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THE POWER OF

**LIFE
COACHING**

The Power of Life Coaching

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Igniting a Strong Start.....	6
Change Matters	6
I. Mow Down Denial.....	6
II. The Contemplative Path	8
III. Tools and Blueprints	13
Deriving the Best from Your Inner Coach	16
Jumping In!	20
Coaching for the First Time	20
1. Eyes on the Prize.....	20
2. Tough Love, Tough Questions	21
3. Active Listening and the Feedback Circuit.....	21
4. The Push That Matters	23
5. Setting the Stage	24
Dealing with Setbacks	25
Focusing on You.....	33
Exploring Your Self.....	33
The Core System	38
The Truth About Beliefs	39
Examining Your Beliefs for the First Time	40
Let's Talk About Values.....	44
Mapping the Road of Values.....	45
Life Coaching Questions.....	47
I. Did You Hesitate?.....	47
II. Types of Life Questions	48
Life Coaching Redefined.....	51

Introduction

My name is Dr. Steve G. Jones and welcome to the *Power of Life Coaching*.

Now, more than ever, is the time for people to fully appreciate the power of life coaching, not because it's 'new' or 'cool,' none of those reasons, but because life coaching can truly set a person's path to personal greatness.

I know, because I've been down that path where I didn't have powerful goals or even a path to follow. You see, for most of my adult life, I've been studying. My academic path is rigorous and I for one enjoy the process of learning. But beyond the four walls of the classroom, I always felt that there was something missing – something that wasn't being taught directly to me by my professors in university.

I decided to enlist the help of a brilliant life coach.

It didn't take long for me to trust him because life coaches are equipped not only with specialized knowledge, but also *powerful communication skills* that they have honed and perfected from years of connecting with different kinds of people.

My main challenge was this: I wanted to become truly successful in life. I dreamed of gaining personal abundance but at the same time, I wanted to bring something truly helpful and unique back to humanity.

I also wanted my knowledge and skills to serve and enrich other people's lives, too. At a certain point in my life, I felt lost despite having some resources to my disposal.

I'm sure you've had similar experiences. Looking back, my challenge was I didn't have someone to flesh out the important details of what I wanted to do in life.

In short, I didn't have someone there to *coach* me. It is only recently, when I examine things in retrospect, that I fully realize how important it is to have a life coach with you, especially when your life is in a 'tight spot' with regards to decision-making.

Slow start, big finishes

99.99% of the world starts small – and this figure includes me. I wasn't successful immediately as a practicing hypnotherapist or book author.

Genuine success, the kind that is fulfilling and naturally comes with abundance, is the

The Power of Life Coaching

result of the right mix of focused, diligent (not necessarily ‘hard’) work, the right goals and the right attitude toward those goals. Unfortunately, these three *aspects* of the successful individual don’t necessarily occur all at the same time.

Both *timing* and *confluence of forces* are important in the realm of success.

If you want to be successful the *soonest*, then the bare minimum is having these three aspects working together to create the right kind of environment and mindset for success. In my case, what really drove me forward as an individual was my unquenchable love for learning and *teaching*.

I finished my degree in psychology in the University of Florida in 1994, followed by my master’s degree in education from the venerable Armstrong Atlantic State University (this was in 2007) and finally, my doctorate in education was conferred to me by Georgia Southern University in 2013.

Personally, learning and teaching for me are twin passions. If you love learning and discovering new things, you’re bound to love teaching too – because that’s how you make yourself and others grow.

I pursued the path of teaching others by writing. My major works are listed in my website. Aside from those major written works that have a scholarly flavor, I’ve authored dozens of other titles and I’ve also helped engineer thousands of hypnotherapy recordings for use by general audiences.

How did my life coach help me with all these?

It’s one thing to have great ideas all the time, but it’s a completely different proposition to translate those ideas into actions. I admit: my mind is like a stormy fishbowl of ideas most of the time. I have too many ideas.

My mind likes going into a hundred different directions at one time. While I like having all these ideas, I get bogged down by the sheer volume of them. What path should I take now? What kinds of ideas will benefit me the most at the present time? What ideas should I avoid? What kind of processes should I employ to make my present undertaking work?

These are all massively important questions and at critical junctures, they all serve to shape the kind of work (and success) that I set out to do. But I don’t do it alone. I may have all the ideas, but it’s my life coach who organizes and helps me decide. My life coach honed my thinking skills as well as my decision-making skills.

The Power of Life Coaching

These things don't come easily without specific processes bringing them all together.

And that's why it's so essential to have someone by your side to understand what's happening from another vantage point so that person (in my case, my life coach) can help you figure out *what you really want to happen in life*.

What kind of enlightenment can a life coach bring to the table?

A life coach is an expert at the **art of dialogue**. A life coach doesn't just chat with you to pass the time or make you feel good, although you may *think* this is the ultimate objective.

Among the things that your life coach can help you figure out are:

- *Reasons why you have a particular set of behaviors in specific environments and situations.*
- *The blueprint of your personal beliefs and values and how these affect your ability to do or not do certain things.*
- *If you are planning to do something new, what your possible routes are and which of these routes are most beneficial to your undertaking.*
- *The optimal process for acquiring the best results.*
- *Tenable avenues for sustenance of motivation and self-esteem, especially during trying times.*

So without further ado, let's begin exploring the avenues offered by life coaching, as well as the strategies and knowledges employed by life coaches to help individuals attain their full potential.

Igniting a Strong Start

Now that you know why I spent time and resources to become a life coach myself, let's take a look at the many ways that life coaching can directly help others achieve their dreams and accomplish powerful goals in life. We're going to look at specific segments of life that encounter trouble and how a life coach can enter the scene and make things that much better for people who look up to their knowledge and expertise.

Change Matters

Change. This one word strikes fear into the hearts of men (and women), regardless of profession or stature in life. We tend to associate change with negativity: loss of resources, defeat – all signs of structural breakdown that are *not welcome* in any person's life. Regardless of how people *view* change, we must remember that it is actually an essential part of *all life*. I emphasize “all” because change is important not just in human society but in nature itself. If we look around us, we'll see that change makes life possible. Change makes growth possible. It is *the* catalyst that makes the world go round.

How would a life coach do it?

Big question – also very essential since we're on the general topic of exploring what life coaching can do for you and others. A life coach, as I've mentioned earlier isn't someone who has all the answers ready in a magical bag.

No – that's not how it works. A life coach is someone who *walks with you* so that you can figure things out using a specific process of knowledge-inquiry and knowledge-building. Who creates or introduces this process? The life coach, of course.

Take *change* for example. A simple yet profound way of making change more tenable can be summed up in the following steps:

I. Mow Down Denial

Denial is an awful, awful enemy of change. A person who is in denial will constantly create reasons not to even *think* about an issue that needs to be addressed. The process of creating positive change begins with the acknowledgement that something needs to be worked on in the first place. The moment you realize that you need to work on an issue, that would be the time that change *beckons* to you from the horizon.

The Power of Life Coaching

In an ideal world, people would be more than willing to exert effort and spend different kinds of resources to make positive changes happen. However, we know for a fact that this isn't the case at all. People avoid change because it hurts their established equilibriums. Consider a person who enjoys consuming large quantities of fast food. Now this person has been doing this for quite some time now: years, in fact. This dependence on fast food is the person equilibrium. Imagine this person again going to a doctor and getting the news that she needs to cut down on fast food consumption because her heart is having a hard time with all the extra salt and carbs.

