

Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Kori Linn

This week we're talking about how to create a career that truly delights you with my friend and client, Dr. Sara.

The Satisfied AF podcast is the place to learn how to create a life and career that's wildly delicious. Want a steamier sex life? We've got you. Want a more satisfying career? We'll cover that too. And you can be sure we'll spend lots of time talking about how to build connected, fun relationships that can handle life's ups and downs. No matter what goals you're working on, this show will help you create a one of a kind life that is just right for you. Join me, life and career coach Kori Linn and each week I'll give you lots of practical tips, tools, and proven strategies to help you create all the satisfaction your heart desires.

Kori: Hello, hello, hello, happy Wednesday. I am so excited for this week's podcast, I have such a treat for y'all. This week I have my friend and client Dr. Sara to talk to you. Dr. Sara is actually a local friend and client, so that is super fun. And we work together one-on-one and in small groups.

And we had so much fun coaching on her career and shifting where she was in her career from a place that was really successful, but not quite exactly what she wanted into something that was much more unique and tailored to exactly the kind of work she wanted to be doing and having the impact she wanted to have both in her role and in her industry at large. So without further ado, let's say hello to Dr. Sara.

Dr. Sara: Hi, Kori. Thanks for having me on the show.

Kori: Thank you so much for coming. So I keep calling you Dr. Sara because you are a physician, but do you want to tell the lovely listeners what kind of medicine you do?

Dr. Sara: Absolutely. So I practice pediatric critical care, which means that I am the doctor who takes care of kids of any age up to sometimes even 21 who are admitted to the ICU for various things. And I have been practicing that for, I think at least, oh gosh, 14 years now.

And I am also dedicated to improving the lives of physicians and nurses and people who are taking care of other people. And so that is the second half of my career as a wellbeing leader at my institution.

Kori: Oh, thank you so much for sharing. And I think that's a great place to kick off. Let's tell everybody when you came to work with me, like why did you hire me? What were you trying to achieve with coaching?

Dr. Sara: So the word that came to my mind is curiosity. I had heard about coaching, I didn't know a lot about it. Our mutual friend had shared with me her experience with coaching.

And as you and I started chatting, I realized that there was a way of thinking about my future and what I was doing that could be tweaked, that could be refined so that I could really harness what my goals are, what I want to do with it, what my strengths are, and what does this next kind of phase of my life look like.

And when we first took on coaching, I was at a point where I was two months shy of turning 40 and I was thinking about what I wanted the next decade of my life to look like. And that was personally as well as professionally. And while I love the practice of medicine, and I still enjoy it, I knew that there was something else.

I know that I've developed these other talents and these hobbies and skills and that I had rededicated myself to clinician wellness after I had experienced burnout and workplace trauma myself. And I didn't know what that would look like for me and entered coaching where I was able to take kind of practical steps towards thinking about what that next chapter of my life professionally was going to look like.

Kori: Yeah, so from my point of view, as your friend and also as the coach in that situation, the way I kind of saw it was you were like, oh, I have this really successful career. I've made a name for myself. I'm already demonstrating leadership, not just in the medical care that I'm delivering, but also in the physician wellness angle of understanding that physicians are under a lot of stress and they do really important work.

And specifically, like the way physicians work and the hours sometimes are very challenging and that physicians need to be cared for as well. And so you were already working on that, but you kind of wanted even more to go in the direction of spending more time doing physician wellness while also continuing to do the clinical work as well. Does that sound right?

Dr. Sara: Yes, that's exactly where I was at that point. And then the serendipitous part of all of it was that we had started coaching and there was this position that opened up at my institution of chief wellness officer, which was something that I aspired to.

And I kept thinking, oh, that's a near retirement type job or someday I would love to do that.

Kori: I'm just interrupting, but I think in the coaching call, you even were like, before that role even came up I think you were like, oh, this is the kind of thing I'd like to do in like 10 or 15 or 20 years. Like, oh, this is what I'm aspiring to. It wasn't anything you had thought, oh, I could do this in the next 12 months.

Dr. Sara: Totally.

Kori: But then tell us what happened.

