

## Ep #255: How I Built a Six-Figure Coaching Practice in One Year with Dr. Diana Mercado



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Dr. Una**

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Hi docs, welcome to *The EntreMD Podcast*, where it's all about helping amazing physicians just like you embrace entrepreneurship so you can have the freedom to live life and practice medicine on your terms. I'm your host, Dr. Una.

Well, hello, hello, everybody. Welcome to another episode of *The EntreMD Podcast*. We are going to have so much fun today, I have an amazing doc here, Dr. Diana Mercado. She is a family medicine physician, she is a life coach for ADHD physicians, and she's the leader of a movement. An inbox zero movements, right? And so I'm super happy to have her on the show.

She's a rockstar entrepreneur, we're going to talk about her journey. So many lessons to be learned. So just get ready to lean in, enjoy this. This is going to be great. So, Dr. Diana, welcome to the show.

Dr. Diana: Thank you. Thank you for having me.

Dr. Una: Absolutely. And Dr. Diana had, you know, this is her second year in the EntreMD Business School and she let me call her Dr. Diana for a whole year. I just recently found out I was saying her name wrong, so thank you for being gracious. I'm going to give you a moment to introduce yourself to the listeners.

Dr. Diana: Sure. So where do I start? It's been a year, it's been an amazing year, a lot of growth has happened. In the last few years I think five people knew I had ADHD. And now here I am like screaming at the top of the world to anybody who would hear. And it almost now sounds like a brag, where it used to be like a topic of shame for me because all I could see was my impairment with my ADHD. But I couldn't see my gifts of ADHD.

And life coaching has allowed me to change that and to change my narrative and to help others to do the same. And now whether it's my own clients or my own patients, like when I give them this diagnosis I preface with, and so do I. And they look at me like, "What, you?" And I say yes. Because now I see ADHD as a way to do whatever you want. But with that,

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you have to be aware that you have it because your brain is not broken, it's just different.

It's like if you are a left handed person and you're not aware, all you do is live in a right handed world. And so they keep giving you the tools for your right handedness, but they don't quite fit. And so now that I come and I give you a left handed desk and a left handed pencil, we have an awareness of oh, okay, it's just different. It's not wrong, it's just different.

And so with that being said, I'm on a mission to help other physicians be able to recognize in themselves or in their colleagues if they might have ADHD, or anxiety, or depression or anything else. Because mental health has been brought up to our forefront with Covid. And so I didn't realize it was my ADHD that was keeping me from not spending the time that I wanted with my family and with my patients. And they always said I was just stubborn.

But when you're aligned with your passion, you don't make it mean anything that you have to take maybe five routes to finally get to the destination. And I think that's the reason why I was able to become an entrepreneur and a physician with ADHD because my purpose then became to help others prevent burnout. And so it's been a big blessing to be in this group, to be able to do that.

Dr. Una: Man, so this is so good because there are a lot of businesses that start off really from us finding out we have a "problem," we fix the problem, we turn around and we're like, "Hey, hey guys, it doesn't have to be that way. It can be amazing." And how empowering it is to think about an impairment as a gift, right? This is now not a problem, this is something that gives me an advantage.

And there's so many people, like you said for yourself there was shame around it, that had shame. But now you've flipped this where now you brag

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about it. You don't have ADHD, what's wrong with you? You know, right? And so that is beautiful, right?

And I think having that and then being able to figure out a vehicle to convert that into a business, right, because no margin no mission. So you can actually give your time and give your life to this mission that you have, right? So it's beyond beautiful.

So I know that you had discovered this, I know that you had become a coach and you had done all of this pre EBS, right? Before the EntreMD Business School. So talk to us a little bit about what business looked like, what life looked like before you decided to join the business school.

Dr. Diana: Yes, so I joined Life Coach School in January of 2022. And I, “graduated” from Life Coach School on July-

Dr. Una: 2021?

Dr. Diana: Yeah, sorry, 2021. Yes.

Dr. Una: Okay, okay.

Dr. Diana: Yes, thank you. You see, all my days go together. It feels like it was just six months ago, but no. So it was a year ago and I joined EntreMD on June of 2021. And so it was like a month right after, or actually a month right before I graduated and got certified or whatever.

