

## Pro Coach Mastermind - Live Alisa Cohn AM Session Transcript Mar 24, 2021

- Zeeshan Aziz: [00:03](#) Good morning, good afternoon and good evening. I'm really glad to have you all joining us for today's March Pro Coach Mastermind. Today's session is a networking masterclass with our esteemed guest presenter, Alisa Cohn, whom I'll introduce in just a moment. In the meantime, as people join us, we have a little bit of housekeeping. For today's session, it's going to last 60 minutes. For 60 minutes, please make sure you turn off all notifications, be fully present with us and take the time to really get involved with today's session. Use the Q&A box for interactions. The chat box will be used to share links with everyone. Please get involved. Ask your questions. Engage with us.
- Zeeshan Aziz: [00:55](#) Use the Q&A box. We'll make sure that we try and answer as many of those as we can. We also have our Q&A session with Alisa next week. Resty will be sharing the link for that in the chat box shortly. As everyone gets situated, please take a moment to let me know who you are, where you're joining from today, and why you joined the session. I'd love to hear from everyone joining today. We have Kay from Santa Fe, we have Claire from Denver, we have Phyllis from Lake Greenwood, we have Claudia from Italy. I think it's one of the things that really blows my mind, which is we have so many people from all over the world. It's incredible. We have such a broad spectrum of members. The diversity is really something to appreciate.
- Zeeshan Aziz: [01:39](#) We have I believe Jeanine from Texas. Thank you for joining us today. We have Oscar from Tehran. Quite a way away. Anuradha from India. Yeah, it's really nice to have you all joining the session today. With that said, my name is Zeeshan Aziz. I'll be your host for this session today. We have Resty doing session support and taking care of everything logistics. I'd like to start by giving you a quick introduction to Alisa, and I'm sure you've probably seen her in many of our other sessions and other presentations through WBECS. She's named the top startup coach in the world at the Thinkers50 Marshall Goldsmith Global Coaches Award in London. Alisa Cohn has been coaching startup founders to grow into world class CEOs for almost 20 years.

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- Zeeshan Aziz: [02:36](#) A onetime startup CFO, strategy consultant, and current angel investor and advisor. She was named a top 30 Global Guru and has worked with startups such as Venmo, Etsy, The Wirecutter, Mack Weldon, and Tory Burch. She's also coached CEOs and C-suite executives and enterprise clients such as Dell, Hitachi, Sony, IBM, Google, Microsoft, Bloomberg and the New York Times, and Calvin Klein. She's an incredibly sought after speaker, has keynoted for many companies, IBM, PwC, Dell, Standard Chartered Bank, and Citigroup. Inc. named Alisa one of the top leadership speakers. She has also an expert in networking. She's done recording sessions for Noble. This is a great time for us to dive deep into that topic. With all that information shared, I'm going to hand it over to our esteemed guest, Alisa Cohn. Thank you.
- Alisa Cohn: [03:32](#) Thank you. Thank you so much, Zeeshan. It's so wonderful to see you, and I appreciate those kind words. I'm going to share my screen so we can get into our presentation. Let's see how this goes. All right. It's always my most exciting moment when we share the screen. Tada! Okay. Hi, everybody. I am so excited to be here with you today to do a deep dive, a deep dive into networking to get more clients now, as in today, as in this week, but also, and this is the secret to networking, to build your network which accumulates as an asset over time. I want to give you skills and tools and strategies, again that you can use today, and I'm going to try to be as tactical as I can be about how you can use them today and this week and this month and this entire year and next year and the next and the next because that's how you're going to achieve your goals, whatever they may be, when it comes to networking.
- Alisa Cohn: [04:29](#) As Zeeshan said, this is who I am. In addition to having built my own career over 20 years with coaching startups, as well as large established companies, I also write for Forbes and for Inc. and for HBR. Specifically, well, recently I just recorded Noble. A new audio class company asked me to record a networking course for them because it's really an area of passion of mine. I also write about this quite a bit in certainly in Forbes and Inc.

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and in HBR as well. I'll talk a little bit later about a specific article I wrote at HBR about how to do networking now during a global pandemic, which we are still dealing with. Something that I hear every day from my private coaching clients, from my corporate clients, from really everybody is, "I know I need to network," and also, "I hate networking, I hate it and I feel like I don't know how to do it and I don't have a plan, and it's not something that I have any idea how to get started."

Alisa Cohn: [05:36](#)

The other thing I hear every day from people is when I say, "So how What's the state of your network?" By the way, I ask my corporate clients this, my startup clients this, startup CEOs I work with, private individuals, people who I coach, coaches who I coach, and my family and friends, I'll say, "How's the state of your network?" They'll say inaudible 00:05:55 They always have this, I know it should be better, and I can relate to all of that. I'll tell you a little bit how I got started in my ignominious early days. This is when I was the chief of staff to the provost at a college. I was quite young, and as part of being the chief of staff, something that I did with the provost regularly was we would host cocktail receptions with the faculty.

Alisa Cohn: [06:26](#)

Once a month, they were 10 times a year, because that's the academic calendar. 10 times a year, approximately once a month, we'd troop over to the faculty club, me and the provost, and gather with the faculty, and we have these small groups one at a time and this drinking cocktails thing. I was pretty young, and the faculty was a little bit older and more experienced. Also, this was everybody all together, the scientists and the mathematicians and the geologists and all these folks who I couldn't necessarily relate to. I said to myself, early on, "I don't know how I'm going to be able to handle this," because I was shy and uncomfortable and awkward. One thing I did, I said, "I'm going to set a goal for these receptions. I'm going to talk to two people, and then I can leave. Two people and then I can leave," because I was a co host, I couldn't just not show up.