The doctor's suggested change is a direct contradiction of the person's establish norm or equilibrium. Therefore, what needs to be done (*change*) becomes more of a threat to the person's 'balance' or established way of life, instead of being appreciated as something that is necessary for the restoration of health.

The fast food lover might say things like:

“High blood pressure runs in my family. I don't think my fast food habit has anything to do with it, really.”

“I'm constantly stressed at work. That's probably why I have high blood pressure.”

“I don't eat that much fast food at all!”

“Fast food is my therapy. That doctor needs to look at other angles and he needs to stop picking on me, telling me to stop fast food.”

What is immediately clear from this kind of thinking is that it takes away much if not all of the responsibility from the person. Change occurs because a person takes responsibility for the situation and takes specific steps to make the change happen.

A life coach can help mow down denial by allowing the client to focus on the following aspects:

1. The presence of resistance to change.
2. The nature of the resistance itself.
3. The possible root of resistance, as derived from memory, previous experiences and other existing knowledge.
4. Clues that a person is in denial. The most important sign of all is defensiveness.

The Power of Life Coaching

5. Signs that a person is ready to move on from denial to action/change.

II. The Contemplative Path

After moving through the phase where you deny the issue or refuse to acknowledge that there is even an important issue to begin with, the next step order of business is to *contemplate*. Why is contemplation so important? Here's why:

Contemplation allows your mind to move around variables and 'play' with certain ideas, especially ideas that are not wholly acceptable to you at the moment.

Of course, contemplation is *not* the same as taking action. These are two completely different things. To contemplate is to *stop* and *linger in the present* to give the mind the space and time it needs to appreciate ideas and experiences.

The moment a person begins contemplating, that would be the time that she would begin to make vital connections that she may have missed because of the busyness of life. These connections can lead to important realizations that will later aid a person in making important decisions for personal development.

Another interesting aspect of contemplation is that it doesn't trigger the defensive mechanisms of the conscious mind that much. To recap, the human mind can be divided into two hemispheres or divisions:

The ***conscious mind*** is responsible for filtering information and blocking input that might be harmful to a person's mental equilibrium. In a big way, the conscious mind is the guardian or gatekeeper of the mind. It makes knowledge and memory stability possible but at the same time, if you allow your conscious filters to lead you too much, it may also prevent you from growing as a person because the conscious mind is also naturally resistant to change.

The second half or hemisphere of the mind is called the ***subconscious***. Contrary to what many believe, the unconscious or subconscious mind isn't this weird twin brother of the conscious mind.

It's not this dark area of the mind where bad and scary things happen. It was popular culture (books and movies) that created this inaccurate picture of the subconscious mind.

In reality, the subconscious mind around 85% bigger than the conscious mind. So from an objective point of view, your 'mind' as you know it is comprised *chiefly* of the

The Power of Life Coaching

subconscious mind.

The top layer, or the ‘manager’ of the subconscious or the part that makes contact with the outside world (reality) is the conscious mind. But the conscious mind is *not* the entire mind, not by a long shot.

What is the function of the subconscious mind?

The subconscious mind can be likened to a massive library-workshop. This is the place in your mind where all your memories, knowledge and life experiences are tucked away neatly by the mind so you can review and use them any time. The subconscious mind is also responsible for processing information, old and new, and *embedding* the new information into the grand framework of your being.

The embedding process is accomplished through the continuous creation and maintenance of values and beliefs or what I’d like to call the **core system** of a person. Information and knowledge becomes actionable and practical precisely because the subconscious mind is there to process it and turn it into beliefs that can then be used in the proper context/s of a person’s physical reality.

Consider the adage “an apple a day keeps the doctor away.” This adage (as old as it is) is actually a reminder for people to consume more natural food items. When a person hears this adage for the first time, she may not be able to fully grasp what it means – yet.

And so the person’s mind will take the information and tuck it away in the subconscious for further processing. Additional knowledge and life experiences will bolster the meaning and relevance of this bit of information and eventually, the person will develop a corresponding belief regarding the consumption of fruits and vegetables.

Where does contemplation take place?

A person who contemplates is a person who brews information in the subconscious mind. The conscious mind actually ‘switches off’ for the most part during contemplation, making it possible for the full power of the subconscious to work its magic on the new information.

Since the conscious mind isn’t tapped during the process of contemplation over-powered mental filters are also avoided, making it possible for the person to create new frameworks or ways of doing things without being impeded by old values and

The Power of Life Coaching

beliefs.

A person who is frustrated with life because she feels stuck or static would do well in trying contemplation *and* mindfulness. Contemplation comes naturally to everyone because it is a natural mental process. However, *mindfulness* is something else completely.

How can a person become more mindful?

Mindfulness is synonymous with “living in the present.” This is an old-new concept that has become a cornerstone of self-improvement around the globe because it works against established norms of society that forces people to rush about, worried and anxious without even a hint of time for thinking/appreciating the present.

The present time is where you are. You can worry all day about the future or the past, but the fact remains that you will always be in the present, no matter what happens – and so *live in the present*.

Here are a few things you can do right now to become more mindful:

1. **Be thankful/grateful** – Gratefulness is both a state and conscious activity of remembering. When you are grateful, you reconnect with your life in a way that allows you to see all the goodness you’ve enjoyed thus far. To be grateful is to reach out to the Universe and say “thank you” for every little thing that has made your life happier, better or easier.

Master practitioners of the LOA (Law of Attraction) will say the same thing when it comes to thankfulness, too: that in the process of being thankful, you also end up attracting more of the same. You don’t become thankful for the bad things in life – you acknowledge them but you are not thankful for them. And so, you cannot possibly attract the same bad things *again* because you practice being consciously grateful.

Another wonderful effect of thankfulness is that it shows people that not everything is bad and that there always more things to enjoy and be happy about in life than what was previously thought.

Negative emotions like anger, frustration, sadness and anxiety make it appear that the negative outweigh the positive all the time. Gratefulness reverses this mental trend and makes it possible for people to see with their mind’s eyes that this is not true. The world itself might be somewhat frightening because it thrives on change, but it also

The Power of Life Coaching

thrives on improvement and positivity.

2. Be proactive – To be proactive is to become a dynamic thinker and doer. Proactive individuals are constantly curious about the present and are focused on finding solutions to challenges. Worrying is never part of the larger equation because it saps a person's energy and makes thinking *and* doing nearly impossible.

You can become a proactive individual by shedding your old anxious, worrying self and empowering yourself to take down all those negative issues and challenges one by one. My advice to everyone at this point is to *not avoid* old issues. Why? Old, unresolved issues may not sound 'relevant' to you at the moment, but trust me, they always are. Unresolved challenges tend to slow down people precisely because they haven't been resolved!

So find those old issues and begin taking them apart, one by one. If you feel overwhelmed by this new challenge-solving paradigm, I'd like to encourage everyone to take 'baby steps,' instead.

What are baby steps in this context?

To take baby steps is to break down a challenge and its corresponding solution into successively smaller components, in order to make things more manageable. This technique is also useful for making *goals and milestones* more achievable.

To illustrate, let's look at this particular goal:

I want to lose 30 pounds.