Dr. Sara: Plot twist. So yeah. And I remember we were talking about it and I did the thing that many women experience where I looked at the job description and I thought I'm not qualified. And we went through it together, as well as with my best friend, and directly challenged every thought that I had of what makes you think you're not qualified for this?

And that was really pivotal for me because I think had I not been at that point in my life of already thinking about what the next chapter was going to look like, already being open to exploration and challenging myself and working with you to like be by my side to help me figure out all of that, I may not have taken that leap, right?

I shot my shot. And you remember, I thought whatever happens, happens. We worked through the thought pattern of what happens if you get it? What

happens if you don't? Could you be satisfied with either result? Internally, my heart was prepared for, okay, you're going to go out on a limb and you might not get this and that's going to be okay. But that doesn't mean you're not qualified to at least apply for it.

And so when I got the position -

Kori: Yeah, spoiler alert, y'all. She got the job.

Dr. Sara: I did. It was such a delight. And also, oh my gosh, so helpful and such a blessing that you were already part of the fabric of my day-to-day and my week-to-week from going from clinician to clinician and administrator/executive, that there were things that I didn't know that I didn't know.

And so many things that we were able to work through together from the simplest things such as you teaching me how to schedule my day, not putting myself through back-to-back meetings that go all the way through lunch. Making sure that I actually carved out time to do the work rather than just sit in meetings all day. And I know that sounds really basic, but for someone who's used to the clinical life, I didn't know what it was like to have an office job.

So from the day-to-day coaching of like, hey, this is how you can schedule your day, this is how you schedule your week, to the bigger things. Like my interactions were going to be different. And how was I going to reconcile conflict? How was I going to work through negotiations? How was I going to influence and be an advocate for change for the benefit of the people that I was representing? And that was invaluable.

Kori: Yeah. And just so everyone knows, because I didn't know this before I coached Dr. Sara, the chief wellness officer role, it's a split, right? So Dr. Sara still works in the pediatric ICU doing that clinical work. And by clinical work, what we mean is work where she's being a physician and doing physician things, like working with patients, writing charts, stuff like that.

But then half of her time now she's, like she said, sitting in an office. And if you've always had office work, that's a skill you know how to do. But if you

tried to put me in a clinical role, I'd have no idea what was happening because I have no skills in that area.

So through coaching, we opened Sara up to like, what do you want your future to look like? What's possible? Oh, look, here's an opportunity that actually kind of matches that. Oh, look, you got the opportunity, even though you thought you weren't qualified for it. Oh, look, now how are we going to actually do that and perform in this way that you've literally never performed in your entire professional career?

And so from my point of view, what the coaching did was helped you navigate that transition because that could have been very bumpy and very uncomfortable, if you had even gone through with it at all. But with coaching to support you, you were able to make the transition and then create this life that literally, y'all, I wish you could have been a fly on the wall.

Because in the very beginning of coaching with Sara, she was like, well, I think I want to do like half time, the actual physician work and then half time, something that is like helping physicians have a better experience. It's like what she said is literally what she got, but fast forwarded three months or less of like how fast the transition took place.

But then also it's like learning how to step into that new reality and the things that come with it because there will be new challenges because everything does have its particular challenges too.

Dr. Sara: Absolutely, beautifully put. And I used the word serendipitous, but the only thing that was serendipitous was that the position became open during that time. But it also made me wonder what other opportunities have come up in my life or could have come up?

And had I not been primed to feel more confident, to be able to reevaluate the way that I was thinking about things and breaking patterns that I maybe had previously in my life, or even just breaking out of my shell, it could have been that position, it could have been anything else. And my life could be

so different. It could have turned out so differently, even if it wasn't just this one position, it could be anything.

There's so many opportunities that come up in our lives on a day-to-day basis that we may not even recognize as kind of the next leveling up, right? And it's that thinking small that you helped me break out of.

Kori: I think that's such a good point because I've coached dozens, if not hundreds of people over the years. And something I see again and again is people will not see opportunities that are right in front of them until they're ready to be willing to believe that it could be for them or to be willing to go after it.

Or like someone can be flirting with you so obviously. But if you don't believe people flirt with you, you might just be like, I don't know, this person's standing close to me, it's very weird. Right?