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- Alisa Cohn: [07:17](#) I remember one time in particular, I was talking to this professor and he was probably some sort of scientist or a computer scientist or mathematician. He was pretty awkward and I was pretty awkward. We had this really awkward conversation. Then I excused myself finally, like, "I have to go talk to that person over there." But really I made a beeline for the door, and then what I didn't realize he was doing was that he made a beeline for the door also. We met again awkwardly at the door, and then had this awkward exchange before we both left. That was the beginning of my career in networking. If that's any spot where you are right now, I can totally understand that.
- Alisa Cohn: [07:58](#) Today, we're going to go over some of the strategies that I hope are going to empower you and enable you to have a better experience in large networking events, one-on-one, when you're sitting in your home office doing what you're doing and thinking about your network to help empower you to improve and increase your network. Because it doesn't have to be this way. Right? It could be that networking for you is something that. Actually, it could be a joy. For me, it's a joy. It could also be something that is just incorporated into your day-to-day sense of walking through the world. Networking doesn't have to be this thing that I'm doing, like I'm networking right now. It could be something that you make time to do on a regular basis in a comfortable and easy way because you've learned the strategies to do that.
- Alisa Cohn: [08:45](#) For example, some of the success stories that I've been acquainted with, even just during this pandemic, is that two of my private coaching clients actually got new clients by sending out a new kind of newsletter to their clients. A number of coaches that I'm familiar with, or was part of, did June cocktail events. One in particular, Camilla. What she did was, in the Zoom cocktails, she was able to get help for a pricing situation she was having, and also someone introduced her to a VA. Another of my clients inside of a cocktails, the Zoom cocktails, she got a new client right out of it. I myself reached out to somebody who I didn't really know very well, we had a nice long

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conversation which was great, and he referred me a client. I met somebody who I'd never known before.

Alisa Cohn: [09:39](#)

I met him online on a video situation, and he invited me on his podcast, and from there has referred me to three different people, one of whom became a client. I'm giving you these success stories because I want you to know that this is very possible. This is happening right now all around you. Don't think to yourself, oh, it's a pandemic, so I can't really do anything. Recognize that you can absolutely adjust to circumstances right now, and also heading into wherever you are, like in a lockdown, heading into more in real life situations, and say to yourself that you can also connect to these success stories. The first thing I want to ask you to do when we think about networking is to have a goal in mind. Have a goal in mind. Your goal might be to get new clients.

Alisa Cohn: [10:27](#)

I know that folks in the WBECS, the coaches on the WBECS calls like this, I can imagine that what you want is new clients and the things around it. Maybe opportunities for speaking opportunities, maybe opportunities to be on podcast, to write, to get your word out, get your ideas out. That's a great goal. I'm going to focus our discussion today on that kind of goal. But I want you to know, you can have many goals in mind for networking. You could think, I'm going to be moving to a new location and I want to get new friends and new colleagues and new people lined up in that new location. Also, everyone wants to know where to have brunch and have dinner in that new location. That is a good reason for networking. You might have a special interest, and you might think that I want to build my network in that special interest.

Alisa Cohn: [11:17](#)

It may be a hobby that you have. I'm here in New York City, and a lot of the folks in Central Park are bird watchers, and they always want to gather those bird watches to them or bicyclists. My boyfriend just got his private pilot's license, and he's dying to meet people who are into flying and private pilots like him. If you know any, please email me or if you're a private pilot

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yourself, email me, I'll connect with my boyfriend. The idea is that if you have a goal in mind, it helps structure your networking. As I said, today, we're going to talk about ... My focus is going to be on how to you, as coaches, get new clients or get other opportunities that'll get you new clients, or adjacent opportunities that'll get you new clients. But you can adapt any of these strategies for whatever you want to gather.

Alisa Cohn: [12:04](#)

The other thing I would say is this, what's great about networking is it increases serendipity. It's the ideas that if you have a network which is broad, broad, broad, broad, broad, and also deep, deep, deep, deep, deep, so broad and deep, suddenly serendipity is able to come into your life. That's fantastic. However, if you're thinking about I need to network, my suggestion to you is to start by having a goal as I said, and making some lists. The list would be this. People who you already know, who you recognize are really helpful and useful to you that you should get back in touch with. I call it the top 25 list. You can think about 25 people who you recognize I need to be in better touch with these folks, that's a great list. Another great list is people that I would really like to be in touch with.

Alisa Cohn: [12:55](#)

It could be like dream scenario like I'd like to meet Jeff Bezos, or I'd like to meet Marshall Goldsmith, right? That kind of thing? That can be another list. Dream scenario network, or even people who are more accessible. Just somebody who you don't know that well. He's a thought leader or somebody, or you don't know them at all and they're a thought leader, but you would like to meet them, that's a great list for you to make too. First of all, your top 25 people you already know who you know should be in touch with. I would say dream scenario, as well as specific people you'd like to get in touch with, right? That would be another really good list to make. The third list to make is the characteristics of the people you'd like to meet. What that would be your ideal client. The list of attributes who make up your ideal client.

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- Alisa Cohn: [13:45](#) Maybe it's people in professional services, maybe it's women who want to get promoted, maybe it's people who are in transition in some way. Whatever it is for you, write down those characteristics. Also, the characteristics are people who you know will be able to introduce you to those people. It might be HR inside of a company, it might be ... Let's say you're a coach who does spiritual pursuits and you're a personal coach, and you want to help people in their spiritual world, well, do you know priests and rabbis and other folks like that who might connect you to folks who are interested in improving and increasing their spiritual lives? Really it could be anything, and I want to invite you just to be a little bit purposeful and intentional about who you want to bring into your life by clarifying it and making some list.
- Alisa Cohn: [14:38](#) That's going to help you position into your goals. That's all preparation for what we're going to talk about, which are seven, seven specific strategies to help you improve and increase your network and your networking process today, this week, this month, and then all the way into the future because, again, these strategies are so important because networks accrue over time. Networks accrue over time, and I want you to keep remembering that, because these strategies will all work immediately. Also, you can't guarantee that any of them will work immediately, right? You've got to do them over and over and enact them over and over so that you can build the asset. We'll talk about that too. The first is to bring fresh eyes. What does that mean? Everybody has this group of people that you see every day, and that might be your colleagues, that might be fellow coaches, certainly is your family.
- Alisa Cohn: [15:37](#) There may be many people who you run into in your normal rotation every day. Now, some of you by the way, I understand may work in an office, you may be internal coaches or you may be people who are working inside of a company but you want to transition into being a coach. Fantastic. Inside of your company, you see people every day, right? Wherever it is, you see people every day. Well, what I think is that there's a whole bunch of

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people who you probably see every day or see regularly through other engagements, other way of engaging, that you're not really thinking about. First of all, that might be clubs you're associated with. A lot of people are in cycling clubs, in book clubs, in crafts clubs, any kind of regular interaction that you have, certainly your house of worship, whatever that is, you are dealing with all these people on a regular basis.