This is a common enough goal, correct? People set weight loss goals for themselves all the time. It's fantastic when a person decides to take it upon herself to improve her wellbeing by losing weight. But wait: if people already know how to set such goals, then why are so many still struggling with weight?

The answer is simple: people know how to set goals but they don't quite know (from the bat) how to achieve them. The same analysis applies to challenges and solutions: a complex challenge may seem unsolvable if you don't take apart its constituent parts. A complex *solution* may seem impossible to put into practice if you don't know the *smaller steps* that contribute to the formation of the whole.

A big step is almost always just a series of small steps leading to a desired result.

The Power of Life Coaching

Going back to the original complex goal of “I want to lose 30 pounds,” how can we make this particular goal more achievable? Like I said before, we break it down. Here are some smaller, more bite-sized goal chunks, broken down successively until singular steps are discovered:

1. I will exercise more.
 - a. I will devote 30 minutes to exercise every day.
 - i. I will jog for 30 minutes every day.
2. I will eat less.
 - a. I will first examine what I eat on a daily basis.
 - i. I will make a list of foods and beverages I normally consume on a regular day.
 1. I will make sure that I list down my breakfast, lunch and supper and especially my in-between snacks and meals.
 - a. From now on I will keep a daily journal of what I eat so I know exactly what I am putting into my body.
 - b. I will consult with a dietitian.
 - i. I will immediately put into action the menu and diet plan from the dietitian.
 - c. I will cut out excess sugar, salt and fat from my diet.
 - i. I will eat less fast food from now on.
3. I will be more active.
 - a. I will move more frequently than before.
 - i. I will climb the stairs instead of taking the elevator.
 - ii. I will play sports.
 1. Badminton sounds like a good plan.
 2. Ping-pong also sounds perfect.

3. Cut out toxicity in your life. – The third and perhaps most important step in regaining your ability to appreciate life in the present is knowing and taking the steps to remove or distance yourself from toxic people and situations.

Toxic people are those individuals who bring constant negativity in your life. We’re not just talking about overly antagonistic individuals here – we’re *especially* including folks who may not look like they’re doing much damage to you, but have lingered long enough in your life to make you believe certain things that limit your growth and confidence in yourself.

Toxic situations are often chronic and repetitive experiences that we encounter on a day

The Power of Life Coaching

to day basis because of our personal/family lives or even our professional lives. Toxicity sets in when we see ourselves as hampered, limited or trapped by negativity that we don't want in our lives. If you feel that you are facing toxic situations in your life constantly, there are two ways to go about it:

- Distance yourself from the toxic situation to lessen its impact.
- Address the root cause of the toxicity and resolve the challenge.

Toxicity that stems from your professional life may not be that easy to avoid or resolve, especially if the stressors are people or circumstances of the work that you have to perform in order to earn a living.

Of course, a career change may be in order but we are aware that this isn't always an immediately practicable recourse.

If this is the situation for you then it might be better if you figured out ways to make your work less stressful by analyzing the variables that give rise to the stress in the first place. It may take some time before you succeed in removing a considerable measure of stress, but it is possible!

III. Tools and Blueprints

Every great plan remains a plan if you don't prepare for the action steps that come with it. This is where your tools and blueprints come in to save the day. A most common question I receive from people I coach is: *can I really do this?* This question is extremely important because if a person doesn't feel that she can do it, then the battle is already half lost. Why? Because in the grand scheme of things, it is a person's mental readiness that matters the most.

Let me explain by creating a tangential connection with self-hypnosis. I have been practicing hypnotherapy since the 1980s and in the many decades of my career, I have helped individuals and families attain very specific goals through the discipline and science of hypnosis.

People ask me, too: *why does hypnosis work?*

And my answer would always be: *hypnosis works because once the mind sets itself to achieve something, that commitment – that powerful hyper-focus on a desired/ desirable goal – transforms the battle in to a half-won one.*

The Power of Life Coaching

It's all in the mind! All of the resources that you could possibly need or want as a person who wants to accomplish *anything* in this world is already there inside of you.

Let there be no confusion: by *resources*, I refer specifically to things like:

- The objective capability to learn new knowledge and skills.
- The natural ability to adapt to different situations, not just easy situations but most especially difficult situations.
- The ability to socialize and create new networks of connection that would be helpful for different types of endeavors.
- The ability to manage stress and stressors.
- The ability to creatively think of new solutions to challenges old and new.

We're barely scratching the tip of the iceberg with my list. The human mind is an amazing treasure trove of innate resources that is nearly limitless in its potential. All you really have to do is to believe in your capabilities and everything will flow naturally afterward.

And before you begin...

Every journey should begin with *unshakeable convictions and beliefs* that will set the tone for everything else that would follow. I'd like to share three things that have made my coaching journey more fruitful:

First: You are the only one of your kind in this world. There is no need to compare yourself with others. There is no need to contrast your skills and capabilities with your neighbor. Everything that you are now and everything that you have are results of a special mix of circumstances that make you the only one of your kind.

With this in mind, it is essential for you to *acknowledge, appreciate* and *accept* who you are and what you are as a person. If you feel that somehow you are limited right now, that is likely a result *only* of the fact that you haven't tapped some of your skills yet.

Insufficiency in knowledge or skills can easily be remedied by study and practice. There is also no need for you to feel bad that other people are more *able* than you at the moment when it comes to specific endeavors.

The Power of Life Coaching

Why? Because the moment you set your mind to accomplishing new things, you're going to achieve them once you put in the necessary work. It's as simple as that. So instead of worrying that you can't do things, think of how you can *start on your goals*, instead.

Second: You are a powerful individual not just because you can think creatively but because you have innate type of resourcefulness that permeates your being.

You are an adaptive creature, capable of analyzing and learning on the go. New situations don't frighten you, because they offer unique challenges that allow you to learn new things and consequently, grow as a person.

Your resourcefulness is not something that people can take away from you just because they think that you can't do it. That's not how these things work.

Again, the moment you begin to set your mind to certain endeavors, the rest will flow easily. Oftentimes, we are held back not by our actual limitations but by our irrational beliefs and fears that revolve around the idea that we can't do things.

If you feel afraid and inadequate, always remember that you're going to feel even more inadequate if you don't take action now. Inadequacy is another irrational type of thought, like fear. There is no objective measure of human inadequacy because we are all created in evolution and growth. So never stop believing and doing the things that you want – allow yourself to *be* and you will conquer the world.

Third: The path to the full accomplishment of your goals is not linear or unitary. There is no external master who draws your path for you and fixes you there permanently.

More than anything, you must realize that you have *free will* and you can exercise your essential free will any time you wish. Human free will translates to the ability to make different kinds of choices, not just the choices or options that have been pre-made for us by other people.

While it's perfectly normal to seek out the counsel of others when it comes to things that we are not familiar with, it's even more important for people to become masters of their own destinies by creating these options themselves. There is no rule that says that a person cannot forge her own path, even if her path is indeed new and she is still amassing new knowledge and skills to accomplish her goals.

Now, if a person has freedom to make different kinds of choices, then she also has

The Power of Life Coaching

the supreme freedom not to pursue certain things if she deems such choices unpalatable or unhelpful, regardless of who made those options available to her in the first place.

Deriving the Best from Your Inner Coach

Whether you are an aspiring life coach or just someone who is interested in using the discipline of life coaching to make your life 110% better, it would be best to familiarize yourself with what I'd like to call the "inner coach."

