



The logo features the name 'Ray' in a large, bold, black cursive script. Below it, the name 'EDWARDS' is written in a smaller, bold, black, all-caps sans-serif font, with each letter spaced out.

EDWARDS

Ray Edwards Show, Episode 429

The Mastermind Playbook

[00:00:00] Announcer: Ray Edwards Show episode 429, The Mastermind Playbook.

[music]

[00:00:10] Announcer: The Ray Edwards Show. This is the podcast for prosperity with purpose.

[00:00:18] Ray Edwards: It's another episode of the Ray Edwards podcast, the number one show for prosperity with purpose, where you get copywriting and marketing tips that increase sales and help you get more health, wealth, and wisdom. I'm Ray Edwards, my podcast co-host Tiffany Laughter has this week off. She's spending it with her kids and her husband, which is always a good thing to do. On Instagram, I love it if you'd say 'hello'. Give me a shout out. I'm Ray Edwards on Instagram. Tiffany is Tiffany Laughter on Instagram and she's Tiffany everywhere else too.

Before we get into today's show, I'd like to turn the listener spotlight on one of our latest podcast reviews. Today that's from Virtually Natalie who wrote, "Ray and his stellar guests shine the brightest of lights on what it means to be a leader. Bold, insightful, and engaging are just a few of the words I'd use to describe the time you'll spend with them. You'll get tons of actionable advice and tangible tips, but you'll also get heaps of inspiration from truly engaging individuals that have been where you are and want to see you succeed. Thanks for putting out such a suburb show, Ray. Keep up the great work."

Well, Natalie, thank you so much. That's such an honoring review. I just really, I'm kind of knocked out by that. It's always interesting to see other people's perspective on ourselves and our work. It feels a bit weird reading these reviews that are so praising of me and Tiffany, but there's more than just self-aggrandizement at work here. There's also the fact that I appreciate you taking the time to write these reviews and post them on the Apple podcast app or wherever you post your reviews because it

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helps us get more eyes on the show and more ears listening to the show and that helps us have more impact in the world. So, thank you so much.

If you would like to be featured on the podcast with your review, just go to the Apple podcast app. Give us a rating and a review and make it honest. Of course, I hope it will be favorable, but we'd love to hear whatever you have to share, so please do that. Now on with the show and today's guest, Aaron Walker, he's founded more than a dozen companies over the past 41 years. Think about that. Think about the work that went into that.

He attributes much of his success to having surrounded himself with his mastermind counterparts. Aaron spent a decade meeting weekly with Dave Ramsey, Dan Miller, Ken Abraham and five other amazing entrepreneurs. Aaron is the founder of Iron Sharpens Iron Mastermind, now host 15 groups with national and international members, and he's got something that we're going to be talking about today called the mastermind playbook, which shows you how you can incorporate operating a mastermind that people pay you for into your own business. I actually believe this is the future of our industry and we're going to get into that with our guest today, Aaron Walker. Now remind me, where did we first meet?

[00:03:15] Aaron Walker: About five years ago. I met you with through Dan Miller and then I started coming to your conferences and started promoting you. We started pretty actively promoting you within our community.

[00:03:26] Ray: Yes, you did. I appreciate that.

[00:03:27] Aaron: You're welcome.

[00:03:28] Ray: At the time I met you, you were doing mostly one-on-one coaching, weren't you?

[00:03:31] Aaron: It was. Yes. When I started doing the one-on-one coaching, a buddy of mine came to me and he said, "You need to do a podcast interview". I said, "Okay, I'll do that, but what is a podcast interview?" He started laughing and he explained it to me. I reached out to John Lee Dumas, our mutual friend and I said, "Hey, this is my story." He said, "I want you on the show," and I'm like, "Are you serious? You really want me to tell my stories?" He said, "Yes."

So, I did, and I've been on there a number of times since, but my one-on-one filled up immediately. It was like immediate. I thought, "Well, I can't scale one-on-one, I'm killing myself with all these one-on-one clients." So, we started a mastermind group and continued to do the podcast interviews and that's been our marketing strategy, is doing interviews just to tell people about what we do in the mastermind. Today we have 18 mastermind groups as a result of it. 15 for men and then we have three that we're just launching for women.

[00:04:29] Ray: What I love about what you've done is I was going through-- You have a course right behind you. There's a big sign which says the mastermind playbook, a step by step guide to start and run your own profitable mastermind. You've done something that hardly anybody else I know of. There are a few people, but very few

people I know of have done what you've done, which is you've made the mastermind concept into an actual business instead of just a fancy job for yourself. When you were coaching one-on-one, that was more like having a job, wasn't it?

