again to me is beautiful because that creates that market space for younger coaches and younger people who may have an interest in becoming a professional.

Whitney Johnson: Interesting. So, what you're saying is if you're 25 or 30 and you want to become a coach, don't worry so much that you don't have a lot of life experience. If you

have the training, in fact, your experience will be relevant to someone who is relatively inexperienced as well because you're living in the same reality. Interesting.

Magdalena Mook: Exactly. You know, I think this is my conspiracy theory. I don't have proof for it. Yeah. But I think that this idea that to be a good coach, one has to have significant life experience came from the fact that people who created this, at least the ICF as an organization, were in that point of their careers. When they started coaching. They already had brilliant professional careers behind them. So, because when you look into core coaching competencies, nowhere does it say that you need to be a seasoned professional or older person to be a coach, not a single competency point. So, does it help in creating your marketing positioning? Sure. Are they people who are looking for potential clients who are looking for certain experience because that helps them explain their situation? Absolutely. Is it useful and relevant? Most definitely. And there is space for those who are who are just beginning their professional journey.

Whitney Johnson: Look at you, expanding the market even more for young coaches. Yeah. All right. So doing a quick sort of hop, skip and jump over your career. So, you've worked at the US Department of Agriculture, you've worked at the Council of State Governments. Um, and I'm wondering, so at the Council of State Governments, if I understand correctly, you were signing off on money that would determine in some part the economic health of entire countries and very vulnerable countries at that. I'm wondering if there were any insights that came for you from your time at USAID of what it really means to lead and build people? And did it change how you see yourself or how did it change how you see yourself?

Magdalena Mook: You know, the work with USAID was funding a grants program that the Council of State Governments was implementing, and that was combining the expertise of environmental protection coming from us states with our countries in Southeast Asia. And I think there were several very important points about that relationship. And it was a first that you can't boil the ocean. You have to pick and choose where you can have an impact and finding the right partners for that impact to be sustainable. Uh, we all hear stories about a lot of money being spent by international institutions such as World Bank or International Monetary Fund or USAID, for that matter. Um, and, and, you know, is it sustainable? So, this grants program, and we had a very robust process of selecting the programs to be funded. And there was a time that we also worked really hard on developing measures of success and those measures of success. And this is probably to your question, the biggest learning those measures of success. Uh, we're not always your traditional roses. You know, you're talking to an economist. And, of course sometimes it was some societal impact that could not be easily translated into traditional, you know, dollars and cents ROI. It was the life improvement that, again, was not eligible immediately, but that was making a difference, that was allowing those programs to be sustained. If you bring, say, new technology somewhere but you don't train people how to use this technology, it's not going to work. Right. And then you see all this one way, say side effects. Except they are not side effects. Suddenly the kids don't have to work as hard in their parents' business. They have time to go to school. You know, suddenly you see again kids going to school because they are not sick, because they are not drinking polluted water. You know, things that are tremendous. And one could say they are proxies for the traditional ROI, but they are possibly more important. So, my point here is that the measure of success is not always what you think immediately it is or it should be. You have to look more holistically and more systemically to be able to truly answer the question is it making a difference? Is it having an impact and is it sustainable?

Whitney Johnson: Wow. And what a beautiful combination or marriage of your training as an economist to have that insight at USAID and bring those together at ICF.

Magdalena Mook: Yeah. You know, sometimes it is so interesting, that retrospective, as you just said, what you said, I'm like, yeah. While when you're in it, when you're in a moment, you may not even think about it that way. It's just this experience that is enriching and elevating ability, our ability to see things differently and therefore bring the perspective that that may be the one that needs to be at least taken into consideration and not dismissed.

Whitney Johnson: What's the line between coaching and therapy and how do how do coaches navigate that? And for anybody who's listening, how do you navigate that with your coach?

Magdalena Mook: It is a very interesting question because it is a fairly simple definition that would say that coaching does not deal with trauma. Coaching is working with the whole person fully capable, and it is to move from point A to point B and point A is already a healthy place. And point B is the goal for a person. And at the same time, we of course, realize that we're working with the human person. Right? And human people are influenced by different experiences in their life. Some maybe not be as pleasant as others.