What is the inner coach?

Your inner coach is the symbolic representation of your practical, good sense that comes from your knowledge and experiences in life. Too often, the inner coach is suspended from view and practice because we tend to prioritize what other people think or say. While reaching out to others to learn from their feedback is essential for long-term growth, what is even more important is that you confidence in your own good sense.

Without this confidence, there is no way for you to navigate the challenge-solving process in the real world. Every turn necessary for the resolution of a challenge involves making decisions and turning to your own good sense. You cannot always rely on the knowledge of others because their appropriation or use of knowledge is heavily reliant on their personal contexts and experiences.

Your experiences and personal context are both important and so it makes sense that you craft your action steps and plans while keeping in mind the relevant life variables that may affect the final outcome of your efforts.

What does an effective inner coach do?

Your inner coach isn't just some internal voice that keeps saying "you can do it!" No – far from it. Your inner coach can become a powerful ally in more ways than one. Your

The Power of Life Coaching

inner coach can:

1. Help you craft the best goals and milestones, depending on what you really want to achieve in life.
 2. Show you that limiting beliefs, faulty values and irrational fearfulness are all just figments of your imagination and are not mental barriers to success. When these obstacles are preventing you from moving forward or taking action, it is your inner coach that comes to the fore to make sure that you continue moving despite of your fear/anxiety/belief.
 3. Aid you in finding your footing in new endeavors in such a way that you can perform at your own pace while maintaining high standards. While we do not encourage any kind or form of perfectionism, there has to be standards to keep your performance up. Without standards, you wouldn't really know how you're doing.
 4. Helps you navigate the wild, wild terrain of available options and possible avenues in planning, preparation and taking action.
 5. Boosts your ability to find optimum choices/options for your endeavors. Since not all options will bring the same results, your inner coach will not only encourage you to find or formulate choices, it will also help you select the best ones, based on your desired results and the external resources available to you.
 6. Prevents you from being sidetracked. It is extremely important to keep moving forward regardless of what you are trying to accomplish at the moment. By 'moving forward' I refer to the idea of *constant striving* on whatever you are trying to accomplish.
- To move forward doesn't mean you have to be overly aggressive or careless. It just means you need to focus on what needs to be done and conserve your energy by not engaging in side activities that do not directly contribute to the end result that you want.
7. Allows you to be happy with what you have achieved so far. Many people involve themselves in lofty pursuits and they eventually succeed – but they remain unhappy. Why? Because they feel that they don't deserve to be happy or content with their achievements.

This permanent state of dissatisfaction and unhappiness is often attributed to the *inner critic* which is the direct opposite of the *inner coach*.

The Power of Life Coaching

What is the inner critic?

The inner critic represents all of the insecurities and anxieties that a person has. Like the inner coach, it can speak to you directly and affect your thought processes and decisions greatly.

The challenge with the inner critic is that it is often concerned only with the negative aspects of each undertaking. The end-effect is always the same: a person feels that the current undertaking is impossible or extremely difficult, and this can greatly impede the 'forwards-looking' attitude that we'd like to foster with every one.

How can a person foster a good relationship with her inner coach?

Your inner coach is essentially a voice inside your mind that can hold a dialogue with you, any time.

To use your inner coach is to exercise your memory, instinct and good sense in such a way that you are able to approach challenges and obstacles in life creatively. By 'creative,' I refer to the active process of solution-seeking that makes use of different kinds of approaches, not just one known or common approach.

While asking other people for advice is a known best practice, one must also learn to seek the counsel of *one's good sense* because in the long term, *this* is what will save you (again and again) because you can't always ask people for advice as you continue working on your goals.

In order to create the best mental and emotional environment for your inner coach, use this simple exercise:

1. First, find a comfortable and quiet place to perform the mental exercise. It can be in your bedroom, living room or even office. Seat yourself on a chair and relax. Make sure that your cellphone is on silent and no one will disturb you from your mental exercise.
2. Second, think of an endeavor that you are currently working on. Just put the idea of the endeavor at the center of your mind and let it dwell there. When the image in your mind becomes clear, begin to contemplate the endeavor and how you've been handling the necessary effort to accomplish your desired results.
3. Third, as you continue focusing on the idea of your endeavor, begin to pay close

The Power of Life Coaching

attention to the different voices that are speaking *to you* about the endeavor. You will encounter two general types of voices: one positive, the other a polar opposite – negative.

The negative voice is almost always the *inner critic* while the more constructive voice represents your inner coach, or the positive energy in your mind. Take note of what is being said and try to analyze what the voices in your mind are really trying to say, as opposed to what is simply being ‘said.’

I encourage a bit of analysis here because even in our subconscious minds, we tend to use codes and masks to hide what we really mean. When you exercise your ability to hear and communicate with your inner coach, you’re not just acknowledging the presence of an inner coach. You’re *harnessing* this voice inside to begin making good decisions.

4. Fourth, after distinguishing the two voices (inner coach and inner critic), I want you to visualize a radio in front of you, with an antenna, a speaker and two knobs. The knob on the left side of the radio is black while the other one, directly beside it, is blue.

The radio is already working. Turn the black knob slightly to the right and you will hear your inner critic speak. Turn the blue knob after and you will also hear your inner coach speak, alongside your inner critic. Obviously in this orientation it is difficult for you to hear your inner coach because your inner critic is spouting away at the same time.

Let’s fix the challenge. First, turn the black knob to the left to turn your inner critic off or to the barest whisper. In real life, it’s not possible to turn off the inner critic completely because humans are instinctually pessimistic (a remnant of our hunter gatherer days many thousand years ago). After drastically reducing the speaking power of your inner critic, turn your attention to the blue knob beside it. Turn the blue knob to the right until you can hear the voice clearly, as if it was speaking directly to you and the source of the sound is but a meter away.

There will be times when the knobs’ settings will change and the inner critic’s voice will overcome the inner coach’s voice. Simply repeat this exercise to see which voice is stronger. When you’re feeling down and depressed about something, it’s highly likely that your inner critic is speaking to you more than your inner coach. If this is the case, visualize the radio once again and adjust the knobs until your inner coach voice is

The Power of Life Coaching

dominant once again.

Jumping In!

Now that we're done with the preliminaries, it's time to get down to business. To recap, you've already learned that:

- Life coaching is all about getting the results that you want.
- Life coaching principles are *universal* and can be applied by anyone, at any time.
- There are two kinds of voices in a person's mind: the inner critic and the inner coach. The inner critic's voice needs to be powered down. The inner coach's voice on the other hand, needs to be given priority and precedence over everything else.
- Life coaching must lead to affirmative and positive *action*. Preparation must lead to taking actual steps that will help a person arrive at desirable results.

Coaching for the First Time

If you wanted to become a life coach so you can help individuals and families achieve their dreams and goals, how would you hold dialogues with them? How would you reach out and introduce the idea of change? These are the big questions that need to be answered and fleshed out before you can really start helping people by becoming a life coach. Let's begin.

1. Eyes on the Prize

Before anything else, a coaching dialogue must have a clear goal guiding it. A dialogue with a goal is like a road trip that doesn't follow directions or maps. A life coach is responsible for setting these goals when engaging in dialogues with clients.

What does a goal look like in this context?

Life coaching deals more with ideas, beliefs and issues that a person needs to solve. Therefore, a coaching dialogue may deal with a single idea/belief/concept/value, depending on what the subject (the client) needs now.