[00:04:55] Aaron: Absolutely. I was trading my time for money.

[00:04:58] Ray: You've managed to systematize it and make it into a business. When you first started your first mastermind group, did you know you're going to do that, or did you think you were just going to speak to one group?

[00:05:04] Aaron: No. When I first started coaching, I was going to coach two guys that reached out to me to coach. Then, that turned into more one-on-ones. Then, I said, "I'll start a mastermind." I was going to have one mastermind group. It went so well that I thought, "Well, there is no point me just stopping at one. I'll go ahead and do another one."

The more interviews that I did, I did one on Pep Fred show and filled up two mastermind groups with a 30-minute interview and I thought, "This is insane."

It just kept building. Then, I got to a point that it was like- it was with one-on-one coaching, it's like, "Man, I'm going to kill myself. I can't lead this many groups." I started thinking through that. Then I said, "We have some of the most amazing people on the earth in our mastermind groups. They know the culture. They've been around forever. They know my core values. They know what my mission statement is. I'll go and train and teach them to run the mastermind groups," in which they have been involved in now for a number of years and we'll do revenue share.

Then, they will be built out the entire model that is included in this mastermind playbook teaching people to be a facilitator. Now, it's a win-win for them. Now, we lay out the framework. We teach them how to lead the mastermind groups because we've got a very regimented procedure in place for running the masterminds. Then, we'll do a revenue share. Now, I don't have to physically show up on the calls. They're happy because they're making money. They're continuing on with our brand.

That's just evolved into now, we have seven or eight facilitators. I rarely, if ever, get on the calls personally. We continue to lay off the themes, the books, the book questions. We do the live events. We do everything. We house everything here as far as the administrative side of it. We continue to grow their groups. We've just built the systems and the processes by which to do this. Now, we've scaled mastermind groups.

[00:06:57] Ray: Which is amazing. I don't know of anybody who's done it at all, frankly. How do you deal with people wanting to learn from the guru, from Aaron?

[00:07:07] Aaron: Here is what happened a number of years ago. People started calling me, started paying attention. These are some known people that were paying attention to what we're doing. They said the same questions as you, "How do you do this?" I started giving them bits and pieces. Some people said, "Would you coach me one-on-one?" I hadn't even thought about that. Quite honestly, I hadn't even considered coaching people to do the mastermind groups.

I said, "Let me think about this." I talked to Rob and talked to our team a little bit. I called the people back. I said, "Yes." I gave them this ridiculous amount of money. I said, "For this amount, I'll teach you." "Where do I send the check?" I'm like, "Okay, I'm really onto something here." They started sending me these checks. I started coaching one-on-one, which was back in the seat of when I was trying to trade my time for money again. It was good money, ridiculous money.

It was like, "I can't scale this either." My daughter, Broke, is our COO to our company. She walked in my office one day. She said, "Dad." She's the only person on our team that's allowed to call me dad. She said, "Dad, why don't we build a playbook and let's teach people how to do what you're doing with these people coaching them and then we can scale that?"

We put our thinking cap on, started thinking through how we could do that. I really rammed our team men and said, "It's going to take a concerted effort from everybody." We started going through writing out systems and processes for everything that we do. Then, we've put it into this-- It's a business in a box. It's really much more than a course. This is literally a turn-key business. Now, we've created the mastermind playbook.

[00:08:48] Ray: Yes, you have. I want to come back to that. I want to back up. Help us understand. I know the difference, but I want to make sure our listeners know the difference as well. I'm going to make a bold statement. I actually believe this, what you're doing and what you're teaching people to do is actually the future of the online training business. I have some very specific reasons for saying that. I want to start with, what's the difference between coaching, group coaching, and mastermind groups?

[00:09:19] Aaron: The coaching is obviously one-on-one for the most part. Group coaching is where I show up and I'm the central focus. I'm leading a group. It's one to many. The mastermind group, what's so powerful in that is that you've got the perspective of now 8 to 12 people. I've laid out the framework. I'm hosting the party with everybody there is being hyper focused on because we only have one life experience. We only have one set of lenses by which we've lived life. When you have the value of 8 or 12 people around the table going, "That may work out that way for you, but here has been my experience." I'm like, "I didn't even know to know that. I didn't even know to ask that question."