Alisa Cohn: [16:32](#)

But what's interesting to me is that many people never have professional conversation with people in their book club, or the people at their synagogue or the people at their church. That's what I want you to begin to think about. By the way, another thing I would say is parents dropping off their kids at school, looking at the other parents, to me, I'm so jealous. I don't have kids, because I'm like, "I'd love to drop my kids off at school so I could network with all those parents." Right? That's amazing. Also, community organizations that you're part of. I would invite you ... Again, this is very helpful to write things down and to be intentional about this. To think about what are the other groups, clubs, areas of interest, whatever it is, that you haven't really thought much about that suddenly could be a new way to meet new people and bring fresh eyes, bring fresh perspective into your own circle?

Alisa Cohn: [17:25](#)

I'll give you an example. My client, Yasmin, she's part of a book club, and I always encouraged her to have these conversations with her book club. "Oh, no, we're not like that. Oh, no, I'm shy. I'm uncomfortable." How can you be shy after having met with this group of women for three years? Right? How can you be shy about asking them, "Do you want a professional conversation?" I finally invited her to just do it. It's really an easy script. I'm very good at scripts. It's a very easy script. It is, "Hey, we've been in this book club together for three years, and we've never really found out our professional interest together, and I'm wondering if we could just have a conversation about our professional interest. Maybe we can find ways to help each other." "Well, that sounds reasonable, if you put it like that, Alisa." She agreed to do it.



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- Alisa Cohn: [18:13](#) Then it turned out that she was in the book club with somebody who did, now and again, bring in speakers to her organization. Indeed, once she had this conversation and she understood that Yasmin was looking for speaking opportunities, she said, "Oh, well, next time we have a speaking situation, I would love to bring you in," and indeed she brought her in for a speaking gig. Not only that, but after that, as the months went by after that, Yasmin got two new clients out of it. I tell you this, not because it's definitely going to happen to you, but I want you to know that when you're searching out, inside of the groups that you're already a part of, new ways to connect, these kinds of things will be more likely to happen. That's again where I come back to you've got to be purposeful in your actions so you can allow serendipity to emerge.
- Alisa Cohn: [19:06](#) I can't guarantee that somebody inside of your book club is going to hire you as a speaker. But I can guarantee that if you don't start talking about it, nobody's going to hire you in those circles because they just won't know it's an opportunity. I'm going to actually ask you to ... Actually, I'll allow you to take notes during this whole presentation. Think about the clubs, the organizations, the things adjacent to your regular day-to-day, and think about how you could bring fresh eyes to them. Is it a sports team you're on? Again, is it parents that drop off their kids? What can you do to look at your own network freshly so that you can have a new fond for adding new people to your network? That's strategy number one, and I will tell you it's tip number one.
- Alisa Cohn: [19:51](#) The next tip is really one of my favorites, which is reconnect with dormant ties. Dormant ties means either ... Mostly dormant ties means people who you haven't been in touch with for a long time, let's say three years or more, and that goes all the way back to elementary school. Right? It's all of those people in your life who you know about in the background, but you haven't been in touch with them in three years, five years, 10 years or longer. By the way, people don't love social media sometimes. One amazing thing about social media is that it

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keeps you in the loop with your high school friends, and people who you knew early in your career. If you just peruse Facebook or Instagram, every once in a while, you keep a little bit up to speed about what's going on with them, and it gives you context to reconnect.

Alisa Cohn: [20:40](#)

Because what people say to me all the time is, "But I don't know how to reconnect because I haven't talked to them in so long and I'm kind of embarrassed and I'm not really sure what to do." I totally understand that. But if you think about who are some people in your life who you may as well get back in touch with whether it's old colleagues, people you used to work with, people who used to be friends with you, you just lost touch with, people you've met in your travels, it could be anybody. I recently did this. I'm going to actually read you a specific ... I printed it out for you, a specific script of someone I recently got back in touch with, and this is how you can do it.

Alisa Cohn: [21:18](#)

I was on LinkedIn, and I happened to notice that somebody had connected with me about a year ago, who I knew from high school. Now, I'm from a small town, which means that if I knew her in high school, I know her at elementary school. Basically went to first grade together. That's how I first met Lisa. I was thinking I'm going to reconnect with Lisa, see what she's up to. I wrote, "Hi, Lisa. I happened to come across you on LinkedIn, and it made me think of you and wonder how you're doing. What are you up to these days? Are you friends with any of the Halston crowd on Facebook? I'm doing great. My big news is that I wrote a book. It's called From Startup To Grown Up and will be released in October, Business is going great. I'm living in the suburbs because of the pandemic, and I've started taking piano lessons."

Alisa Cohn: [21:59](#)

"When I was thinking about you, I remembered how your mom told everyone at one of those parent teacher nights that you and I had read all the books in the library, and how surprised my mom was. Remember that? I'd love to get back in touch and hear what you're up to. What are the most inspiring things

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you're up to and what are the important things you're working on? Drop me a line, hope to hear from you." That was pretty easy for me to write, and I just hit send. inaudible 00:22:26 I encourage all of you to do. Think about people in your life that you could get back in touch with and just hit send and don't worry about it. As it happens, Lisa did get back to me. Right? I'm actually going to give you a structure for that first email.

