

# **10 things you should know about Life Coaching**

**Athletes, film stars, politicians, company executives and professionals use them and now you can too... A PERSONAL LIFE COACH!**

## **1. What is life coaching?**

Life coaching started out in the 1960's as a life skills training program for under privileged kids in New York. They were introduced to things like goal setting, time management, managing emotions and problem solving. The idea was then developed and taken into the main stream by a group of Canadian researchers who discovered that schools and universities were not majoring in life skills and that many adults felt that they lacked three things in life:

- A. Strategy. They found that most people had no plan for there life. No written goals, no definite purpose and no real sense of direction. Instead they were simply hoping for the best and looking for a lucky break.
- B. Skills: They further found that most people had never been taught any essential life skills like, goal setting, planning, time management, problem solving, self motivation, communication skills and emotional management. As a result of this most people found themselves ill equipped to cope with the realities and challenges of life.
- C. Support: Finally they found that we can all achieve more with the moral support of a personal coach. This has certainly been the case for athletes who use coaches as a support mechanism to help them achieve their goal of winning.

Today, the idea of employing a person to help you develop a personal strategy for your life and to acquire the necessary skills to follow through on your strategy and to support you along the way as you go is called: LIFE COACHING!

## **2. What does a life coach do?**

A life coach does essentially four things for his/her clients.

- A. A diagnostic analysis. This is an exercise designed to pin-point your needs and goals together with your strengths, weaknesses and opportunities. At the end of this exercise, your life coach can put together a tailor made program aimed at developing:

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- B. Your strategy. Once your needs and goals have been determined, your life coach will help you to develop a plan of action for meeting those needs and achieving those goals.
- C. Your skills: Once you have a plan of action, your life coach will take you through a series of exercises aimed at developing your skills in the critical areas necessary for the success of your plan. Following through on your plan will require real skill especially in the area of motivating your self, managing your emotions and solving problems.
- D. Support: Your life coach will walk with you as you take those first steps towards living the life you deserve by acting both as a personal motivator and as a source of accountability. Your coach may even conduct some of the necessary research into specific areas on your behalf, so that you can quickly get the information you need in order to get the results you want.

### **3. What kind of person uses a life coach?**

One of the great lessons that we learn for the world of sports is that WINNERS EMPLOY COACHES AND LOSERS DO NOT! If an athlete is determined to win, one of the first things they do is look for a good coach; someone that can help them develop a winning strategy, sharpen their skills and support them in training as well as in competition. The same principle holds true in life; winners usually win because they develop around them a winning team. You have heard the saying: It takes team work to make the dream work! Well it is true no matter what the dream. You may already have an accountant, a lawyer, a financial advisor or a fitness instructor on your team but when you bring a life coach on board, it puts you in the league of some of the most productive and balanced people in the world.

### **4. How long does life coaching last?**

The objective in life coaching is not to create co-dependence between you and your coach but rather to kick start your progress towards specific goals. For that reason we do not allow coaching to go beyond twelve sessions. In twelve one hour sessions, all the objectives of the coaching relationship can be achieved including the diagnostics, strategy, skills and support aspects of your personal coaching program.

### **5. Are the results of life coaching measurable?**

Absolutely! Part of the initial diagnostic analysis is aimed at establishing a definite starting point for the coaching process as well as the key performance indicators that tell both you and your coach whether or not you are making progress. Coaching is goal

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oriented. This means that you can determine the success of a coaching relationship by whether or not you achieve the goals you set out to achieve in the first place. Whilst your main objective may be to achieve specific goals, your coach is going to be focused on helping you to get measurable results.

## **6. How does life coaching differ from counseling, mentoring or therapy?**

There is a fundamental difference between counseling and LIFE COACHING! Coaching is a goal oriented process. This means that your coach is fundamentally future focused and will home in on your potential. Both counseling and therapy are problem focused and tend to home in on your past. Your life coach is not a counselor and will not help you to deal with the past. However your life coach can help you to create the future you desire and as such is probably the best solution for past issues. A good life coach will recommend therapy if it becomes clear in the coaching process that counseling is necessary.

Coaching also differs from mentoring because a coach will never offer him/herself as an example of success in the same way that a mentor does. A mentor is effectively a person who can show you the ropes because they have been there and done that. You learn from their experience, expertise and example. Coaching is different because your life coach may never have been where you want to go in life. In the same way that a boxing coach does not need to be an ex-world champion, your life coach can never be better than you at living out your life. Your life is unique and so are your goals and needs. Your life coach is an expert in the science and process of behavioral change. They can help you to make the changes you need in order to get the results you want.

## **7. What are the hall marks of a good life coach?**

- A. A good life coach won't mind you speaking with previous clients before making a decision to buy their services. It is not what a life coach says about them self that counts but what their clients say about them. Don't be afraid to ask your life coach if you can speak to their past clients. Coaching is confidential, but with the clients permission this is not usually a problem.
- B. A good life coach will work in association with an organization, in some cases they may be answerable to. If for any reason you are unhappy with the service you have received, you can then address your complaint or comments to that organization. As with any business there are charlatans who are not answerable to anybody and deliver a poor quality of service. Don't hesitate to ask your life coach for sight of his/her credentials or license as well as the contact details for their head office.

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- C. A good life coach will be part of an association aimed at constantly improving their own knowledge and skills in life coaching. Don't hesitate to ask your life coach what they are doing to better themselves.

## 8. What are the main benefits you can get from Life coaching?

The main benefits of life coaching come in the form of the three C's which are: Clarity, Control and Confidence

- A. **Clarity.** You will come out of a good life coaching experience with absolute clarity about: what's important to you in life, what you want to achieve, what you want to become, why you want what you want and how you intend to get it.
- B. **Control.** You will come out of a good life coaching experience with greater control over the critical factors in your life including: your time, your health, your mind, your money, your relationships, your career, your overall direction including your personal, social and professional life.
- C. **Confidence.** You will come out of a good life coaching experience with increased self esteem and greater self-confidence. This in turn leads to increased productivity, better performance and an overall sense of competence.

## 9. How does the life coach do this?

Your life coach may take you each week through a series of exercises designed scientifically to prompt deeper levels of thought and creativity. Each exercise will bring greater clarity, control and confidence to you concerning the future. These exercises are the tools of the life coach's trade.

## 10. When should I think about employing a life coach?

Life coaching is always a good idea however it can be a real life saver if employed at times of personal change e.g.

- Career change
- Kids left home
- Retirement
- Divorce
- Moving home

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This also holds true when you become aware that you need a major change of lifestyle  
e.g.

- Increasing stress levels
- Imbalance between personal and professional life
- Domestic tension
- Health problems
- Difficult decisions
- Before, during or after a crisis
- Redundancy
- Leaving university
- Bereavement