Now, we have the brain trust. We have so many people involved in helping you make the decision, that it heightens your awareness to other possibilities. The group coaching is just from my perspective, is from big A, Aaron Walker. It's my life experiences. This is my perspective. That may be good in some scenarios. I like to think that it is because I've got 41 years of experience.

When you get this mastermind group around, and they go, "Oh, big A, that's good, but if you had done it this way, it would have exponentially been better or if you had tried this, possibly it would have exploded even faster." I'm like, "Man, I wished you were around five years ago, and that would have helped me immensely." That's where I see the greater value, Ray. You have the greater perspective from many more than just a group coaching.

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[00:10:54] Ray: Well, and I think that's true. I know that from the standpoint of a person in the business of teaching, which so many people listen to this show are or want to be, that there's an appeal to doing group coaching. So many people are doing what they call mastermind groups, but they're really group coaching programs.

[00:11:12] Aaron: Correct.

[00:11:13] Ray: It feels good to the ego of the person leading it because everybody looks up to you as the guru as the wise one with all the answers. That feels good, right up until you realize you're the only one with all the answers and everybody's relying solely on you. That begins to feel burdensome. It also I think, if you have a little bit of humility, you realize, "Well, this is not true. I do not have all the answers."

I felt like-- I'm going to go into crazy territory here for a minute. I was praying as I do at the end of each year about God giving me a vision of what's in store for the next year. What do you have for me? He gave me three words. I learned this from a marketing friend who says, "You pick these three words, you're going to define what your year is going to be about." In this case, I felt like God gave me these three words and the words were impartation, activation, and elevation.

That sounded exciting but I didn't really understand totally what the meaning was, I kept praying on it. I felt like what I got from the Lord was, "I want you to impart what you have to other people. I want you to activate those other people, so they put this into practice. Then I want you to elevate them above yourself so they can go out and live the destiny that I have in store for them."

[00:12:35] Aaron: Someone asked me recently that very question what you just said. First of all, you and I both have an abundance mindset, not a scarcity mindset. Someone asked me recently, they said, "Aren't you afraid that you're going in competition with yourself?" I started laughing and I said, "You have a scarcity mindset. Here's why I don't believe that. I believe very much in this impartation, activation and then elevation."

Here's what's happened, contrary to their belief, the more I've talked about this, the more I've shared, the more it's heightened the awareness of iron sharpens iron mastermind, the more people want to be involved in our group because I'm willing to share. It's not holding your cards close to your vest, it's going, "Been there done that, I've experienced it. Now I want to teach it and I want to teach you how to do it yourself."

Really, what it does is that it elevates them to a point to where they have more trust in you. They want to be around you more, and then you help them take it to the next level for themselves. I love these three words you've been given this year.

[00:13:39] Ray: Thank you. The amazing thing to me is, I was in the process of asking, "God, I don't know how to do that." Then I got another message from our persistent mutual friend, Derek. It just came at the right moment and I felt like a little tap on my shoulder saying, "Here's your answer." I dug into the course, in the playbook, it really is more than a course. Derek told me, he said, "This is really a business in a box." I thought, "Well, that's what everybody says." But I did know we're talking about big A, so I felt like there was a little more credence behind the claim.

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Then I got into the program. I literally went through the entire mastermind playbook. There's a lot of stuff to go through as you know. I went through the entire thing in a single weekend. I got up in the morning, on Saturday, I started, and I kept going until it's bedtime. Then did the same thing on Sunday. I took some time out to be with the Lord on Sunday.

I feel like I got a clarification on how I was going to go forward. We were planning on doing another mastermind group. I still felt this is not scalable. By seeing this playbook that you've laid out and then seeing what you've done, I mean, you've got 18 groups, and you're not leading them because this is the revelation that I got from going through your playbook, "It's not about me. It's about them." The depth of the material that you have put into this program to ensure the quality of experience the participants have is nothing short of amazing. I wonder if you would talk through your philosophy in your material on how you conduct these mastermind groups, how you make sure the qualities stay at the level that you want it to be at and what your outcome for the members is? What do you want them to experience when they're at the end of their first year in a program?

[00:15:38] Aaron: Well, I appreciate that, Ray. Thank you. I'm very humbled at all your kind comments as it relates to the mastermind playbook. I thank you first and foremost for that. The thing is that those that have heard me interviewed on other programs or even your program in years gone by, know that I had kind of a revelation in 2001. In that revelation is that my life is not about myself. It is about others where I tell the story where I ran over and killed a pedestrian. I said God if you'll give me another chance, I'll make it more about other people not as much about myself. I was so focused on myself and making money that I really lost focus on what life was about.