Alisa Cohn: [22:39](#)

You want to just say, "Hi, how're you doing?" Context, I was thinking of you because, right? This thing came up for me because, or I was thinking about all the people we used to go to school with or I saw you on LinkedIn or I saw this thing that reminded me of you. It could be anything. But it doesn't have to be that complicated. Then share some news. The reason you want to share some news is because that's going to help them share news back. What happens amazingly is that actually people are very interested in being coached, and if you put it out there that we're going to have also professional and personal reengagement, they may actually be interested in being coached or they may know people who are. Then you want to express a desire to get back in touch, and then you just send it. You don't over think it.

Alisa Cohn: [23:26](#)

I want to send you the follow-up ... I want to share with you the follow-up email that I wrote to Lisa, which is just this, because she wrote back to me. I wrote. "Hi, Lisa. Great to hear back from you. I'm so happy to hear about your new husband and that you love Denver." Amazing. I saw Claire earlier is from Denver. Lisa is also living in Denver. "I love that you're a consultant. I can really see how that would suit you. You had so many interests. The biggest thing I'm working on these days is my coaching practice. I work with startup founders and want to turn them into world class CEOs and executive teams inside of startups. It's very rewarding and interesting work. If you know any startup executives, there are lots in Denver, send them my way. I thought you'd enjoyed this article that I wrote about communications. Let's keep in touch."

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- Alisa Cohn: [24:09](#) That is it. That's structure number two, right? Respond to the news with enthusiasm, whatever they send back to you, And then that's when you can let them know. Because people always want to know, well, how do I turn it into a sales conversation? This is not a sales conversation. This is just a 00:24:25 I want to tell you what I'm working on. It's amazing to me how often people want to engage with coaches, want to talk to coaches, or know somebody who wants to talk to a coach. What's also I want to tell you is that weirdly your close friends are not as great about referring people to you as the people you get back in touch with. I mentioned to you that during the pandemic I reconnected with somebody who hadn't been touched with for a long time. We had a half an hour chat. Next thing I know, he sent me a referral. Next thing I know, that person hired me.
- Alisa Cohn: [24:59](#) This happens. I can't guarantee it's going to happen to you if you send out one email. But I actually can really guarantee this, if you get in the habit of getting back in touch with your dormant ties, good things will happen by way of speaking opportunities, being on podcast and definitely getting new clients. The last thing I want to show you is this, I hope you can see that. This is a picture that showed up on my iPhone today, and that is a picture of my friend, Tasha Eurich, who's the author of Insight, and a picture we took with Tasha and Alan Mulally, who was the former CEO of Ford, and myself at a Marshall Goldsmith 100 Coaches event way back three years ago.
- Alisa Cohn: [25:42](#) It showed up in my iPhone. What I'm going to do, definitely, later today is send a note to Tasha and to Alan and say, "Hey, remember this great picture that we just took?" As a way of just being in touch on a regular basis. What's amazing to me is that people don't look for those opportunities, as in here's an interesting article that made me think about you, here's a picture of us, this popped up in my iPhone, or whatever. Use all those opportunities to get back in touch with people on a regular basis, and don't be shy about it and practice doing it.

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Then as you do it on a regular basis, you'll be amazed at what comes back out to you. That is email number two, the whole email structure around getting back in touch with people who are dormant ties to you.

Alisa Cohn: [26:26](#)

The next is to create a personal advisory board. That's my personal advisory board. We sit around the campfire, all the time. The reason that this is really great is because as you cultivate a personal advisory board, people begin to have a stake in you. They want to refer things to you, they become resources of people that you can actually turn to when you need them. Really, it sounds so formal, a personal advisory board. What does that mean? Not really. It's something that you can make up for yourself. What I wouldn't encourage you to do is to think about who in my life would be very useful to pull closer to me? Then also, what kinds of people do I want in my life? I have a friend who did this. Her name is Sejal. What Sejal did was she cultivated ... she was in finance and she cultivated people who were in finance for sure, but also had successful careers, who could give her advice about career, not just in finance.

Alisa Cohn: [27:31](#)

Then through that network, through that personal advisory board network, two things amazing, inaudible 00:27:36 amazing happened to her. One is that she got invited to be on a board, on a governance board, through that personal advisory board connection. The second is that she met somebody else who wanted to start a hedge fund. She decided she wanted to start a hedge fund too, and the two of them moved off to Singapore to start a hedge fund. Now, that may not happen to you exactly, and I'm not sure anyone here wants to start a hedge fund. However, the point is that these connections lead to other opportunities happening. But how do you do that? I should say for myself how I do that is I don't think about personal advisory boards as much as I think about peer coaches.

Alisa Cohn: [28:11](#)

I have about three peer coaches right now, and I have just regular conversations with them. One is a coach, just like me.

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He's someone I respect, who I adore, who I know I can be safe with, and so I tell him all my stuff, he helps coach me, I help coach him, we coach each other, and then that creates a closeness so that we're able to ask each other questions really quick, really shorthand, and by the way, refer each other business when it's appropriate. The second is someone who's more financially oriented. Something I do is invest in startups. I also work in startups. I thought, I need somebody who I can talk to, I can just go to immediately to talk to about financial issues or equity issues or the mechanics and logistics of being in a startup.

Alisa Cohn: [28:58](#)

He's somebody who we do peer coaching back and forth. I coach him about his career and he coaches me, and I can reach out to him anytime I need to about startup logistics, so to speak. Then the last person is somebody who I'm constantly talking back and forth with about pricing, about strategy, about how to position a certain thing, and we do that for each other. I think about that, personally, for myself with peer coaches, you can do it any way you want. But the way to do it is to think about both what are the categories of people I want on my personal advisory board? Also, who around me do I want a closer relationship with to add them to my personal advisory board? The way to do that is to say, "Would you be in my personal advisory board?"