So I think that's a great point that one of the things that is kind of hard to quantify about what coaching actually does is it helps you open your eyes up to what are the true opportunities around me and which of those opportunities do I want to pursue?

And then the second piece is, how do I strengthen myself enough that I can pursue them being uncertain whether I'll achieve them or not and knowing that I can tolerate the disappointment. Because I think we haven't touched on this yet, but that was also part of it like, wow, this role came up and my brain is telling me I'm not qualified. But then my coach is telling me like, let's go through the literal bullet points on the job description and maybe I am qualified.

But then there's also this leap of like, okay, I believe I'm qualified enough to apply. But in your brain, I think you were still like, but I'm not going to get it, right? You were like, this is an exercise in putting myself out there. But an exercise in putting yourself out there means coming to terms with the fact that if you feel disappointed, that's going to be painful and uncomfortable.

Now, it turns out you weren't disappointed. So that was also super fun. But I think you were able to put yourself out there because you also knew you

had the support in place that if it was devastating, you could tolerate it, right, and not be destroyed.

Dr. Sara: Right. And it's all about reframing. So when you taught me your coaching methodology, there was something so empowering in knowing that whatever I was feeling in the present moment, let's say it was something that was negative. And it was bothering me that I was feeling that way. It was so empowering for me to just pause and say, how would I rather feel right now?

And whatever the thoughts are, whatever the narrative is in my head, how can I change that? So I can feel this alternative feeling, which is what I would rather have. And then realizing that those thoughts and those feelings are going to directly impact how I act. And how I act is going to impact the results that I get. And my brain broke.

There were so many times you broke my brain for the better, that I realized the power was within me and that I could choose to see and view my life and my choices in the way that aligns with what I wanted it to be.

Kori: Right. And I think it sort of allows you to rally, right? And for everyone listening, this doesn't mean you get to skip on the negative emotions of life. That's not what Dr. Sara is saying. Like, we're still going to feel disappointed. We're still going to feel sad. We're still going to feel angry.

But what she's talking about is like realizing like, oh, okay, but, but now what, and where do I want to go from here? And can I add an additional perspective that's going to help me move forward in the way I want to move forward? Or is there an element of narrative that I'm adding to this that's making me feel bad that I can actually shuck off? Even if I'm still going to feel some disappointment, maybe I don't also have to feel shame and think I'm a failure as an example.

Dr. Sara: Yes, very well put. And, you know, even helping me be able to view conflict in a more positive way. Also, when we first started coaching coincided with when I met my current partner and that was new for me as well, being in a serious, loving, very healthy relationship. And there were

moments where I was like, I don't know what to do with this. This is so unfamiliar to my nervous system.

But realizing that even when we had our first conflict, that I could work through that and we came through it so much healthier and we were so much more connected to each other. And so even though we often coached about work-related things, sometimes when personal things came up, I was able to learn from that experience, realize that conflict or negative emotions aren't necessarily bad things. It actually taught me what can I learn from this?

And then I was also able to apply that to any interaction that I was having that ended up causing some amount of tension. And that was truly a gift.

Kori: Yeah. I love that you said that because one of my favorite things to teach is this idea that conflict can create intimacy. And y'all, I did not come up with this idea. This is from doctors, John and Julie Gottman, who are relationship researchers whose work I absolutely adore. But it's fundamentally changed how I show up in my primary romantic relationship.

I don't know why I'm saying primary, I only have one romantic relationship, but I just meant like my primary relationship in life. But it's something I talk to my clients about all the time because so often there's this thing of like, well, we're having conflicts, so that must mean we're not a good fit. Or we're having conflict so I have to break up or I have to quit this job because conflict shouldn't be happening.

But when you can embrace conflict as something that's like part of how we work better together, part of how we love each other more, it's first of all, such a relief. But second of all, it makes the conflict much more usable to get you towards wherever you want to be, like a better version of the relationship. So I love that you brought that up.

Dr. Sara: Thank you. Well, thank you for teaching it to me.

Kori: My pleasure. Okay, so we've talked about lots of fun things, and then I just want to ask you a few more questions. And one of those is, what was your favorite part of coaching? Or did you have a favorite part?