In my book, *View from the Top*, I talk about that. Here's what I decided that if I would make the other person's experience something that was meaningful. If I did make it to where they were heightened and edified and gratified and lifted up. First and foremost, that's the right thing to do. Second of all, you can't run them off because they're getting value. They're getting edified in the things they're doing.

They're being held accountable. Their best interest is at heart in what we're doing here. We make blunders and we stump our toe and we don't always live exactly the way we're supposed to in every regard. They call me out on that, they say, "Oh, this is not what you said, or this is what we should do." We've built that reciprocity for each other and I want him to hold me accountable as well.

It makes for a really good mastermind session when this is going both ways. This is just not me holding them accountable or making sure that they're accomplishing their goals. I do as well. I feel sometimes that I learn as much or more than all the participants in there. It is because that we're looking out for their best interest. Here's the thing that we say that we're going do.

We're going to be authentic; we're going to be transparent; we're going to be vulnerable because that's where real strength begins. We live this facade. We live in a place that we want other people to think that we've got it all together. I break that wall down as quickly as possible and say, "Hey, we're all knuckleheads, just trying to figure it out." As soon as you get to a place to where you're real, but you can't do that

with the entire world, we know that because you don't have contacts and you don't have the relationships.

When you're in a group with 8 or 12 people, we say, "Okay, this is who the real Ray Edwards is. We learn this over time. Based on our experience with you for a period of time, Mrs. Edwards doesn't think you should do this or your children or your team." You become extremely vulnerable. You say, "This is areas that I've not done as well in, this is my blind spot." We all have kryptonite, we all have superpowers, but we do have blind spots in our life.

Other people see you differently than you see yourself. My job is to come along and say, "Hey, because I love you, because you're a great person, because I want to see you do well. This is something you've either got to start doing or stop doing." You go, "I didn't even know I was doing that. I didn't even know I was talking that way, or I didn't even know X," you fill in the blank.

One of the guys on our calls today came to the group and he put out a post this week. In the post, he said something, and I called him out on it. I said, "I don't think I would have done that, here's the way it's portrayed to you." He said, "Wow, I didn't even know I did that, I wasn't even aware." He's going to be better as a result now of us heightening his awareness. That's what we try to do, Ray. We try to get people feeling like, "Man, that stung. That left hook stung a little bit, but I'm going to be better as a result of it."

That's what we try to offer people. I don't think you can help people making them feel good. My job is not to make you feel good. My job is to make you better and the only way I can do that is to be honest with you. That's the experience that I hope people receive out of being in our groups. That's what we've laid out in the playbook, steps to teach people to do exactly what I just said.

[00:19:40] Ray: Yes, and I wish I had had this playbook about five years ago. Because so many of the things that I see you've put into the playbook somebody new to this may come along and go through the playbook and think, "Well, that sounds pretty good. I'll do that. I'll follow those instructions." They won't realize in many cases, probably, the painful experiences that resulted and you knowing how to help people avoid mistakes that are costly.

One thing you mentioned is you have an application process and you mean it, it's not a marketing gimmick. It's like you're trying to find out, "Is this person going to be a good fit?" Could you speak to why that's so important?

[00:20:23] Aaron: Well, when I first started, I was just like everybody, we need revenue to run our businesses. I thought, well, I'll start these masterminds and there's great revenue in that. Just to be honest with you. There's a lot of great money made in mastermind groups and so I said, "Hey, yes, Billy, you'd want to get in, not a problem. Pay your money and you're in." Well, [laughs] that didn't work well. It did for the first couple of months until I found out Billy, was a nut case and he shouldn't have been in there, to begin with, and I found out that he was really a taker. He wasn't a giver.

I really backed up for a moment and I said, "Listen, I've got to rule the crazies out at the beginning. I can't allow them to come in and disrupt what we've built," and so I started going through thinking what are the things that are most important. How can I find out how we can serve him well? It's a very extensive application. It's not just three questions and pay your money. We want to know about your family, your history. We want to know about what your objectives are, what your lifelong goals are, what you would do with free time.

It's a very extensive application and then we go through and vet each person. We go through and interview them, similar to what we're doing today. We're having an interview, but I have this, it's a 30 to 45-minute interview and we go over, we tell each other's story and then I even tell them, "I want you to think about this and if you're a person of faith, I want you to pray about it. I want you to think through what you're getting involved in."

