

COULD YOU USE A COACH?

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This time next year your life will be different. You'll be happier or NOT. Skinnier or NOT. Married or NOT. Either better or worse.

Many of us are too passive. We ride along waiting to see how it'll turn out. Perhaps it's time we started driving our own bus. Perhaps we could use a personal coach.

There was a haunting song by Harry Chapin a many years back. "Cat's In The Cradle" reminded us that time is flying by and what's important to us - relationships, passions, values - needs to be savored NOW before it's too late. The guy in the song was stuck in his pattern, his rut. He continually promised he'd get to it next time, yet "life" kept him from what he valued most. He let other things become his routine. And so he lived a busy life with unfulfilled relationships. He didn't have a life coach.

Nowadays if a person wants to change, get rid of old habits and embrace new ways, the choices are endless. There are countless self-improvement books, and endless arrays of instructional courses offered by community schools, colleges and the latest guru from Oprah. Opportunities abound!

Many jump on board for the latest self improvement craze. Eventually, what starts in a fury slows to whimpers and complaints. **It's difficult to change. Old habits die hard. Information and intention takes you**

just so far. After tasting reality, most resign themselves to exit excuses.

"Well, I tried."

Now there is a way to apply insights you receive from books and classes. You CAN become the person you desire to be. How?

Get a life coach!

What began a few years back as a motivational tool for the corporate world has grown into the equivalent of having a personal trainer at the gym. Life Coaching has become part of the personal development and training industry worldwide. As a stand-alone profession it has come into its own in the last few years. Executive coaching is no longer exclusive. Retirement coaching, family coaching, teen coaching...anything in life can become a focus of personal coaching. Sessions can be delivered in person, over the phone or even on the internet.

Coaching is different than counseling. Counseling tends to be "problem focused." When the client comes to understand his problem then it will cease to be a problem. Counseling is a therapeutic process that mostly involves the past. Coaching, on the other hand, targets the future.

A coach helps clients look forward and examine where they are now and where they want to be in the future. Setting goals, providing feedback, perspective, and

inspiration, and identifying new ways of handling situations are valuable tools taught by life coaches. It's like having someone running alongside you in life, giving you the extra input and encouragement that can really make a difference to your success.

A while back a client came to a life coach with the intention of learning communication skills, thinking he could then apply them to his staff at work. The coach listened and agreed to help.

After listening and getting a better feel for the client, the coach got him to prioritize his life - values, relationships, possessions, goals - the whole spectrum. After this insightful and revealing exercise it became clearer what the client really needed - not stronger communication skills; he needed *direction!*

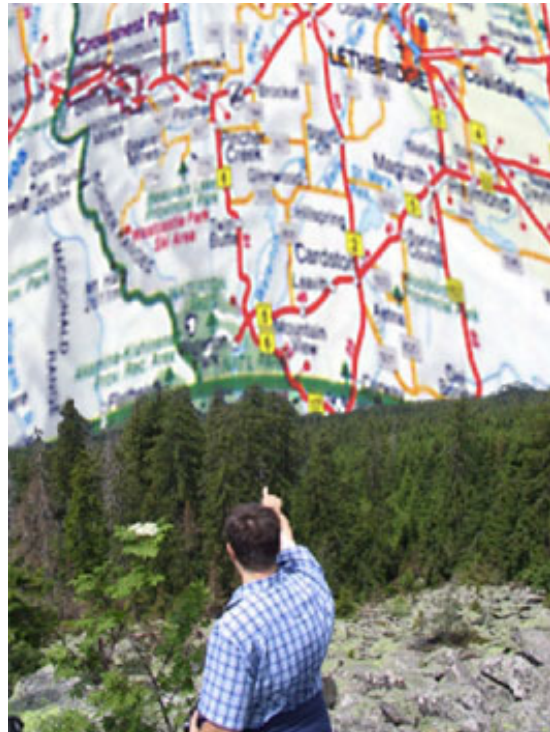
Too many paths, too many irons in the fire and too many demands for his time. This man was ready for some good advice. Is that what the life coach gave him? Not if he was a GOOD life coach!

Sure a coach CAN offer advice. NOT the good ones though. The idea is to employ the wisdom of Solomon with the skill of Socrates. When asked a question, Socrates answered with a question. This leads the questioner to invest more of himself so he *discovers* solutions rather than having answers handed to him. Answers are easy. They're at the back of the book. It is the journey, the formula, the recipe that the client seeks. That will create true personal and professional growth, and this change is what's really sought.

Empowering a life plan, finding better choices and improving productivity must come FROM the client.

A good coach listens, guides and opens doors but doesn't provide a numbered sequence of instructions. We already have the 10 Commandments and the 7 Habits. The key to success is not in the knowing what to do - it is in the DOING. And that's where a coach can help.

A good coach gets you to discover, own and apply solutions. Whose solutions? Yours!



Finding a good coach can be a challenge. Virtually anyone can call himself or herself a coach. Even those who are certified may not possess the skills to effectively coach. Ask around. Interview the coach before signing on. Get references.

The coaching process I have developed and used as a life coach is **MOVVE!**TM - Mobilize, Organize, Visualize, Verbalize and Energize! I know that becoming a better version of yourself means playing the character you want to be with all the motivation, planning, walk-the-talk behaviors and emotional intelligence that will **MOVVE!** you toward your goals.

If you want to make the most of your career, relationships, health - whatever it may be - then coaching is an effective resource to consider.

Isn't time for you to **MOVVE!** toward your success?]

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