Dr. Sara: I can say this now, even though at the moment, I probably didn't feel it, but the moments where my brain broke were the best moments. Where I had that light bulb moment of a pattern breaking, it was just a paradigm shift.

I don't know how to describe it, but there were moments that really, like I have few moments in my life where I'm speechless. And I had many of them with you where I just kind of stared off into space and everything that I had thought was the way to think about the world or the way that I was going to approach things completely kind of fell away. And I realized I didn't have to think about things in that way.

And I know that sounds really abstract, but learning through your methodology and really challenging the beliefs that I had had about myself before and creating that reframe was really a transformative experience.

Kori: I love that. Do you have any examples of what a tangible impact of that is? Or do you want me to think about if I have examples?

Dr. Sara: I think the first thing I can think of is the example that I gave earlier of how you taught me to think about working through conflict. I had never thought about that before. And it was, I think the other thing about coaching that I also really loved was that it was so practical.

I've always been a proponent of therapy and I had engaged in therapy and coaching at the same time. And therapy is very different. And while you're learning about why we are the way that we are, what is it about your past or your present that is influencing you now, I think coaching is distinctly different because there is an element of that, but it's also a lot of practical application of, okay, now you know this.

Now with this knowledge, how can we do things differently? Or how are we going to act differently or think differently or approach this problem or opportunity or whatever it is? So I think the practicality of it is what is also a very enjoyable part of the experience.

Kori: I love that you said that because I actually think that's one of my number one most favorite things about coaching is it is very practical. It's

very straightforward. It's very like, oh, I learned something and now my day is going to be different. And now I have all these different options that heretofore I didn't realize I had. And I'm maybe going to exercise some of those options and then create different outcomes or get different results in my life.

Dr. Sara: Yeah. And it truly is the more you practice it, the better you get at it. And eventually it became something that I just started to do naturally, rather than at the beginning it was a concerted effort of like, okay, I'm going to practice this. I'm going to practice the model. And then after a while that just became something I started to do second nature.

Kori: Which I think is such a good point and something for everyone out there that like when you build a new habit, it often feels clunky in the beginning. In the beginning you're like, this is hard. How will I ever keep this up for forever? But it's such an important thing for you to realize that keeping a habit going is actually a lot easier than starting a habit. Just like cooking is easier than learning to cook.

So what Dr. Sara is talking about is like a lot of times in the beginning of coaching, it can feel a little hard. You're like, what are we doing? Why? But as you continue to do it, it will shift from being something you have to do intentionally and think really hard about to something that happens on autopilot.

The same way the first time you drive somewhere new, like if you go to a new city and you are trying to find a grocery store, it's like the most harrowing experience. But then I can drive to the grocery store near me and I don't even really have to think about it. It's just automatic. I know where to turn. I know where the stop signs are. It's much easier. So I love that you mentioned that. Thank you.

Okay, here's another question. Before we worked together, what hesitations did you have, if any? I feel like you're in a really unique position because a lot of my clients find me online via my podcast or via my social media, but we actually met in person as friends. So maybe you had different

hesitations, but what hesitations did you have if any? And then how did you feel about those hesitations once we started working together and after the coaching?

Dr. Sara: So I remember we had a very intentional conversation about we're friends and now we were going to kind of work together professionally. And what does that look like? And I loved how open and transparent you were and made it so easy to have that conversation so that it never felt like our friend time was ever going to have any of the creep. And even if it did, that would be okay. And it was just mutually respectful.

So I think that is something that was unique to our experience. I love that you just named it at the very beginning and said, you know, let's just talk about this. And then it wasn't a big thing at all. It wasn't a big deal. And then we were able to seamlessly kind of traverse that journey together and have our friend time and have our professional time.

And sometimes if one or the other dabbled into each other, that was also okay. But we were able to navigate that together as friends and as working professionals. And so that was a very cool experience.

And I imagine one of the other things I wanted to bring up is that, again, I'm in a fortunate position and I recognize my privilege that it wasn't as much of an issue for me. But I can imagine for many people in this economy it might be if it was cost prohibitive. And one of the things that I thought about as I was thinking about, okay, what do I want this next decade to look like? What do I want to invest in? Do I want to take courses? Do I want to do coaching? Like what kind of coaching do I want to do?