And a lot of us have this thing in our minds that not until we have the degree or that not until we've gone through so and so class are we all the sudden qualified to be able to do X, Y, and Z. And so this is why sometimes business can feel so scary.

Because if you can imagine, most of us are physicians were listening, I mean we've been in this straight, narrow path, even though some of us take curves along the way, for years, right? Maybe 7, 10 years, who knows, depending on your specialty.

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And then all of a sudden I was supposed to wrap my mind around the fact that it took me six months to all the sudden say I'm a life coach and this is my new business. And it felt really weird to me. But I had to understand that I was showing up as my full self, not just as the entrepreneur, but as the physician.

Even though when my clients talk to me, I'm not talking to them from their physician perspective, but we are able to at least have a conversation so that then they can go and get help, whatever they need, right?

So before EntreMD I was just somebody who was trying to survive, right? Just like everybody else. Through EntreMD I learned not to just survive, but to thrive, and just to speak from a passion but with a call to action so that I made an impact. Not just "the bottom line," but an impact on how it was going to prevent burnout on others, or encourage others to step into the role of who they wanted to become, whatever that looked like.

Whether it was time freedom, or financial freedom, or whatever it was. And so it was through being in a room of unicorns and normalizing that we were all unicorns, that we kept telling each other you're not dreaming, dream bigger. And we couldn't see what that meant because we hadn't yet done it. But somebody else might have done it and they were leaning into each other and saying, well keep going, I got you.

And we all know that when we are starting any endeavor, all we do is second guess ourselves because that's what the normal brain is going to do. When you have those around you who say yes it's scary, but if you keep going through the river of misery, you do come out on the other side. And it was in this environment where you started to unlearn things that were not helpful and to maybe not share everything until you were already really needing the help, when you were really already been successful.

Granted, success looks different for everybody. It could be that all of a sudden you have international speaking gigs, right? Or it could have been

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that you had, for me it was 55 physicians that I was able to help. And it was not necessarily the money that I made, although I went from 2k to 148k in the first year.

But it was the fact that all those physicians decided that they were worth the investment. That they were worth a chance of a new life, of a different life. A life where they were in control instead of feeling like everybody else's priorities was what was the most important thing and then they forgot about who they were.

And so in this year I learned to see it as having my army, right? Of having my people that if I didn't know what I needed, I just typed it in and somebody somewhere told me and it was wonderful. It was a mastermind. It was a way to keep going and helping each other. And you don't realize how the people that you need are always presented in the right time and how you can open doors for others without even trying and how they can open doors for you without even trying.

And so, yeah, going to retreats, being around the energy of where add more zeros is the norm, or celebrating, "Oh you got fired, oh, that's cool, that means a bigger opportunity is coming." And of course, we all grieve, but sometimes we have to realize that life throws us curve balls because we might have been stuck in that hamster wheel unaware that there was something better and bigger for you.

Dr. Una: Man, and you've had quite a journey, right? Like 55 people in the first year and going from 2k to crossing six-figures in the first year. So now I have questions, right? What do you think is one of the things that has helped you reach as many physicians and generate as much revenue?

Like if you could speak to coaches, this applies to all entrepreneurs really, but if you could speak to coaches, like after you've done your training, you've done all these things and you've identified as a coach, this is what will help you move your business forward, right? Because the act of

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coaching and the business of coaching are two different things, right? What would you tell that person?

Dr. Diana: So what I would tell that person is that you have to be willing to begin with a beginner's mind. That we can't expect our business to all the sudden give us the same fruit that our current career does that we've been training for for so long, right?

For years, we've been so patiently waiting to earn what we earn, right? With business, because most of the time it's aligned with a passion and an act of service, you want it right away because you're so excited about it. But I keep telling people, you can't expect the toddler to start to run when it was just born, like you can't.

But there's shortcuts, there are always shortcuts. When you surround yourself with people, you have the shortcuts because all of a sudden they're leaning into what books you might be thinking, what mindset you might be having, what course. You know, we didn't know all those medicines, right? Like we had to learn all those vocabularies. Well, it's the same thing with business.

So I think the success comes from you knowing why you're doing it because there are some things that are not fun and boring. And we all know that those are not the ones we want to do.