Alisa Cohn: [29:43](#)

Then they're like, "Oh, what's that? It's very exciting, right? It sounds so formal, it sounds so exciting." If what they say is, "I don't know what that is, I don't like that," well, then they don't have to be on your personal advisory board. That's what I think about it. Try it and see what happens when you begin to engage with people in that kind of a way. PS, they'll often pull you onto their ... like, "I want a personal advisory board too." They pull you into their personal advisory board, and then you suddenly have go-to people that you can talk to you when you need help with something, and also when you need to talk something out. Zeeshan, I see you coming back on. Did you want to take a few questions?

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- Zeeshan Aziz: [30:19](#) Yes. Alisa, you're doing such an amazing job that we're getting very few questions coming in. That being said, I would prompt everyone to please ask your burning questions about networking. This is the time and space to do it. What do you think you're not doing so well? Is there something you'd like to improve on? There are a couple of questions that I'd like to start with. Leo says, "Thank you for this event, Alisa. what are the most important soft skills to possess? Empathy is already a strength for me to network more effectively." So soft skills to network more effectively.
- Alisa Cohn: [30:57](#) Thank you for the question, and I love that you have empathy. That's fantastic. I think actually, one of the soft skills that everyone needs is to be purposeful and intentional about their network, right? So it's like easy to let it go and easy to not think about it and just people as they go. Excuse me. Think about, strategically, who you want to have inside of your network. That will be very helpful. Should I keep going then, Zeeshan? Yeah.
- Zeeshan Aziz: [31:27](#) No, I just for purposes of the video attend to camera.
- Alisa Cohn: [31:30](#) Okay.
- Zeeshan Aziz: [31:30](#) I do have another question for you, and we don't shy away from the tougher questions. Kayla was asking, in the example scripts you gave earlier, in your response, she asked, "Well, why not offer to help ..." Just a second. She said, "Why not offer to help the friend to keep the conversation going? It seems a bit one sided to ask for a referral without offering." How would you answer that?
- Alisa Cohn: [31:56](#) I think that's a very good point. I can't believe I didn't offer to be helpful. You're absolutely right. That was my mistake. I always think that everybody should say, "How can I be helpful to you?" I had the impression with Lisa that would almost This is my instinct, it would almost come across as a little bit salesy or something, so I didn't do that. But I 100% agree that you should

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definitely offer to help other people. This is a masterclass in networking. This is hopefully the strategies that we don't talk about every day. I think the notion of give first is definitely you should be embedded into your whole fabric, and definitely you should lead with what can I do to help you make ... basically, what can I do to help make your life better? Yeah, thanks for that question.

Zeeshan Aziz: [32:46](#)

Thank you very much. I will take another question. Around personal advisory boards, Amy was asking, "Do you recommend that your personal advisory board is in the same location as you?"

Alisa Cohn: [32:59](#)

That's a great question. I recommend it being the right people, right? Location agnostic, because it really has to be with the right people. Also, it's very helpful to have people near you for a variety of reasons, including for support. Also, it's very helpful to have people across the country and across the world because they have a different perspective. There's somebody who I have in my informal personal advisory board who lives in Australia. It's been very interesting to me to be in touch with her to understand how Australia is handling the pandemic and their experience is very different from we in New York. I would also say the people I know in Florida, people I know in Texas and California are all experiencing our life right now differently. It's extremely helpful to be awakened with other people from across the world. I encourage you to think about it's not an "or", it's an "and".

Zeeshan Aziz: [34:01](#)

We'll take one more question, yeah, around the advisory board. Priya was asking, "For the personal advisory board, do you bring all of them together at the same time or do you connect with them on a more one-to-one basis? How do you actually manage the workflow and the back and forth?"

Alisa Cohn: [34:18](#)

Yeah, great question, Priya. I used two things. I tend to focus on one-on-one and talk with people one-on-one and don't bring



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them together because that's my comfort zone. Although, sometimes people have said to me, "We should all get together." Alisa's advisory board should all get together because they want to meet each other. I think that's a good idea. I have run for two different clients and friends, one client, one friend, I ran personal advisory board discussions, a two-hour session for them both, and people found that very wonderful and they all want to do their own personal advisory board. Make it up. It's great to bring people together and we'll talk about that a little bit later to be a connector, and it's great to have the one-on-one conversations as well. I'm going to move on, Zeeshan. Is that cool?

Zeeshan Aziz: [35:12](#)

Yeah, that's what I was going to say.

Alisa Cohn: [35:14](#)

Good. Thanks, Zeeshan. That was fantastic. I appreciate that. We've talked about the personal advisory board and we've talked about the way you can target people in your real life. I would like to invite everybody here to get focused on their online presence. I think it used to be like, "Oh, you don't need social media. Oh, it doesn't really matter." I no longer think that. I no longer think that. If you want to upgrade your networking, if you really want to be a master networker and build your business through networking, I think it's really important to at least have a LinkedIn profile. Now, you don't have to have Instagram, you don't necessarily have to have Facebook, whatever you want. But if you want to great.

Alisa Cohn: [35:52](#)

But minimally, people are going to Google you, and minimally, they're going to want to see your LinkedIn profile. Having an appropriate LinkedIn profile is super, super helpful, and I would say again, imperative. It's about really having a strong picture, having a headline and body that speaks to who you are and mentions who your ideal client is so they can send them to you, right? Obviously, and they can also self select. Then also that your experiences, the things you've done, give you credibility. What I hear from my coaching clients all the time is, "There's so many coaches out there, how do I stand out?" Absolutely. Well,

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one basic way to stand out is to make sure that your online presence is up to date, and the way you use that is if you don't ...

Alisa Cohn: [36:39](#) I encourage everyone to at least write on your online blog, right? Even just 250 words, 500 words, short online LinkedIn blogs for just you to do or post videos. That helps people understand who you are and what you're about. The second thing is, even if you don't do that, right? It's really helpful to post relevant articles. You're a coach, right? You want to send out articles or post articles or share articles that seem to reflect your point of view, and that also are based on people who we made in the first list that you want to get closer to, to help you interact with them. That's the best way to use LinkedIn. Whenever you post, you then get a flurry of activity and you want to build an audience on your social networks so that it helps you build your credibility overall to be findable. Right?