And I remember a friend telling me that any investment in yourself is money well spent. And that, I think, could not be more true, especially when you think about the wellbeing world, where we talk about self-care and the wellness industry has it as one thing of like, yes, absolutely do the massage and the retreats and the mani pedis and whatever it is, if that is what calls to you.

But self-care is also that investment in yourself, right? It's going to the doctor. It's going to the dentist. It's sometimes doing things that don't sound super fun or aren't glamorous, but are really important for you. And to me, investing in myself, well, I knew it was going to be work. I knew that this was something that I was going to dedicate time and energy and effort into, and I felt ready for it and I was excited about it.

And what I got out of it was also directly proportional to what I put into it. And that, to me, whether you think about education or anything, that is an investment in yourself. And once we started, that wasn't even a thought in my mind anymore.

And many of the clients that I have now become friends with through group coaching, we have since become friends and had conversations about that. And for them, it may have been cost prohibitive, but we all came to the same conclusion that this is so worth it.

And I wouldn't give a second thought to that anymore, because it was so immediately obvious to us of how beneficial this was and that we could immediately use those skills in our lives. And that it gave back so much more than we ever thought we were putting into it.

And that is a testament to what an amazing coach you are. And also just the nature of the relationship, of the coaching relationship, as well as people who want to improve, who want to get better, working with someone who has the skill set to help you get there. It's just a magical experience and it's just 100% worth it.

So if that is a concern for any of the listeners, I hope you hear me tell you that you are worth every penny of it and you deserve that investment.

Kori: Thank you so much for saying that. And y'all are hearing the podcast, so you can't see my face, but it means so much to me to hear this from Dr. Sara, who, like we said, is both my friend and my client.

And I believe so deeply in the power of coaching. I know personally, I've spent over six figures on coaching, which is a number that makes me feel a little bit like, ah, but that's also what I've done. And it's been really profound

what I've gotten out of it. And I've been able to build an entire business and create an entire life and relationships that are, like you said, magical in ways that just weren't available to me before.

I also think it's a good time just to mention on the podcast that because my business has done very well over the years, in the more recent months I've also been able to add a sliding scale to my one-on-one business model, which means that there are actually three different price points at which people can hire me for one-on-one coaching.

And so that means that for people who are in a tougher economic situation, and that could be for a lot of different reasons, like caring for family members or being in the early stages of launching a business. But now I have sliding scale spots available for that.

So I'm doing three-month packages right now. The full price is \$4,500, but it slides up to \$6,000 for people who want to support the sliding scale and it slides down to \$3,000. And so it's actually been really cool because so many people told me, oh, if you have a sliding scale, no one's going to pay the highest because it's not required. And everybody who I've sold this to, I've sold four people into the lower end where like that's what they can afford is the \$3,000. And then I've sold five people into the higher one, right?

So I think that's really so heartening for me that people are like, oh, I'm happy to pay more so that you can open up more low spots, because that's how it works. Like for the people who pay at the higher end, then I open up more of the lower spots. That was a clunky explanation, but I think sliding scales are a really cool thing. And a long time ago when I was doing therapy and still in grad school, sliding scale was how I afforded therapy.

So I think it's a really beautiful business model, but I also hear what you're saying, Sara, which is like, it's a big investment of time. It's an investment of money. I actually think one of the hardest investments is it's an investment in being willing to think about how you're doing life and try doing life, doing career, doing relationships differently.

That can be expensive in an effort way, but the results you can get are truly mind blowing.

Dr. Sara: Absolutely. And anything that makes you feel vulnerable and is making you change the way that you thought you were doing things, great, right? And we all want to pat ourselves on the back of, yep, we're doing the best that we can and what we're doing works. And to suddenly kind of reckon with that truth of maybe the way that I've been thinking about things hasn't actually been serving me.

And that takes some vulnerability. It takes some honesty and it takes a very safe space, which you do a beautiful job of creating with your clients where we can kind of have that realization and know that you are there with us and that you're holding that space with us and you're helping us not just kind of reckon with that, but also build a healthier path forward is really truly a gift and just part of the amazing work that you do because it is hard.