For example, let's say that the subject needs to figure out why she is frightened of meeting new people, even though she is longing for romance and companionship. A

The Power of Life Coaching

life coach can zero in on the issue itself *but* before that, the current dialogue's tone and goal must be clarified. Some examples of worthy dialogue goals in this context are:

- *“By the end of the conversation, we will have understood the genuine meaning of companionship.”*
- *“After the dialogue, we will have established what you need in terms of romance and what you don't want, too.”*
- *“We will be able to create a solid model for understanding your anxieties about romance and we'll talk about each one in the succeeding coaching sessions.”*

2. Tough Love, Tough Questions

From the get go, a life coach is expected to give 'tough love' by asking relevant and sometimes difficult questions – questions that are often avoided by people because by asking these questions themselves, they would be required to take responsibility for certain actions, events and situations.

While a life coach is never combative to her subjects, she can provide the right level of 'tough love' so that clients will not skid around important issues.

What kinds of questions are best for coaching dialogues?

- Questions that go into the heart of the issue, instead of playing around it.
- Questions formed 'outside the box,' with the intent to introduce a new paradigm to the subject.
- Questions that are normally avoided because of possibly unsavory answers, but are nonetheless important for the resolution of past and on-going conflict/s.
- Questions that delve into specific details of a current endeavor or situation.
- Questions that help improve a person's perspective of things, either by clarifying an existing viewpoint or introducing new viewpoints that challenge established beliefs.

3. Active Listening and the Feedback Circuit

To become a good life coach, you must be an *excellent* listener. One of the biggest

The Power of Life Coaching

reasons why life coaches are good at what they do is that they have learned early on to listen more than speak. From now on, always keep in mind that you are an *active listener*. Active listening is a central principle in different therapy settings precisely because it's so effective in drawing out issues, challenges and root causes of human behavior.

The principles of active listening simple and easy to apply:

a. **The subject as center of communication.** You (the speaker) are *not* the true center of a dialogue. The center is always the subject (the other person/group) because the subject is the sole source of *immediate feedback* that can then be used to adjust your tack as a speaker. The more you listen to your subject as a life coach, the better you will be able to help her understand concepts and issues relevant to what she is trying to accomplish.

b. **Without feedback, there is no communication.** Eliciting feedback is of utmost importance to a communication circuit. That's why it's called a circuit in the first place: a circuit has a return path to make the system work in the first place.

When you reach out to another person as a life coach, it is imperative that you are ready to *listen more than speak*. Yes, you may special knowledge and an objective view of the situation, but in the final analysis, all your knowledge would only be useful *if* you know what's really going on in the subject's mind. And the only way that's going to happen is if you listen long enough for the subject to truly open up to you.

While it's true that life coaching is not nor will it ever be a form of psychotherapy, it still follows the tried and tested path of genuine communication, which of course involves the endless exchange of both negative and positive feedback.

c. **All feedback is useful.** Some people believe that only positive feedback is usable. This isn't true at all. In any social context, *all kinds of feedback* is usable – even the most negative ones. Why? Because it is through feedback that you are able to glimpse at what your subject might be thinking at the moment.

As you continue receiving and responding to feedback, you will realize that as long as you know *exactly* what the subject is thinking, there will be ways around obstacles and there is a promise of arriving at solutions to challenges.

The Power of Life Coaching

4. The Push That Matters

Everyone needs a bit of push in the right direction to get things going. While a life coach is not necessarily responsible for formulating actual plans and steps for you to follow, she is responsible for keeping things moving.

Like a well-oiled machine, an effort to achieve something must keep moving forward, no matter how slow or fast things are at the moment. Things must keep moving. Matter must not rest. This is how success in life is molded: by never allowing moss to gather by always being in motion.

Now, it's important to understand early on that a life coach doesn't have to have all the answers to be effective. In fact, it is also wrong to assume that a person consults with a life coach because she wants clear-cut solutions and precise answers. A life coach will work with a client specifically to draw out ideas and insights from the subject. This feedback will then be utilized to brainstorm and organize, so that the subject can make important realizations about herself and her situation.

Once important realizations are made, the life coach is then tasked with guarding the subject's motivation and drive to keep moving forward. This is the primary task of a life coach, one that sounds so simple but is in fact complex because every person is unique and operates with different needs and mindsets.

What kind of action steps are proposed or initiated during a life coaching session?

A call to action or *action step* can fall into any of the following categories:

- a. The simplest action step is to perform a very specific task to begin the process of change.
- b. A blueprint or plan for performing a larger or more complex task.
- c. A preparation list so that the next session would be more fruitful and productive.
- d. A contemplative list so that the subject can meditate on certain ideas. This type of action step is especially useful when a person is in drastic need of change in her life. Since resistance is a big issue in the field of personal development, inner resistance must be dealt with immediately and the simplest way to do that is to encourage contemplation.

The Power of Life Coaching

5. Setting the Stage

Another important task of the life coach is to expose the myriad of connections between your behaviors, life choices, desires and current undertakings. These connections are collectively known as your *life context*. If you do not have a clear idea of your life context, it may be difficult for you to establish the groundwork for present and future endeavors.

You need to know where you're coming from, where you are now at the present time and where you are headed, based on your life experiences and what you've done so far in certain areas of your life.

For example, if your goal is to become fitter and healthier, what have you been doing thus far to contribute to the accomplishment of this goal? On the other hand, what aspects of your life have not been contributing to the achievement of the said goal? It would be best to look deep in the past and closely at the present to get the right answers to these questions.

The Tale of the Left Hand and Right Hand

In the land of Bodea, lived two hands, the left and the right. The right hand was always complaining that he did most of the work given to them by the king of Bodea. Right hand complained day and night, unceasingly, blaming every one including his twin, the left hand. The left hand was always quiet and understanding, never the one to make snide remarks against his brother who was constantly moving about and doing things.

One day, right hand moved close to this twin brother and said: "Brother, I really think that you're not really necessary. What would be the use of a hand that is barely used and is almost never called upon by the king of Bodea? Maybe you can take a vacation and no one would notice."

Of course, left hand was terribly hurt by right hand's assumptions. That night, left hand hatched a plan and set it into motion immediately the next day. When right hand woke up the next day, he immediately went about his usual tasks. After a few hours, he felt more fatigued than ever. He became even angrier. He was doing the same tasks but everything felt so awkward, strained and exhausting. That was the time he realized that he had been doing everything on his lonesome, without even the slight assistance from any other member of Bodea. Right hand lifted pails, cleaned floors and did all sorts of activities completely alone. By noon of that day, right hand was ready to pass out from being over-worked.

The Power of Life Coaching

With bleary eyes, he called upon his brother, the left hand. Left hand was nowhere to be found. Right hand thought long and hard about what he had done and tried to make sense of what happened. The king of Bodea constantly called the right hand to perform tasks... But it was the left hand that did all of the necessary balancing to make things possible. The left hand quietly boosted the strength of the right hand without the right hand knowing it. The left hand, being seen as the 'lesser' of the twins, decided long ago that he would do everything he can to make his more popular brother successful.

At night time, the right hand was called upon again to perform a major task: to replace a car tire in the middle of the night, after a long day of driving. The right hand looked about and thought: I'm going to break into two if I try to remove this tire on my own. Right hand felt resigned and gripped the tire when he felt a familiar movement. The left hand was back.