Dr. Una: You have to say that again. They're not fun and they're boring. Okay, I am so sorry to interrupt, because that is so powerful because a lot of times you come into entrepreneurship expecting this roller coaster and it should always be a roller coaster. But sometimes it's those not fun, boring things that make it work.

So now I want to know, what are one or two of those boring things that you've had to do again, and again, and again, and again? You even got tired of doing it, it was boring, but you did it and you can link that to success in your business.



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Dr. Diana: So things that are not fun for me are sending emails. They're the pain of my existence. And that's why I don't have yet, like it's known that you're supposed to, not supposed to, it's encouraged that you have an email list. That that's the fastest way you can grow your audience. To me, that's the boring part.

So what do I do? I see people saying something, I go and post and provide service. And I keep asking, "Hey, if you know somebody who needs help, I'm here to talk about my story. I'm here to talk about my story. I'm here to talk about my story."

So that's maybe boring because I don't even know how many people have heard my story or if they even want to hear the story again, but the people that need to hear it will hear it. And so the success, I think, has been from you thinking why not me? Why can't I be the one who goes and now speaks at the events that I've been at?

For example, I went and I pitched myself to the Texas Academy of Family Physicians. I had just finished a master class through the Life Coach School, which was outstanding with like DJ and all. It just so happened they were both in Austin the same weekend, so one finished and then I went to the other.

And then I was like, "Oh my God, this is so boring. CME shouldn't be this boring, like we're just falling asleep here. Let me go tell them how we can prevent burnout. Let me go talk about how to identify ADHD in physicians. Because in identifying, they might save somebody's life because it's the ripple effect.

It doesn't just affect the individual, but it affects the relationships that they have because there can be so many misunderstandings that could lead to not even getting married one day or being married and ending up in divorce. Or it could lead to them speeding because they're always late, you know?



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And so it might really save their life and it might change their life if they just realize that ADHD is not just a kid who is upset and all around because usually females are diagnosed later on because they have the inattentive type.

They're the perfect student in the back of the room who's not causing any chaos. And they're the people who, if they find what they like, they're not going to be diagnosed until the birth of their first child, or after they become the CEO of something, or they go into law school, med school, or something else, or even until they hit menopause.

And a lot of people are like, "Well, why diagnose them then?" Well if you're like my grandma, who lived till the 90s, I hope that you want to be at least aware of how to help yourself and improve your quality of life the last 40 years, right?

And so it's so important to do the boring things because the boring things are what's going to actually give you the freedom of time. The boring things is where I show you how to use planning, and batching, and timers. Things that seem really boring but they really provide a safety net. Because I had to learn the hard way that while medicine can help, it's one of many tools, and coaching, and therapy, and running, and low carb diet, all those are so many tools.

Not medicine can help everybody so you need to know, okay, I took the medicine and now I can focus, but why am I still irritable? Why am I still lashing out? Why am I still emotional? Well, because you're not aware that there's a two second delay in your amygdala that the people with ADHD don't have, and you already were so impulsive and said things out loud.

But that's also part of the reason why you are probably a leader. That's probably part of the reason why I'm the chief resident and why I was, and I am still the clinical medical director and the chief medical officer at my hospital.

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So when you align yourself with your values, you stop just being reactive, but you start being proactive. And so the boring parts allow you to not get yourself in trouble, like actually having your CME in time and like not forgetting to do your oil change and paying your taxes.

And so the boring parts are the parts that need to be done in a fun way in a shorter amount of time. Not in like let's plan everything and then I planned and I don't want to do anything now because I just planned everything. Not that type.

Dr. Una: That's a whole masterclass right there, right, doing the boring things. And it's a trap that many entrepreneurs fall into so I'm so glad you brought that up. All right, people, embrace the boring, embrace it.

Another question I have for you is I noticed that, especially in the second half of the year, you were really big on putting yourself out there making offers. You alluded to it here a little bit, putting yourself out there making offers, putting yourself out there doing masterclasses all of that.

Is that something you were always open to? Was it uncomfortable? Was it uncomfortable and boring? How did you keep going when maybe sometimes you did that and it looked like nobody responded? Talk to us a little bit about that.