Alisa Cohn: [37:34](#) When you reach out to people, that's fantastic. You also want to be findable so people can find you, and self select you to both be connected to, but then also to maybe hire you as a coach or to send you clients. That's what I want to say about online presence. It's a little bit uncomfortable for people sometimes. They don't like social media, I understand that, and I spend too much time on social media. I wish I didn't have to do it. I don't think it's optional, so the way to get the most effect and impact out of the least amount is by at least having a social presence and also sharing some relevant articles. By the way, if you do that for 15 minutes a day, that's very short period of time, but I promise you it'll get you great results. That's about online presence.

Alisa Cohn: [38:20](#) Another thing you can do regularly is electronically start a newsletter. Many coaches, I know that you know this, I have a newsletter, coaches I know have a newsletter, Marshall Goldsmith has a newsletter. That is normal, right? The idea that you take content and you position your content to send out to people. I absolutely encourage you to do that. This is my friend,

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Nick Grey. Nick is the founder of Museum Hack, which is an amazing company which helps you see the best of museums. He loves museums, he wants people to enjoy museums as much as he does. This is the first time I came across this thing that I thought he innovated, which was a friends newsletter. It's the idea that you don't have to just have professional newsletter, you can also have a friends newsletter that you send out to your friends on a regular basis.

Alisa Cohn: [39:09](#)

Back to connecting with people on a regular basis. Well, how do you do that? By the way, it can be pretty time consuming to connect with the people who you used to know, to connect with people that you want to know, to constantly be connecting. When you have a friends newsletter, then you're positioning just for your friends and you share what's going on in your life. What Nick does, Nick is a single guy who travels around a lot and he shares pictures of his photos. You may not be a single guy, you may have kids, you may have a busy life, you may not have all these photos of your interesting travel. That's okay. You have news. Even during the pandemic, everyone has the opportunity to cultivate and curate an interesting life, whether it has to do with the books that I'm reading, whether it has to do with hobbies I took up.

Alisa Cohn: [39:58](#)

I took piano lessons, my friend Dorie Clark took up ping pong, plenty of people have become bakers, right? And sourdough makers. Whatever it is that you cultivated as a hobby during this period is a great thing to be sharing in terms of the things that you're up to. If you have kids, you can share about your kids. All the personal things that you want to share with other people. The other thing is that, inside of your friend's newsletter, you're allowed to and I encourage you to talk about the coaching practice that you're doing. Interesting kinds of clients you're working with, the ways you're thinking about it now. Whatever you want to say about your coaching practice.

Alisa Cohn: [40:36](#)

All of this ... By the way, someone earlier asked, thank you, about offering to help. You can also, in your friends newsletter,

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say things like, "I'm always here to help you. Reach out to me if I can be helpful." Those kinds of things. Those are really great. It also drives response. People reply back to you, and they say, "Oh, I saw this, that's so interesting. I didn't realize you were doing this. I'm also doing that," or, "I'm doing something different," or, "You inspired me." Whatever it is, it generates response, which is very nice in its own way. It also just keeps people appraised and apprised of what you are working on, even if you don't know them professionally. It's a way to think about that, and it is a way to inspire people definitely. I know that we coaches became coaches not to, oh, we sell our services and not even to network.

Alisa Cohn: [41:24](#)

I think that we became coaches in part to give and to inspire other people. When you take the opportunity to really be purposeful about your life and to curate an interesting life, even during difficult times like we're living in now, that is inspiring to other people. I want you to think about what kinds of things ... You don't have to start a friends newsletter today, but you could think today about the things that you would include in a friends newsletter. Just think about that. You can even write it down. You could send out one experimental friends newsletter to all your friends. You can even then say, "If you want to opt in to my friends newsletter, you could do that," and then you have people who have opted into your newsletter, right? Which would be amazing.

Alisa Cohn: [42:07](#)

The last thing I want to say about this is the point about newsletters, professional and personal, is that the more people are exposed to you, the more people get to know you, exposed to you, see you in their email, see you around through social media or other kinds of things, the more they experience that they like you, that they know you, and that you have credibility. Some of this is sincere one-on-one communication and connecting, and that's wonderful. And some of this is also about having the background noise, the background noise of you being out there all the time so people can benefit from that frequency. That's how you want to think about starting a

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newsletter, like my friend Nick Grey did. Speaking of Nick Grey, he's in the bottom left there.

Alisa Cohn: [42:51](#) This is the first, first virtual ... I know the picture is not great, but I wanted to share it because this is the first virtual cocktails party that I personally hosted when the pandemic started. It was pretty much a year ago, actually. Because my friend Dorie Clark and I, we regularly throw cocktails or dinners or those kinds of things in person in New York. It always used to be that I'd be like, "Hey, if you're in New York, come on and join us, and we'll have a dinner and we'll have drinks and whatever." Then sadly, the pandemic happened and we both have the same idea, which is, okay, well, we're going to do this online now. This is the first one that I hosted, and then soon after, Dorie and I would host one almost once a week, on pretty much once a week during the pandemic.

Alisa Cohn: [43:37](#) We even wrote an article about it for Harvard Business Review about how to create your own online networking event. There's nothing magical about it. There's nothing special about it. All you need to do is to invite people. It's nice to co host it with somebody else because you can invite people that you know, three or so, and that person can invite people he or she knows three or so, and suddenly you've got eight people on a cocktails that don't necessarily know each other on a cocktails Zoom. What's awesome about that is that even though we're in a pandemic and we can't necessarily leave our house too easily and we're certainly not doing the kinds of events we used to do, this is a fantastic opportunity to meet new people and to deepen your existing relationships, and that's amazing.