Magdalena Mook: It is also true that at the very beginning of ICF, many people who joined actually did come from the medical and especially mental health professions, counselors, psychologists, psychiatrists, and they of course maintain their, their licenses. So, they were fully prepared and capable of operating in both fields. And we found it confusing to the client. And we recommend that that even if somebody is fully prepared and licensed to do that, not to so that the client has a nice separation of the two functionalities. Probably the best. An example I heard was from a person who was working with both psychiatrist and the coach. She was a victim of domestic violence and she said there was a big problem with it. You know, just a person. And she said, look, my psychologist or psychiatrist helps me deal with the trauma of domestic violence. My coach helps me to maintain healthy habits. The ICF code of ethics. In fact, very specifically states that if a coach recognizes that the client can benefit more from the work with different kind of professionals, they have an obligation to refer them to such a professional. We did research some time ago about recognizing signs of of, you know, mental problems that would be better served by the medical professional. And we offer that research to our coaches, including kind of one pager. You know if this then that so that people can realize that. And just recently I spoke to Meg Moore at the Institute of Coaching and then they just started offering training to recognize the signs of mental stress because, you know, mental being is different than mental issue. And mental well-being can be very well supported by the coaches. While mental health needs to be dealt with by a professional. Right.

Whitney Johnson: Okay. That's a great distinction. Okay. So, a lot of us might receive coaching bits and pieces from a mentor or friend or colleague. What's the value in formalizing coaching into paid appointments?

Magdalena Mook: I think that this is a little bit of a myth that coaching is like talking to a friend or colleague. There is a very distinct difference. One is that, as you know, there are eight core coaching competencies, and coaching is a process. It has its beginning, it has its end, and it is a way of bringing the decision to fruition and then keeping an eye on accountability of doing what you promised you've done. But to me, a very significant difference is that when you talk to a colleague or a friend, consciously or otherwise, they

have a stake in the decision. Say I tell you that I'm planning on moving to Australia. You don't want me to move to Australia because we're having great chats, you know, and having coffee every other week, whatever. Consciously or not, you will probably ask questions that would make me start questioning my own decision rather than exploring what's exciting about moving to Australia. The only, the only focus of the coaching relationship is to establish a goal and to find a way to reach it, and then to keep a person accountable for taking steps to make it happen. And if those steps are not taken, why not? Maybe the goal is not the right goal.

Whitney Johnson: What's coaching done for you?

Magdalena Mook: Oh, you know, I'm still friends with my very first coach.

Whitney Johnson: For real.

Magdalena Mook: And that was a zillion years ago.

Whitney Johnson: Yes.

Magdalena Mook: And not a long time ago, I called her, and I said, listen, I -- I have to apologize. She says, "For?" And I said I was not a very available client. I said, "Now I know what you tried to do. I now recognize what we tried to take me on this coaching journey. I wasn't ready. I, you know, was so new to it." So, there is something to be said about client's preparedness to go into different levels of coaching conversation. You know, to me, coaching is the best way of raising your self-awareness. And as we know, everything, including what you and your company always say, starts with self. It does. So having a self-awareness is a huge, important piece of learning through coaching. The other one for me as a CEO is to have a very different management style. It is. It is a style of listening. It is a style of soliciting input from others. It is the style of exploring different. Ways of doing things. Exploring different potential solutions before. Actually, doing that. And then that accountability piece to make sure that we know who's responsible for what. What are the milestones? And if we need to correct. We correct. But let's know where we're going. Of course, with the, you know, boundaries being sometimes quite, quite broad and be able to evaluate if we're making progress.

Whitney Johnson: Yeah, and just as you're saying that I'm thinking so the question slight reframe or rephrase is helping you figure out are you on the right s curve for you right now? And once you make that decision, is support you in moving up that curve as quickly as possible so that you can then move to your next s curve and then your next. Exactly. All right. So, my final two questions for you, Magda, are what was useful for you today in this conversation?