Dr. Diana: Yeah, so it's really funny, I remember my first masterclass that I did, I didn't even know how to like share a screen or use Zoom. And I remember when I was trying to get people to pay, I didn't even know how to have a pay button like for Pay Pal or like for different things. But that didn't keep me from still asking people if they wanted to work with me.

I figured, I mean, we buy stuff on Amazon, I figured there was a way or another they would send me money if they wanted to. So that's part of the boring thing, doing all the little details that allows you to get that email, to get everything done.

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Later on I was very lucky to invest in Kajabi. Before I was trying to do it manually, you can imagine how much of a task it was for me to try to remember people's emails and send the right times. So it was a hot mess at the beginning. But you then continue to grow.

And so I ended up developing three key things that they would find if they came later on into my course and rotating those so that when they came, I served. And whether they bought or not, it was not a big deal because they still would walk away with things they could implement. But just like everything, even though they're simple, you need that accountability.

And that's why I'm in your school, because I need that accountability. Because I know what I want to do, but when I see everybody else around me doing their own thing, I'm not envious, I'm inspired. And so that's where I wanted to provide and think outside the box. Because most people when they start coaching, specifically, they're like, oh, I'm just going to get 20 or 30 private clients, and then I'll do a group so I don't become the bottleneck.

But all along I was working full-time and I was really doing part-time coaching. And I had to really tell myself, how can I do this so my husband doesn't keep saying that this is a hobby and not a business? It's like how can I do it so that he sees the value, how much fun I'm having in reinventing the life of everybody else, and reinventing my life?

And so it's funny because once you drink the Kool Aid, you keep drinking it because you keep growing. And it's so addicting because you see that you just have to go from A to B. And even though you've never been to B, you're going to get there because your success is going to happen because of the people you're surrounded with.

And so I became creative. At one point I had three groups going on at the same time. Why? It was never my intention, it was just that I saw people in November wanting to jump in before the holidays and I was like, let's do it. And then I saw some people telling me I want to do that after the holidays.

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And somebody approached me that they were going to close their practice, like they were two physicians who were going to close their practice so that I could coach both of them at the same time in January. And that's when I said, well, if anybody else can jump on that one on a Friday, why not? So that's how I ended up having two at the same time.

But then it just so happened that three medical students reached out to me around the same time telling me that they were about to quit medicine because of their ADHD. And I said, whoa, whoa, whoa, wait, wait, don't quit medicine. Let's talk, let's go through this coaching. And if you then decide that you do want to, that's okay, that's not a right or wrong thing. I just want to make sure you have the tools that I didn't have when I was going through med school. And so they didn't quit, so that's good.

Dr. Una: Oh man, that is so good.

Dr. Diana: They're doing so well.

Dr. Una: Look at that. Look at the significance of that, right? Doc's that are like, "We're out." And now they're in, and they're going to go on to touch thousands and thousands and thousands of lives because you said yes to your stuff and you kept making offers, and you kept putting yourself out there.

Okay, so what would you say to the doc who's like, I've started a business, maybe I'm a coach, and the business piece is not working. They've thought about the EntreMD Business School, they're not sure. I don't know if this is the right time, I don't know if I have time, it's expensive, stuff like that. What would you say to that doc?

Dr. Diana: I would say that you should have signed up yesterday. You're kind of late, but it's okay, everybody's on their own timeline. We're never ahead or behind. But you cannot keep telling yourself no. Your life deserves the chance to dream it up, and not just dream it up, but make it a reality, manifest it.

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Like we've been saying, how many years did you invest in your school? And how much is that purse that you're carrying? Or that car that you're driving? Or that house that you're living in? Do we need all that? I'm not sure, yet we invest in it, right?

So why not invest in your brain? Because it's the only thing that it's going to give you the ripple effect. Not just, again, financially or time wise, but in your relationships because all of a sudden, everything's at your fingertips.

Is it going to be hard? Yes. Are you going to be frustrated? Yes. Is being married hard? Yes. Is being single hard? Yes. Is it worth it? Yes. So then you decide what your yes is, and that's it. And just learn to see money as an energy exchange, as a way to invest to then 10x it. And that's it.