The left hand smiled and waved at his twin. It was indeed the beginning of a good night for everyone.

The Tale of the Left Hand and Right Hand illustrates the importance of using all of your faculties when solving challenges and facing challenges in life. When we try to do things "one-handed," *i.e.* without making full use of all our creative potential and skills, we often find ourselves overly fatigued and imbalanced.

So it is extremely important that when you seek to improve yourself, that you become as resourceful as you can. Do not rely merely on one framework or way of doing things. Balance yourself by employing multiple paradigms and action plans to lessen the burden of solving challenges and accomplishing goals.

This piece of advice is especially important for individuals who have a ton of great ideas in their heads but are unable to move forward with their plans because their viewpoints on how to do things are severely limited. *Think outside the box* and you will find new methods and even new mindsets!

Dealing with Setbacks

Setbacks are a natural part of life. We can't assume that everything is simply going to work out simply because we want them to. There are factors and circumstances that are simply beyond our control and we have to accept that some things may not fall into place perfectly and immediately.

To prepare yourself for the uphill battle that comes with all kinds of efforts, big and small, keep the following in mind:

The Power of Life Coaching

1. Change is Serious Business

All goals and endeavors are essentially processes for *change*. This is the first and last thing you need to know about all your goals in life. When you set a goal, you want something to change. The desired result *is* the change translated into physical reality.

Even in nature, change requires resources in order to take place. While some kinds of natural changes seem to happen in an instant without use of any resources, it just seems that way. Depletion of energy and use of resources are bundled with change.

With these facts in mind, it's necessary for everyone to realize that change won't happen if you're not willing to put in the necessary work involved. In addition to work and effort, you're going to have to put forth resources too. Yes, resource loss is part of growth. It may seem paradoxical at first, but it will all make sense when you realize that the resources and energy lost to a specific effort will be regained once the desired end-result is gained.

What about 'shortcuts?'

In our day and age where people have shorter and shorter attention spans, it's not surprising that people are drawn to *shortcuts* to... just about everything.

I do not personally recommend any kind of shortcut to *anything*, because these shortcuts are often unscientific and misleading. Instead of taking shortcuts with uncertain or unsustainable results, focus instead of putting in the necessary work gradually, until you get the desired results.

A long effort that's sustainable and properly accomplished is always better than a haphazard shortcut that's meant to impress, but never to sustain the person using the shortcut in the first place.

2. Custom-Fit Everything

I love the idea of 'custom-fitting' precisely because you'll have to pay close attention to your needs and how you do things in the first place. This principle extends to methods used to accomplish tasks and goals. A method that works for one person or a group of people may not necessarily work for *you*.

It is imperative that you test your methods, find out which ones work (and which ones don't) and discard those that don't contribute that much to what you're trying to do. Don't

The Power of Life Coaching

feel pressured *at all* that you are pursuing a different path than the others. Remember: each person is unique, with peculiar resources at their disposal. What works for Person A may not work at an optimum level for Person B because Person B doesn't have all of Person A's facets as a person and doer.

What if it still doesn't work?

Remember the concept of feedback that we talked about earlier?

The concept of feedback explains that the communication circuits works only because both speaker and subject can receive and process input. If we apply this communicative paradigm to accomplishing goals or even just goal-setting, we will see immediately that setbacks are a form of feedback, *too*. And what do we do with feedback? *We use them to get even better.*

Negative feedback isn't necessarily unhelpful. If there is failure, error or any kind of negative feedback, it just means that the process you have been using still has room for improvement and you simply have to find the exact area where the failure is taking place so you can do something about it.

Feedback is only useful if you're willing to take the steps to remedy challenges within the current action process. If not, feedback remains just that – neutral input that will only gain life once used directly to address issues within the 'system' where it belongs.

3. The Beauty of Avoidance

Remember the old adage about willpower? That we can accomplish everything with will power? Well... This old adage isn't exactly accurate. While I agree that willpower is important, it's not the only thing that determines a person's success.

For example, a person who wants to lose weight can have all the willpower in the world, but if this person continues to surround himself with all the food and beverages that have caused the obesity in the first place, the willpower factor will matter less in the long term.

Why? Because you're dealing with human nature, here. Human nature favors quick rewards and easy ways out. A person who is struggling to lose weight and finds little satisfaction in exercise will seek out some form of immediate compensation and/or reward for her efforts. And so available junk food and other high calorie foods become *the* avenue for pleasure and satisfaction.

The Power of Life Coaching

In situations where unhelpful factors or variables can be avoided completely, do so. It's easier to avoid negative elements than try to test your willpower against them. Additionally, there is no actual need to test how your willpower is doing if you are indeed engaged in an important pursuit. There are better ways to spend your time and energy than just finding out if you can withstand temptation or what not.

4. Embrace the Zigzags and Spirals

The path to success... isn't straight. It never was. Illustrators may have been drawing the path/mountain/hill of success as a short trip upward and beyond for years now, but in real life, the path to success is more of a bumpy, zigzag ride with lots of stops and detours.

This is how it has always been and so it's time to embrace the reality that you are going to be encountering more zigzags and spirals on your way to success than a steady line or path.

How can we lessen the impact of the undulating path?

Through preparation. You have to be prepared for the fact that it might not be an easy journey. When you set your mind to meet challenges and difficulties, obstacles and setbacks won't surprise you anymore. They would be met with much attention and energy and in the end, you will be able to conquer them all.

I often hear people say things like "*I wasn't expecting (X) to happen to me*" or "*I was planning to do (X) but (Y) event happened and I wasn't prepared at all for (Y).*"

Such statements reveal not only a general lack of preparation for the eventuality of difficulties, but also the wrong kind of mindset – the linear one. Unlearn the linear mindset and start thinking in terms of multiple paths and streams. You're going to have an easier time of it once you see that goals, challenges and endeavors all have multiple angles and therefore, can be approached from various vantage points, too.

5. Don't Expect Too Much From First Attempts

First attempts are amazing by themselves – but they shouldn't be seen as *the* opportunities for immediate success. If you are trying out something for the very first time, have positive expectations but spare yourself from agony if things don't work out.

Because the truth of the matter is this: that no matter how much we prepare for our

The Power of Life Coaching

first attempts, there will always be angles that we haven't covered adequately and we will fall short in some respects.

The more important thing here is that you will no longer give yourself a tough time if things don't work out perfectly the first time.

Now, I'm certain that there are some goals that will work out fine the first time you set your mind to it. I don't want to say that they are the exception and they certainly are not the rule, but they are amazing accomplishments nonetheless. Congratulate yourself heartily if you slay the dragon on your first attempt.

These exceptional moments are likely made possible by your diligence in preparing for the challenges ahead *and* your willingness to adapt constantly to the changing needs of your situation.

Often, people encounter setbacks because they don't want to adapt or change tack when something goes awry. What they don't realize is that by avoiding change, you end up with less in the end and an unresolved issue to boot.

6. *You Matter, Most of All*

Here is a huge mistake that people make when they set out to do succeed in something: they dip their hands and feet into everything that needs to be done *but* they forget themselves in the process.

What do you mean by 'forgetting yourself?'