Alisa Cohn: [44:22](#) My advice to you is to take a risk, partner up with somebody and host one yourself, and then what do you do? Because I think what happens is we're on these Zoom events, and it's like we're talking over each other, it's a little bit awkward. Don't make it awkward. Be a facilitator, which I know you know how to do as a coach, and recognize that you want to take charge of this event. What Dorie and I have come up with the formula is

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you first go around the Zoom room, and you introduce yourself and you talk about yourself personally and professionally and what you're up to, and then some fun fact. Or what I like to ask is what music's in your head right now, or a hobby you've taken up over the pandemic, whatever it is. Then we go around again the Zoom room, and we ask a question, the table question.

Alisa Cohn: [45:06](#)

The table question is just to have people be able to share a little bit more about themselves. Share more about themselves so we can all get a little bit better. One example of a table question would be, what are you most proud of this week or this month or this year? We're in March now, could be this year? What are you most looking forward to? What unexpected delight has come out of this period for you? What have you learned about yourself? It could be anything like that. I like for it to be a deep reflective question because again people share personally. If you create that space for people, you can create amazing intimacy, real intimacy, even inside of a Zoom room.

Alisa Cohn: [45:46](#)

PS, when you host dinners in person, which I encourage you to do when it's safe to do so, but when you host dinners in person, especially the restaurant industry in New York City, it can be loud, right? It can be really loud. The thing about Zoom is it's really quiet, where everyone's in their home, we talk one at a time, and you can hear each other. Also, by definition, you're not stuck next to the person that you're sitting next to. You have this more of this whole space. I want to encourage you to think about how you can host events in person when it's safe, and virtually when it's not. This is something that's available to you immediately. You could do this tonight, if you wanted to. You could certainly prepare and do it next week just by partnering with a friend, inviting three people, inviting three people and using our formula.

Alisa Cohn: [46:33](#)

Again, look us up on the HBR article we wrote, how to host a virtual networking event, and we lay out our entire formula there that you can absolutely use. That is about hosting events. Now I'm going to encourage you the last strategy is this, make it

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a system. Make it a system. Think about, on a weekly, monthly basis, the kinds of people you want to get back in touch with, how you're going to do it. Have Monday be email day, right? Have Tuesday be reached out day. Think about when you're going to put the strategy inside of your mindset and when you're going to actually do the mechanics. The way to do that is to really carve out time. Even right after this call, you can sit back and carve out specific time for I'm going to get out and get in touch with dormant contacts every other week.

Alisa Cohn: [47:21](#)

I'm going to reach out to the people who I know, but not that well, and have a professional conversation with them once a week, right? Two or three people once a week, and put them in your calendar. When you ... Then also, I'm going to host two Zoom cocktails every month, and they're going to be on these dates, and I'm going to figure out who I'm going to invite to them, right? By the way, you should be inviting anyone that you meet now, you can invite old colleagues, you can go back to your dormant ties, and actually there's a context for getting back in touch with them by having these Zoom cocktails. I'm trying to get back in touch with people who I used to know. You could invite them to that. Whatever you want to do, the key to you doing it is inside of your calendar, so make it a system.

Alisa Cohn: [48:03](#)

Then I know that many people are thinking, "But I can't do that because I'm shy, and what do we talk about? But that's not my ideal clients, so why should I reach out to them? They're too busy, I'm too shy, and they don't want to come." I understand all of that. I really do. Remember that I felt the same way when I was a very young chief of staff to the provost. Not only that, but in my own adult life, I personally have been concerned about, oh, what if they don't get back to me, or, oh, they're not going to want to come to our event, or whatever. I really understand that and I honor that, and I think it's very important for you to build mental strength. Getting out of your comfort zone, one step at a time.

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- Alisa Cohn: [48:48](#) If you don't feel comfortable hosting your own Zoom cocktails, you could say to a friend, "Let's do it together." You could even get a third friend, so that means you only have to invite one person yourself and you have co-host to do it with. If you need partnership and support, you could find a peer coach and you guys could do it together. You can even practice or role-play what you're going to do. One way or the other, one little step outside of your comfort zone begins to re-groove the muscles, begins to re-groove your ability to build out and expand your own comfort zone. This is what I think about all the time. I love this quote. I love this quote because, to me, this really speaks to the kind of mental fortitude that we all need to have to do difficult things.
- Alisa Cohn: [49:35](#) "I'll persist until I succeed. Every day will I take another step. In truth, one step at a time is not too difficult." That's what I think to myself all the time, just one step what should I do today? I want to invite all of you to write down right now, and even put inside of the Q&A, what steps will you take today to advance and increase and improve your own network? Because I promise you that your network is an asset, and I promise you that through your network, good things will come. New clients will come, opportunities will come, new connections will come, serendipity will come. If you work hard to broaden and also deepen your network, all those amazing things will come to you effortlessly, but it's up to you to activate that by taking one step today. Let me know.
- Zeeshan Aziz: [50:30](#) Thank you so much, Alisa. That was an incredible-
- Alisa Cohn: [50:32](#) You're welcome.
- Zeeshan Aziz: [50:32](#) ... presentation.
- Alisa Cohn: [50:34](#) Thank you.



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- Zeeshan Aziz: [50:34](#) We've got some great comments coming in, and we've got some time for some additional questions. Once again, share in the Q&A box. I think the first question I want to start with, and it's come up a few times, is I've built up the courage to go out start networking, messaging, how do I deal with rejection and being ghosted? What if people don't respond, what should I do?
- Alisa Cohn: [50:57](#) Yeah, it's a great question. I would say my flip easy answer is forget about it, it's not personal. Right? If you're a friend of 20 years suddenly stops getting in touch with us, that's personal. You want to find out what's going on there. Right? What did you do to your friend of 20 years? What happened? But if someone who you barely know doesn't get back to you, I would say, "Someone I barely know didn't get back to me." I make up a very powerful story in my head, which is they're busy, poor thing, or they're dealing with a lot of stuff, poor thing, and then you can move on. Don't over think it, don't take anything personally.
- Alisa Cohn: [51:33](#) If you reach out to 20 people, then I suspect all 20 won't ghost you. If everybody keeps not responding, have somebody else look at your email and ask is there anything that's, by definition, turning people on? If you're sending a salesy email expecting response from that, I would say that's not the right way to do it. You want to diagnose is there something going on inside of my email? But most importantly, don't take it personally.
- Zeeshan Aziz: [52:00](#) Right. Great. Just to follow on from that a little bit, Michael's asking, "I'm more of an introverted person, in the sense of Carl Jung, and find it's not so easy to approach other people in general as I see with the more extroverted among my friends and peers. Would you have some recommendations specific for us introverts?" I think your story and where you started out is great to answer this question.
- Alisa Cohn: [52:23](#) Yeah. Well, for sure. Also, there was just an article that BBC just got in touch with me to weigh in on this idea of ambivert. We