We're not looking for people to come in and us get six months of your money and you go on your way. We're looking for people that are really committed, people that are going to be here and share and be vulnerable and honest and transparent and we want people that are willing to challenge. We want people that are givers, not takers. I said, "Go home and talk to your wife about it," or, "You go home talk to your husband about it," if you're joining the women's group.

I want them to also have input, I want them to also want you to be in the group because if your spouse doesn't want you in, you're not going to last long, you just won't. It's a commitment. It's a huge commitment. Then we say, "Here are the expectations. If you get into this group, we expect you to do these things," and we name them off. Participate, show up on the call, read the books, do the accountability tool, do the accountability partners.

We expect you to do these things. Ray, this is not real popular, and I don't like doing this, but I ask people to leave the group. I asked a young man this past week. I said, "You've only been in for a year, year and a half, but the truth is, you're not showing up half the time, you don't read the books. You don't come to the live event and you're cheating not only yourself but cheating all the other members. They're paying money to hear what you've got to say and if you're not there, you're cheating them out of the experience," and I let him go and I do that periodically.

I go through the groups and I find out who's not participating. Now you would say, "Man, that's revenue you're kicking right out the door." I'll just go ahead and tell you. We have single-digit churn rates in the mastermind group, because we do that. We've had people in the groups now five years meeting in the same group. We have over a 90% attendance to our live events.

We have people now in nine different countries and we have a 90% attendance coming from nine different countries because we are so regimented, because we are so stern with our expectations. The truth is it makes them want to be in the group even more because we're adding value and that's what we've laid out in the playbook. I said, you can't do it this way that you think works. What you've got to do is put these boundaries in place, have this application in place so that you rule out the people that really don't need to be there to begin with.

[00:24:05] Ray: It's so true and anybody who's thinking about doing this, let me tell you, you want to pay attention. You want to go back and re-listen to what you just heard because it's very important. I wish I had known this ahead of time. I had a few crazies of my own to deal with and it's tough.

[00:24:23] Aaron: We've all got crazies. [chuckles]

[00:24:25] Ray: Right, we do. It's tough. It's difficult. What I love, one of the things I love about what you've done is you've made this so step-by-step that I believe somebody who's never had a social media account, who's never done a webinar, who's never done any of the internet marketing things that we know about, that we know works so well. I believe that person could come into this playbook, walk through, follow the directions and start their first profitable mastermind group from ground zero.

I was amazed when I read when you started going into how you do this, how you find your first members for your first group, I just thought, "Well, yes, this is how you do it." How long did it take you to get to this level of granular detail in putting this business in a box together?

[00:25:16] Aaron: Ray, we have a small team. There's only seven or eight of us on our team. We worked on this daily for over a year, putting this together many, many iterations of this. We had professional editors come in. We hired a product development company that helped me to lay out the framework by which we've put this together. I mean, we've spent a lot of money, Ray, quite honestly, putting this together.

I didn't want to leave a single stone unturned. I wanted people to be able to come in that didn't know anything about it. People that were sharp. I'm not saying dumb, but people that didn't have a real frame of reference as to how they could do masterminds. Masterminds are amazing. Historically, we know of them as 8 or 10 people getting together and we talk through things and we meet once a month and we move on.

This is a very profitable business. I want people to hear that loud and clear. When I first started doing this, it was like, "I'm going to do this because I can't handle the one-on-one coaching but then when I started looking at the numbers and the amount of time that was invested, for me personally, and you have other things that you need to do initially when you first get this started.

We've taken this in 16 months period of time, from not existing to a seven-figure business where I go on vacation now, I come back. We make more money than when I left because I'm not missing out on these mastermind group coaching, or these mastermind calls. Even in the groups that I facilitate, I appoint someone to lead the group. Here's the other cool thing, I'm giving away everything here right on the air. The other cool thing is even in the groups I facilitate, we have a leader rotation schedule. I'm training up people every single week, they take turns leading the group.

When I do step away as Robin and I are about to go on a two-week vacation to celebrate our 40th wedding anniversary, they won't miss a bit. They'll continue right on. The people that have been leading the groups, I'm there guiding, directing, got

boundaries set up so that we don't let anything go off track. The other people are leading, even when I'm present.

What I'm doing is I'm identifying great facilitators for future groups. Now, I'm like, "Man, this Ray Edwards, he's the bomb." "This guy's going to get a group if he ever wants it." We're training all the time, and they're leading getting experience. It's a win-win for everybody.

[00:27:49] Ray: You said you're giving away some of your best stuff. That's one of the things I love about you. You're so generous. I actually believe that's the smartest marketing move anybody can make, is to give away their best material freely because I said at the beginning of this conversation that I felt like this is the future of this kind of business. Because this takes things further than any mere course could take things.