Dr. Una: Add the zero, 10x it. I love it. All right, so docs, if you're listening Dr. Diana and I would love to invite you to come check out the EntreMD Business School. It is a school by physicians for physicians, and it's all about helping you thrive as a physician entrepreneur. So check it out, [entremd.com/business](http://entremd.com/business).

And, Dr. Diana, I told you before we got on here that I had a surprise for you, so for the listeners, on July 4th I had sent out an email. I was like, what about your freedom, right? We're celebrating America's freedom but what of your freedom and all of that stuff. And a doctor responded to me and was like, "Hey, I don't know if you're going to get this, but I'm here, it's July 4th, I'm drowning in charts. And after I'm done with all these charts, I have to figure out all these prior authorizations, refills, all this stuff."

And she's like, "I started listening to your podcasts. I bought the book, I'm starting my journey, but I'm drowning," right? And I was like, hmm, this is a problem. I was like, oh, and so I sent Dr. Diana a PM on July 4th. I'm like, "Hey, do you have a recording for your masterclass? Because I know people get wicked results from that."

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You talked about it, like I serve, some will choose to work with me, some won't and it's fine. And so I'm like, "Do you have a recording?" She's like, "Yeah." I was like, "Give me the link." So she gives me the link, she gives me the link to, you know, claim CME credits and all of that stuff. I send it to the doc, right?

And so she responds to me, this is about 10 days later, okay? So I'm going to read the part that's for you. So she talked about, "I was at EntreMD Live, to say it was inspirational is an understatement. I can't let go of the thoughts of what is possible. I've listened to the book, I'm listening to the podcast, I found the Doctors Changing Medicine Podcast, which is our second podcast and I'm listening to that too."

And then she made this statement, "The link you sent from Dr. Diana, taming the in-basket was so helpful. For the most part my charts are now complete at the end of each visit!" With all these exclamation marks. And then she says, "I have a better handle on the in-baskets and anticipate getting that to zero in the next day or two."

Dr. Diana: What?

Dr. Una: That's what I said. This is from a masterclass, okay? So for you, I want you to understand that what you do is so powerful. Again, this is the thing about business, business is not about manipulating people and taking their money. It's serving people, you get a thank you note called money, but it's about serving people, right? And we don't, in the EntreMD world we're not ashamed of it. We serve and earn, we do both. We don't say I'm sorry, we don't do that, okay?

But I want you to see the impact of your work, I wanted you to hear that. And for everyone listening, Dr. Diana does these masterclasses frequently. So whenever you're listening to this, we want you to go to her website, sign up for the next one, it's all about inbox zero, ADHD or not. So tell people,

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your website, where they can go to find you. But I really wanted you to hear that.

Dr. Diana: Thank you so much. Yes, and I want to point out that while 90% of the people that have worked with me have ADHD, some physicians that don't have ADHD have still worked for me and have told me that it is the first time after 15, 20 years of practicing in like internal medicine or radiology, pathology, surgery, whatever it is, they're finally having their freedom on the weekends.

They didn't realize that they could take these simple systems and implement them. So and some of them, like you said, never buy the course. They just go to my masterclass and then they just send me other people because they see how helpful it could be to be in an environment for 12 weeks where you're earning CME and you are aligned with your mission and your passion.

So please join me at [adhd-lifecoach.com](https://adhd-lifecoach.com) or come to my TikTok or my Instagram @beyondADHD, A Physician's Perspective, and come and learn and let's do medicine in our own terms.

Dr. Una: Yes. I knew this was going to be good. Okay, Dr. Diana, thank you for coming to share your story, taking us behind the scenes, truly really powerful. Thank you for the work you do. You know I've been doing an oohing and aahing about your work from the first day I met you. I'm so glad you're doing a second year at the EntreMD Business School. Of course, we're going to take all of this like to a completely different level.

And for everyone who's been thinking, say yes to yourself, say yes to your dreams, say yes to your business, say yes to the way you want to serve the world. It's [entremd.com/business](https://entremd.com/business). And be sure to go sign up for her masterclass so you can celebrate inbox zero. You can get home with all your work done. You can do your weekends and forget there's a thing called work till Monday because that's the reality that we can have.



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So thank you for coming on the show. And for everyone listening, I will see you on the next episode of *The EntreMD Podcast*.

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