I meant exactly what I said: that people forget themselves just because they're busier and more preoccupied. When you begin neglecting yourself, that would be the time that your happiness and energy levels will begin to wane. Your efforts rely on your level of happiness and contentment on the whole, and so it doesn't make sense for you to ignore your emotional state even if you are knee-deep in trying to complete a goal.

Here are some important reminders regarding your emotional state:

1. Avoid perfectionism at all cost. Perfectionism sounds nice because it appears that a person only wants the best for herself. But the reality of it is that perfectionism is more of an affliction because it isn't based on rationality or logic.

Perfectionism is actually more of an irrational-emotional response to a subject/object.

The Power of Life Coaching

It adjusts itself so that the person is never satisfied with what she has accomplished. Perfectionism also makes a person less patient with others, precisely because the so-called standards in place are nearly impossible to satisfy.

Instead of choosing to become a perfectionist, the better choice would be to set goals and achieve them within your capacities. The idea of 'perfection' should be stricken off immediately from your mind because perfection simply doesn't exist. It is a subjective idea, one that causes real-world challenges the moment you believe that you have to be perfect in every way before you can make any headway in accomplishing your goals.

2. This may sound a little off, but do acknowledge negativity in your life. There is a consistent thought stream in the populace that negativity needs to be blocked out, as if it didn't exist at all. While I'd like people to have a more positive attitude toward life, this doesn't mean that we shouldn't take care of negativity objectively.

What do I mean by this? Think of it this way: negativity arises because there is something amiss – there might be an issue or challenge that is preventing you from achieving or doing something. Negativity always stems from *something*. Manage the negativity as an emotional response but don't forget to manage its root causes, too. If you do not pay attention to what is triggering the negativity in your life, you may inadvertently prolong it by *not* working on its causes.

How can you manage negative emotions effectively?

1. Foremost, remember that your emotions do not define you. You are a powerful individual and your emotions are simply a part of the entire, wonderful parcel that is you.

When you are feeling down and out because of anger, sadness, frustration or any other negative emotion, it pays to do two things:

- Separate yourself from the negative emotion so that it doesn't consume you. Understand that your emotions are a result of what you've encountered in life and are not naturally part of your mindset. They can be added or subtracted from your mental state at will, because emotions are not meant to be permanent. In my analysis, emotions are more of a response system than life-defining occurrences.

You must not let your emotions define who you are. You must choose to become bigger and stronger than negative emotions, because that's how you can manage them effectively.

The Power of Life Coaching

- Curiosity rules! The old saying goes that “curiosity killed the cat.” While this may apply to real cats (perhaps), this doesn’t necessarily hold true for people like you and me, who need to learn and adapt constantly in order to thrive.

Genuine learning (as opposed to just rote repetition or mechanical learning) begins with curiosity. You develop the thirst for learning about something over time because you are curious and you really want to know more about something.

When curiosity takes over and your thirst for learning kicks in, you also begin to realize that learning isn’t a rigidly structured process. It doesn’t have to be an “ABC” kind of process where you have to follow a straight path from one point to another.

For example, in my case as learner I am learn academically (by participating in my classes back in the university) but at the same time I also read constantly. I read everything from online articles to journals to books. When I am really interested about something, I set out to find out as much about it as I can without following a rigidly straight path.

I allow myself to discover and *rediscover* by exposing myself to a variety of reading materials *and* experiences that enhance the learning process. Experience is actually still the best teacher when it comes to solving challenges and facing difficult situations and so I also do not shy away from challenges. I am always curious and steadfast about creating solutions to challenges.

The solution-building part harnesses my creative capacities, which is also just as important as being curious. If I am not creative in the way I think, I will not be able to use what I’ve learned from being curious. Creativity *plus* curiosity rules the world!

Journal-keeping is one of the most effective ways to organize your thoughts and record the important insights you’ve learned from all your learnings and experiences. To many people, the difficult part about learning, settings goals and getting things done is keeping track of all the new knowledge pouring in.

You see, while some types of knowledge are immediately applicable (e.g. technical information), others need a bit more time to stew in the mind before they become truly useful. This is the reason why we talked about the contemplative path earlier: you need to be able to quiet your mind and really think about some ideas before they make complete sense to you and what you’re trying to do at the moment.

The Power of Life Coaching

With a journal you will be able to:

1. Reflect on the day's events and write down insights that you've gained from your most recent experiences.
2. Record important realizations about your current endeavor, as well as burning questions that you may want to tackle later on to make all your work processes smoother and more effective.
3. Take care of your inner critic by writing down the negative thoughts you've been having. Your inner critic is an expert in making you feel down and depressed. This power over you disappears the moment you begin writing down the irrational things that you think about through your inner critic. Like a mechanic, I want you to take apart those negative assumptions, beliefs and ideas so you can prove to yourself that they do not deserve any space in your life *at all*.
4. My personal favorite is *creating blueprints*. I want you to be able to plan and prepare using your new journal. Of course, there are countless folks who still plan without using a journal – *but*, a journal can make you more creative and in the end, this added creativity *will* help you create better solutions to your life's challenges.
5. Journaling also helps you move forward. If you feel stuck and uninspired, why not write in your journal? That should help kickstart your challenge-solving mode easily.

Focusing on You

You are the most important person – not me, your neighbor, your boss or whoever it is you may have encountered today. The center of the world is *you* and with your unique resources at your disposal, you will be ready to conquer the world, one process/step at a time.

If you don't pay attention to yourself *in the present*, you're going to have a tougher time facing challenges in the future. The best time to develop *yourself* is today, right now, at this very moment. Commit to the idea that you need to face and solve challenges, resolve issues and make yourself better overall. The transformation begins now!

Exploring Your *Self*

People often come up to me and ask: *why am I not good enough to do (X)?* There are countless permutations of the same question, but they all boil down to the same mix of irrational premises:

1. People are never 'enough' to accomplish certain things.
2. That state is somehow their essential flaw and therefore, little or nothing can be done about it.
3. There is always 'someone' out there who could do things better and with little effort.
4. And why is it *always* so difficult to do things you have to do?

Obviously, these irrational premises have to be addressed because they have become overly pervasive, to the point that people actually believe that they are the actual causes of their challenges when it comes to personal capacities and accomplishing tasks. Let's begin!

1. Technically speaking, an individual can accomplish a greater number of tasks and activities than what she cannot accomplish. Unless a person is hindered or encumbered by a medical condition or some other condition that prevents her from physical/mentally focusing on a task, she is likely very capable *and* she can certainly overcome her limitations by applying the same process of learning and practice to tasks that she hasn't mastered yet.

2. In the event that you *need* to do something but you're not equipped yet, it just means that you have to exert a bit of effort to gain *new skills*. Skill acquisition is anyone's ballgame. There is another pervasive fallacy that being good in one skill or

The Power of Life Coaching

set of skills means you can't be good in another set of skills. I hear this fallacy all the time from both adults and children:

"I'm good at math but I'm terrible with English and writing."

"I've been driving trucks all my life, how would these hands make art?"

"Music speaks to me but I'm afraid business is a galaxy away from me."

What lots of people don't realize is that when you're good at something, it simply means that you devoted a lot of time to develop that level of excellence with that specific set of skills.

Should you go out and develop skills that you don't have at the moment?

Yes! If you need a new set of skills to pursue a dream, goal or endeavor then let nothing stop you from being curious once again so that you can start learning anew.