This also takes things further than we could go with people in group coaching scenarios or one-on-one coaching because that's limited to us being human beings and only being able to be in one place at one given time and only having so many hours to do this. This is multiplicative, you can duplicate yourself and build a real business and still, all the students, all the participants are getting super high quality, personal, human touch. There's no better way to learn and grow.

Do you feel like this kind of business could work for me? What sorts of industries or people or professions, niches, if you will, do you think this would work?

[00:29:04] Aaron: Well, the good part about this, Ray, is it can work in all industries. We've seen unbelievable folks; I'll give you an example of a guy that has an architectural firm. He did an industry specific. He's putting together nothing but architects because this guy's a thought leader in that industry. Now, we've got a specific in nature, this one particular industry.

We've had other people that are women that say, "Hey, I want to do stay at home moms," or we've had other people that do like I've done with small business owners that say, "Hey, I want to deal with folks that are on this financial income to this financial income." What's so cool about it is regardless of the niche market you're in, or if you're just a life and business coach, you can set these groups up any way you want.

I've set mine up a little bit differently. Ray, you know this from being around me from years. Is that I almost lost my family couple of decades ago because I was so focused on business, and I said, "I want to set these up to where we deal 60% professional, 30% personal and 10% spiritual," because I feel like that gives you a platform that you're well-rounded. Because the truth is, Ray. I came home with a pocket full of money to a house full of strangers and I might've won in business, but when you sacrifice your family on the altar of making money, it's not going to fare well for you long term.

I said I want to be sure that I really have people that are grounded in their families. That they're great husbands or great dads or they're great in their community and they're great in their business as well. If you do that, you're well-rounded. You're not going to get blindsided and so we've really made a focus. Other people say, "I don't

really want to get involved in their personal lives. I'd just rather stay in the business side."

You can take these same principles that I've applied here, because the truth is, relationships are our number one asset. It doesn't matter if it's personal, professional, relationships are our number one asset. If we'll handle people in a way, it's very personable to them. All of these principles apply that I've laid out in this mastermind playbook. You can just overlay it. Speaking of that, Brian Moran has partnered with me on this. He is the author of *The 12 Week Year*.

I thought, I don't want people to be jumbled up in this and not know where to go or how to apply it. We've overlaid *The 12 Week Year* on top of this. Brian Moran went in and preloaded all of the 11 steps into *The 12 Week Year*. He said, "This week, this is what you work on, next week, this is what you work on." If you do it, not like you did, [laughs] not over a week year, but if you go in systematically to where it's not like eating an elephant, Brian Moran's *12 Week Year*, and I pay for that. It's \$300 ad-on that I'm paying for every person that buys this for them so that they can systematically work through with this productivity tool.

[00:32:11] Ray: Wow. I don't recommend anybody do it the way I did it. It's just me. That's how I operate. I see an elephant and I'm like, "I'm going to eat that elephant."

[00:32:20] Aaron: You tackled it. You did it too.

[00:32:23] Ray: You don't have to necessarily do that. I don't recommend it. Who is this right for? If there's a person who's thinking this- they're kind of intrigued by this, but they've never even been in a mastermind group. What's their next step?

[00:32:35] Aaron: Well, as I said earlier, I don't know of a profession that this couldn't be used in. If there's any profession out there, podcast host are really taking a strong look at it. A lot of thought leaders in different industries are looking at this. It's a great complement originally for your business, but now what we've done is taken it and we've made it our complete business.

Some people want to do that as well. One guy that went through that we did this with was a beta tester and he was a coach and he said, "I want to go through the beta test," and we charge. That's another thing. A lot of people do free beta tests. I wanted these people to be all in. We had 13 beta testers that paid to go through this, and I knew that if they paid, they would pay attention.

So, they did. We had a weekly call. We went through this, he completely set it up, going through the beta test and we had already had members enlisted before the conclusion of the beta test. I thought that was pretty cool. It's a real test. One of the guys, John was his name, he said, "I've got a pretty strong education and it made me feel really good." He said, "but I think there's more value monetarily speaking in this playbook than was in my college education," and I started laughing. I said, "Would you put that in writing for me?"

He said, "Absolutely." He said the reason is because, what you said, Ray, you walk me through every step. You teach me how to onboard people. You teach me how to

do the application, you teach me how to fill my groups, you teach me how to really walk through the live events and we help you with everything there is to know about that, how to facilitate the groups.