And in those moments where, you know, my brain broke and you feel scared and you are just thinking, oh my gosh, I have been thinking this way my whole life, and now there's this new unfamiliar way of thinking about this. And it's scary. And you're like, yeah, and it's okay to be scared of it, but it's eventually going to feel familiar to you.

And that's exactly where I find myself as I have built this very solid foundation that you helped me build. And now it doesn't feel scary. Now when I change or when I challenge a certain thought or a paradigm, I'm excited by it rather than being scared of it. And that's really empowering.

Kori: I love that you said all of that. And I think it's just important for everyone to know too, like, as Sara said, it's a very nonjudgmental space. I have no skin in the game really of which paradigms you challenge and which ones you keep. I'm just here to help you see like, okay, well, when you're living inside of this paradigm, these things are happening, but there are these other paradigms available and then other things sometimes happen.

So I'm never over here saying, this is the right way, you have to do it this way. I'm just like, hey, did you know that you have more choices than you thought you did, right?

And it's kind of like what we talked about earlier with like, you don't even know the opportunities around you. What I like to believe that I'm helping people do with coaching is just notice and navigate the opportunities that are available in the way that feels delicious to them particularly. Like your delicious life and career is not my delicious life and career, but I think there's one available for everyone. And I just want to help people get to that.

Dr. Sara: And you absolutely can and do. And I want everyone to know that it's available to you, right? And I have a deliciously satisfying professional and personal life right now. And it's not like it just fell in my lap. This was, I recognize, an effort.

Kori: You built it.

Dr. Sara: I built it. I built this empire.

Kori: You built this empire.

Dr. Sara: Yes, exactly. And it was co-created, right? And I had people who helped me build it. My partner, my friends, my coach, my therapist, my family. But I created this and we are all celebrating it together. And I think that is just so beautiful.

So I happen to find myself in a transition point in my life and I don't know where any of your listeners are, but I think that listening to that voice, to that pull, to especially if it feels exciting and makes you a little bit nervous, that's the thing to listen to, right? Because that's what I was listening to in January of 2022 of, I just wanted something to be different and I didn't know what that was going to be. And that's okay.

I found someone who helped me figure it out and we kind of went on this journey together. And so I hope that your listeners are able to find that deliciously satisfying life for themselves as well.

Kori: Yeah. I just want to talk about one more thing that you just said too, is like, I love that you were like, you just knew you wanted something to be different and you weren't even 100% sure what it was. Because I think sometimes people think, I can't hire a coach until I know exactly what I want to do.

But a lot of my clients don't know exactly what they want to do. They just know like, oh, this doesn't feel as delicious as I want it to. And so it is kind of this exploration of like, well, let's just go on a journey together. And my clients wind up in really wonderful places, but I just think it's really good for people to know they don't always know in advance 100% where they want to go.

And a lot of clients also hire me to do one thing. And then in the middle of the coaching, they're like, actually – Like I had a client who was like, oh, I want to get promoted. And then in the middle of it they were like, I actually want to get divorced. And I was like, oh, let's do that then. And they decided they didn't want to get promoted. They didn't want to pursue that anymore.

But before coaching, that was the thing that their brain kept saying, well, if you solve this, it'll be better. So you don't have to know. I just want to give you all permission. Like you can sign up for a coaching package without knowing 100% where it is you think you're going. And you can wind up getting there a lot faster than you thought you could, just like Dr. Sara.

Okay, Dr. Sara, do you have anything else you want to tell people before we hop off here?

Dr. Sara: I just want people to know that they themselves are worth it. You are 100% worth it. And the entire experience is so beautiful and transformative. And I hope everyone gets a chance to experience that for themselves.

Kori: Thank you. Me too.

All right, thank you so much for coming on and having this wonderful conversation with us. And, listeners, I will see you next time.

Thank you for joining me for this week's episode of *Satisfied AF*. If you are ready to create a wildly delicious life and have way more fun than you ever thought possible, visit www.korilinn.com to see how I can help. See you next week.