Magdalena Mook: Very useful, which is also, you know, quite a great thing in coaching, is that sometimes you several times you mirrored to me something I said in a very succinct way that, you know, can be just written down in a, in a simple sentence. And it's like. So that that reflection and realization of naming something, I have a thing for naming things. So. So you help me name certain things. And that was very, very useful. Um, the other one is, um. But again, that awareness about the S-curve. Of course, I know your work. We talked about it before, but that awareness is super useful because sometimes when people actually are on an S-curve and they are not realizing that it can be overwhelming, it could be frustrating, maybe a little scary when you know that it's a process. Then, then then you at least have that goal and see where you are. And also, now

when suddenly these are these are messages that I think are extremely important to everybody. So, thank you for that.

Whitney Johnson: It's funny how you were watching me interview you and observing. That's funny. Like the mirror. Mirror. Mirror. Mirror. Okay. So very final question for you. Are any closing thoughts that you'd like to just put a bow on this conversation, something that you feel like, okay, I want to make sure that I leave everyone with this thought or idea.

Magdalena Mook: We use that hashtag or tagline in ICF and it is empowering the world with coaching. And I think it's a very appropriate one because we know on the practical level that coaching brings results for individuals, for teams, for groups, organizations, systems, communities, you name it. And I think it is so important that people realize that, although working with the coach is hard work, it is an investment. It is an investment in self, and it is a reward you can give to yourself. So, if you any of people listening, if you have not experience coaching. Right. Just try. Try it and see how your mind may be opened, how your perspectives could be changed, and how you can seriously see that this is one of the best investments you can make in yourself.

Whitney Johnson: Magda, thank you so much for joining me. This was such a treat.

Magdalena Mook: Thank you so much, Whitney, for the invitation. Always fun talking to you.

Isn't it fascinating to actually hear from the person who leads the coaching world? At least, one of its leaders. To get that birds-eye perspective on this industry, but also to hear just... who she is? How she got to where she is? It's... comforting, in a way, to know she's at the wheel. Lots to talk about here. I started this episode talking about compromising. I think nothing really exemplifies that more than what Magda's dad said to her. "Do whatever you want, just don't make it mediocre." Refusing to compromise also means committing yourself fully to the task at hand. Even when we take on a challenge, we can still find ways to compromise on our values. Rush and turn in a half-baked project. But, to be frank – and Magda often is – that would be... mediocre. That gets to the point of what challenges we do and do not take on. We truly cannot boil the oceans. Not every request for aid can be approved. It's the role and responsibility of a coach, actually, to put you on an S-curve and then have you re-evaluate whether it's even the right S-curve for you. It might have been, but then you found out – hey, maybe I am trying to boil the oceans here. Being able to re-evaluate as you're in motion on a curve is crucial. Last thing. Coaching is more important than ever, and Magda makes a great case for finding one – or becoming one. She called it both an international and a democratic phenomenon, and the crazy growth she outlined even just within the ICF was more than enough proof. Magda herself has used a coach her whole life – you heard how she called her very first coach to apologize! And now there are more opportunities than ever to get certified, get real hands-on training and use those skills to help others. Those opportunities are there because Magda helped put them there – growing the market, of course, but she's growing the profession's status too. For more like my talk with Magda, there's David Peterson, **episode 164**. David was the Director of Leadership and Coaching at Google for almost a decade, and it'd be a great follow-up. I spoke with Carol Kauffman, the founder of the Institute of Coaching at Harvard Medical School, in **episode 308** just recently. And of course, I can't leave out my conversation with Marshall Goldsmith, on changing the narrative around success and happiness. That's **episode 267**. Thank you again to Magdalena Mook, and thank you for listening. If you enjoyed this

episode, hit subscribe so you don't miss a single episode. Thank you to our producer Alexander Tuerk, production assistant Stephanie Brummel and production coordinator Nicole Pellegrino.

I'm Whitney Johnson

And this is Disrupt Yourself.