There are two courses within the playbook. One is for new members and the other one is teaching you how to build facilitators. We teach you how to organize and streamline your promotional calendar. We just literally don't leave a stone unturned. If masterminds are completely foreign to you, you can develop a business. Now, \$500 a month is a pretty average amount for people to pay to be in a mastermind group.

Some of them are much, much more. Ray, I know you've been involved in some very large mastermind groups, but if you just do that, for example, and you have one group of 10 and you do that, you get the second group. Now we have 20 members. You have a six-figure business with very minimal time invested from you. The other thing that we do is we've created enough content. One guy that bought it said, "I'm buying it for one page," and I started laughing.

I said, "Well, I've got to know which page it is." He said, "There's enough content that you've provided that I can run a mastermind group every week for 30 months and I don't have to create any themes, books, book questions or anything." He said, "So 30 months, every week for 30 months, I've got the content." He said, "That page alone, it's worth it to me," and we do.

We have every book, the book questions. We teach you how to run the call from beginning to end all the way through. There are 30 professional videos and there's over 90 tools. You know what we even did? We've been white-labeled a lot of the marketing tools so that you can just put your marketing material on top of it and now you've got lead magnets and so we've tried literally to cover every base, Ray.

[00:35:53] Ray: You really have done that, and I know the tendency for some people will be to just dismiss that because everybody says they have a step by step program and they show you how to do things. There are very few people or programs who do that, and I just want to say it one more time. This is not a course. This is literally the playbook of your business.

Just to demonstrate how strongly I feel about that, this time last year, Aaron, we opened up a mastermind group and this is going to sound like I'm bragging. I don't mean to brag; I just want to state the facts. We brought in over \$500,000 in revenue in a two-week period by opening this mastermind group. Still, there are things I wish I had done differently. The group is great. The people are fantastic. I love them. I mean that, I've invested in them. I've invested in their lives. Yet, as I look toward this next year and I think about impartation, activation, and elevation, I think the way I've done this is good, but there has to be a different way of doing it to get where I want to go next.

I'm a person who's very familiar with masterminds, who's run many of my own paid masterminds at various price points and various levels of involvement from me. I've had some better than ever success doing this, and I learned so much. There are so many things in this playbook that we're implementing now that are going to help me

realize the vision that I have for my company and my business and my life going forward.

You've made a huge contribution to me, my legacy, to the family, to the families of the people who are in the groups that we're creating. I want people to hear the passion in my voice for what is available here. If you're interested in doing this, and I think everybody could do this, who's listening to me and we wouldn't be anywhere, we wouldn't even touch one 10th of 1/100 of 1% of the potential that's out there in the marketplace. If you're worried about that, you can set that aside because this is the future. This is human connection and wisdom at scale. That's what this is.

[00:38:11] Aaron: Ray, thank you for that. It feels really good to hear you say that. I'm glad that we were a small part in helping you see some things that you hadn't seen in the past. It was really exciting to me. Inc Magazine reached out to us, we didn't call them, they reached out to us and they said, "We want to know more about this playbook," and so recently they did a full article on the mastermind playbook and in Inc Magazine. I thought that was pretty cool.

People that have heard me interviewed, time and time again know that Dave Ramsey and I are friends and Dave endorsed it. He had his entire team go through this and we went up and presented it to his team and his team was blown away. They said, "This is absolutely amazing." We're getting a lot of good feedback from the community and from people like Dave and Inc Magazine and places like that.

I'm really excited about what this is going to do in the future. I'm excited about people not having to reinvent the wheel. They don't have to go in and create all these strategies and create the content and know how to fill the mastermind groups and streamlining their promotional calendar and even the live events. We walk you through step by step how to put on your own live event. We've got systems and processes in place for people that want to be a podcast guest for example.

You can go through and we teach you how to build a press kit and we teach you how to get on podcast. I've done over 1,500 interviews in the past 60 months on podcasts and we teach people how to get on shows. All of that is a part of the marketing efforts. We teach you other things that we do on LinkedIn and other social media platforms in order to promote. We feel like it's an exhaustive playbook on masterminds.

The thing is, it's an investment, but the way we've structured this. If you have a \$500 mastermind group, you get your money back in about 45 days, and we think that's pretty quick to get a 100% of your money back in that short period of time. The other thing is their social proof. This is not hypothetical. I've done this and now we have a seven-figure business with 18 groups as a result of the implementation of this strategy.