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talked about ambivert, which are people who are both introverted and extroverted as time is necessary, and the way that come down on that is you have to flex your style. I understand that you are shy, and I would also say introversion inside of the Carl Jung model is about how I get energy. I recognize that you will need introvert breaks, and you will need alone time breaks more maybe than extroverts. My advice to you is to practice, once a week, saying once a week on Wednesdays, let's say, five times, "I'm going to initiate conversations. I'm going to proactively initiate situations. I'm going to invite people to something," and make it very contained and give yourself a little goal, and that's going to help you groove that muscle and get comfortable inside of that.

Zeeshan Aziz: [53:24](#)

Great. Next question. Of all the strategies that you've shared, I believe ... Yeah, sorry, I lost my place. Of all the strategies that you've said, how would you prioritize them? Now, I do appreciate that this is different depending on what level of coach you are, and where you are in your networking journey. But just a brief overview of how to prioritize them in building the system.

Alisa Cohn: [53:51](#)

Yeah, good question. First of all, whatever appeals to you that you know you can do, do that. The priority is what you will actually do, right? The second thing I would say is that getting back in touch ... Talking to your existing network, people who already know you, and sharing with them about your coaching practice, who you're looking for, the things you're interested in, the people who you already know and see every day, and then also as I mentioned, the groups around you who you haven't had a professional conversation with them, I think that can be very fruitful, followed by getting back in touch with your dormant ties. It's amazing to me how much dormant ties, people you haven't been in touch with for three years, five years, 10 years, whatever it is, actually can be very helpful and useful to you, because they knew you when and also they have the perspective of knowing you for a long time. But now hearing what you're up to can often be very impressive to them.

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- Zeeshan Aziz: [54:48](#) Great. Another good question has come up a couple of times is Zoom fatigue. We've all spent a year dealing with this pandemic, meetings constantly. A lot of people assume responses about Zoom fatigue. How would you tackle that? Say, for example, if I want you to start doing my Zoom cocktails, how would I go about overcoming that hurdle?
- Alisa Cohn: [55:09](#) Yeah, it's a great question. We're all struggling with Zoom fatigue. I think people really, really like the intimacy that the virtual cocktails gives, and also, when you frame it to people like, "Many of us have let go of our networking and our networks during this period, I'm providing an opportunity to help you advance your network, improve your network with this one event," that is very helpful. The second thing is, yes, people are definitely Zoom fatigued, but you only need six people, or eight people or nine people on a Zoom cocktails to make it very, very successful. If you have one person who says no, ask someone else, ask someone else. What Dorie and I have found is that people tend to say yes because that's different from a meeting or even a one-on-one. They enjoy the idea of being able to expand their network. By the way, invite people who you know will be amenable to expanding their networks.
- Zeeshan Aziz: [56:09](#) Just to follow on from that question, on these cocktails, are you inviting the same people over and over again or are you trying to consistently rotate and invite new people? What would be your recommendations around that?
- Alisa Cohn: [56:22](#) We invite new people, because otherwise, it becomes like ... this is not bad, but it becomes a group. That's where I feel like a book club, and if you love your book club, that's great. But if you're going to do weekly cocktails with the same group, for me, that's exactly what contributes to Zoom fatigue. But meeting new people is very useful, and there's also the variety of meeting new people, and that's what I encourage you to do.

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- Zeeshan Aziz: [56:47](#) We have three minutes left. I think I'm going to close out with one final question. Do you actually have cocktails on these cocktail meetings?
- Alisa Cohn: [56:56](#) That's a great question. The answer is yes. People bring cocktails, and we even go around saying, "What are you drinking?" Yeah. I encourage you to do that no matter what time it is your time. It's 5:00 somewhere.
- Zeeshan Aziz: [57:11](#) I want to thank you, Alisa, for such a brilliant session. I just like to say that I know we didn't get around to all the questions. We have a whole 60-minute session with Alisa once again next week. Resty is going to drop the link for that in the chat. Please ask your questions. We'll be collecting them and preparing those for you. You can come prepared to that session with as many questions as you want, specific to you around networking, and it's going to be your opportunity to directly interact with Alisa and get some great feedback, just like we've done on this session today. Now, as you know, WBECs is coach created, so your feedback is incredibly important to us.
- Zeeshan Aziz: [57:49](#) You're going to see a poll appearing on screen shortly. Please let us know, let me know, let Alisa know how you found the session, how we did. We're going to leave that running for a minute or two as you go through that. I want to thank all the participants for attending. We've had some great questions, great comments. We've got more of the same to come next week. Once again, Alisa, it's been wonderful to hear you speak on networking. There's some tips and tricks I think I'm going to have to take up myself. We're going to let the-
- Alisa Cohn: [58:17](#) Happy to hear that.
- Zeeshan Aziz: [58:18](#) Yeah, we're going to let the poll one for another minute or so. As always, if you do need any further support, you can reach us directly at [support@wbecs.com](mailto:support@wbecs.com), and we'd be more than happy to help. I want to thank everyone once again for attending.

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Thank you very much, Alisa, for your time. I'm looking forward to seeing you next week. Thank you for answering the poll, and I hope you will have a great day. Take care everyone. Bye.

Alisa Cohn:

[58:43](#)

Bye, everybody. Thank you for coming. I look forward to answering your questions next week. Bye.