[00:40:24] Ray: Well, we're going to have a link in the show notes that will take you to a place you can find more information about this mastermind playbook. I want to say to you, if you're listening right now, you feel the slightest little tug, like maybe this is an answer, then I would follow that instinct and I would go find out more about the mastermind playbook and how it can work for you.

What I love about what you've done here is it really removes the need for other marketing programs or courses or- it removes the need for decisions about what CRM you're going to use to run your business, because you just spell it out and I can vouch. I've learned the hard way by switching CRMs until I found one that I felt worked for us. I would have rather been able to skip all that. You've made it possible for people to skip all that and as much as you, what I could say about it, I really don't think we still do a fair job. I think people should take a closer look.

[00:41:21] Aaron: Well, I appreciate that. Here's what else we wanted to do. Just so your listeners- I know we're nearing the end of our time together. The other thing was a lot of people offer either courses or things like that and then you buy it and you're left on your own. Well, we've chosen not to do that. So, what we're doing is that we're walking with you for three months.

Our team is walking with you every other Tuesday for an hour. We get on a Zoom call. You're able to come on and say, "Hey, Aaron, I didn't understand this in step three, when you were talking about programming, I didn't really understand that." We walk you through that, and there's no additional cost for that. There's no up-sales. That's the other thing about this, there's no up-sales to this. I'm giving you everything, right? We're not going to get you in and then try to upsell you.

There's no charge for the three months that we walk with you and hold your hand, but not only that, we put you in a Facebook group with other persons that have bought this, and you can stay there forever. There's constant community. It's like a mastermind for mastermind facilitators that you can stay in our community, no additional costs and then we're always there to answer your questions. Not only do I want you to buy this and be successful, I want to hold your hand as you walk through the process.

[00:42:38] Ray: Wow. I didn't even know that. Dear listener, think back to how many times you've heard me do an interview like this, just about never, because so many people want to be able to come on here and sell their thing and I just don't do that. In this case, when I discovered the playbook and went through it and understood what it was, I wanted to have Aaron on to explain what they've put together and I'm endorsing it.

I'll go one step further. Of course, I mean you're smart, you're savvy, you're listening, you know, "Well, Ray, probably gets a commission if I buy this." I'm going to give you two links on the page for this podcast. One link will be a link that pays me commission if you decide to enroll through that link and the other link will be a straight link that I don't get anything, and I'll let you pick. You can decide which link you want to use because I want you to know if this is right for you, I think it's right for you whether I get paid or not and I want you to get what's right for you.

[00:43:40] Aaron: Wow, that's huge, Ray. I don't know if I've ever heard anybody ever say that, just to be honest with you. That's a pretty strong endorsement for what we've put together, but to your own admission, you've gone through it personally. Every single video, every single tool. That's quite a feat. That's got to have to go down in the Guinness book of world records. I believe there's 90 tools and worksheets and lead magnets and 30 videos.

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[00:44:04] Ray: I did watch the videos. I'll tell you that.

[00:44:07] Aaron: There you go. Well, if you can't listen to me in slow speed, anyway, I'm from the South, and so you can speed me up and it sound normal. [laughs] Ray, thank you, buddy. I appreciate the endorsement. I appreciate the conversation. You're a great guy and I'm glad that you found it beneficial.

[00:44:24] Ray: Well, thank you for putting this together and for coming on the show and I look forward to seeing you again real soon in person. I'm sure that'll happen. We'll have the link in the show notes. You can follow up; you can check out big A and his mastermind playbook.

[00:44:39] Aaron: You want to do this. Just trust me. Do it.

[00:44:44] Ray: That's Aaron Walker and his new program is called the mastermind playbook. I've learned so much from it. I know that you will too. Make sure you check it out. Go to rayedwards.com/playbook for more information. Here's a little bonus. Did you know that I also do a live show every weekday morning? It's called Ray Edwards live at Five and it happens every weekday at 5:00 AM Pacific time in the US. The one way to get to daily show is to join our free online community. Jump into my private Facebook group, just search Facebook for the Ray Edwards copywriting community.

You can also click the link that's in the show notes for this episode at rayedwards.com/429. Follow me on Instagram @Ray Edwards where I actually answer my DMs. I would love to hear from you. Until next week, may you be blessed. May God do more for you than you can ask or think or even possibly imagine. See you.

[music]

[00:45:42] Announcer: Thank you for listening to the Ray Edwards Show.

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[00:45:58] Announcer: Each week we bring you a message of prosperity with purpose and freedom. Remembering that true freedom is available to all through Jesus Christ.

[00:46:12] [END OF AUDIO]