You can make the choice to start learning. You also have the choice to forgo the learning *if* your physical resources or time do not allow you to do so. This is where life balancing comes into play: we only have a finite amount of time every day and we have to split this time between all the tasks that we need to accomplish.

Learning a new skill will definitely require time, energy and resources. Take stock of what you will need to invest in the learning of a new skill and examine your time and resources at the moment? Is the plan to learn the new skill feasible and realistic? If the answer is yes, then by all means – start learning! However, if the answer is no then we have to sit down and take a look at why you can start learning a new skill at the moment.

a. **Resources** – Resource limits such as not having enough cash for classes is definitely a hindrance to learning a new skill. **Solution:** Perhaps try finding a cheaper way of learning the skill? Either by finding less expensive classes/seminars or by learning by yourself at home? Nearly everything can be studied at home nowadays, from classical literature to global business enterprises.

b. **Time** – In order to have time for learning, you need more time *for yourself*. Make a list of your day and examine how you are spending all your hours from the moment you wake up. Is there a window that you can use for learning a new skill? If not, is there an activity within your day that you can eliminate or reschedule so you can tackle the skill-building endeavor, even if it's not every day?

The Power of Life Coaching

c. **Willingness** – The motivation to continue learning will come *first* from your wiliness to learn in the first place. I have met countless adults who say that “they don’t attend classes/seminars, they give them.” The challenge with this mindset is that it presupposes that the individual no longer needs to learn and therefore, the door to acquiring new skills shuts tight immediately. Because you can’t learn a new skill if you are not willing to learn.

Obviously, a person who wishes to learn automatically becomes a student again. To be under someone who has had experience for a long time with a particular set of skills is a privilege and not a hindrance.

There is nothing to be embarrassed about if you wish to learn something new even if you’re already in your fifties or sixties. The love of learning should never stop. There is no age limit for skills acquisition!

Now, if you feel that you’re “too old” to learn anything new, just keep in mind that learning, even if you are a little hesitant, will revolutionize your brain – literally – by allowing your neural networks to develop once again.

This the reason why people who have brains who are constantly engaged in work are generally sharper and more retentive: their brains are constantly being used and the connections in the brain are maintained and or even enhanced over time.

3. In order to thrive, you have to enjoy your strengths and successes in life. When you succeed in something, that means your creative capacities and technical skills have come together to create that success for you. Sounds great, right? The sad thing about all of this is that people often take their own strengths and capacities for granted.

Many people feel that all of the things that they can accomplish now are “bare minimums” and are “nothing to be proud about.” Consider the logic of these statements and contrast them other pervasive beliefs about “not being good enough” to achieve certain things.

What did you notice? Your analysis is as good as mine. If Person A can perform Task X better than Person B, then Person B might feel that Person A is a better individual altogether. However, Person B doesn’t know that Person A fares poorly with Task Y, which is something that simply comes naturally to Person B.

The subjective differences in the way we see the world in general and other people misleads us into a false competition with other people when we should really be just focused on making ourselves better. This is the strongest message I can muster when

The Power of Life Coaching

it comes to developing your strengths as a person: do not fall into the trap of thinking that you are competing with others, because they are most definitely not competing with you directly.

Instead, think of what you can do now and find out what other skills you need to add to the roster to become even more successful. Once these new skills have been identified, you can then move on to dedicating time and resources to learn these new skills.

In the end, these new skills will become *new strengths, too*. Imagine yourself being able to grow and build your strengths simply by *choosing to do so*. Now that's the kind of personal power that will make people super in a short amount of time, don't you think?

4. Let's talk about setbacks again and how they relate to your strengths. We already know that setbacks are a natural part of the process of personal growth and thriving. In fact, the paradigm that I'd like all my readers to use is focused on projecting setbacks not as a form of personal failure per se, but as *feedback*.

Setbacks should be seen merely as negative feedback that requires your attention. Address them objectively and keep moving forward. There is no need for you to feel bad about setbacks because they happen even to the most skilled of individuals. Just think of NASA and all of the rockets that they weren't able to launch because the contraptions couldn't even get off the ground! Imagine: there are literally thousands of scientists working at NASA and yet, they still have setbacks as large as those involving millions of dollars in project funds. Do they stop?

No. They continue the process of re-evaluating *what went wrong* and they begin anew. Eventually, they do succeed – and NASA has had countless victories under its belt for decades now. Many of those scientific victories wouldn't have been possible if they didn't experience setbacks in the first place – because there wouldn't have been opportunities for important corrections and recalibrations.

So the next time that you don't succeed in something, do not give yourself a hard time. Acknowledge the setback and find out what went wrong. Learn and adapt quickly so you don't lose steam. Do not *dwell* on the fact that there was a setback. Instead, focus on the nature of the setback itself, take it apart and conquer what went wrong. Onward to success!

5. Another challenge that people encounter with regards to their individual strengths is they don't know exactly how they are faring. Each person is unique and has her own

The Power of Life Coaching

sets of skills and strengths. However, in terms of *performance* you may need someone to take a look at what you're doing so you can have another viewpoint on your actual capacities.

Now, it is imperative that we look at this exercise from an objective point of view, too. We must seek other people's feedback, but not so much that we would begin to depend on them wholly for *validation* of our performance.

There must be self-awareness *first* before anything else. You must be aware of what you are capable of and how you're doing and any feedback would only be secondary to what you already know. Simply keep an open mind and use whatever feedback you receive to improve your overall performance.

6. And finally, another massive blockade to developing your full potential and strengths is the belief that you shouldn't be celebrate or be proud of your capacities. To acknowledge and to be proud of one's achievements and capacities is never a bad thing. There is nothing negative about it – unless you make a conscious effort to make *other* people feel bad that they can't do it themselves. That's the fine line between celebrating your strengths and blowing your own trumpet.

Too often, we think of ourselves in relation to what other people think of us. We become too hung up on public perception that we forget that at the end of the day, all of the people who are passing judgment on us do not contribute directly to our efforts. They're merely projecting their own insecurities upon us by stating the negatives in order to make themselves feel better/superior.

Instead of always thinking of what other people might think, focus instead on your current needs and what you need to do to accomplish your goals. Don't hold back on learning and acquiring new skills. Let the naysayers do their thing while you continue doing yours.

The Core System

It's not every day that we have to take a look at our beliefs and values. That's simply how they work: we have them, we don't think of them and for the most part, we don't mind having them.

As we've discussed before, one of the more substantial drives that guide our behavior is *resource conservation*. This tendency is tied integrally with how we act when faced with challenges and obstacles: we become wary of risk and we often choose not to act if taking action means the dissolution of any kind of resource at our disposal.

Why are we like this?

Humans behave like this because of the instinctual *scarcity mindset* that prioritizes resource conservation over anything else. The scarcity mindset is a throwback to our species' days as primitive dwellers, hunters and gatherers.

Thousands of years ago, when humans had to live off the land and deal with hostile creatures, we didn't have a choice: resources were limited (definitely) and to waste resources is spell death for oneself and family unit.

Eventually, the small human family unit expanded to include extended families and other families. The human community was born. Upon the birth of the human community came the instinctual readiness to commune with others socially and politically. Clans were born and soon enough, larger forms of human organization followed. Indeed, our civilization's antidote to scarcity was to band together with others. There is safety in numbers.

What should we do about the scarcity mindset?

Like other core beliefs, the scarcity mindset will always be there. But that doesn't mean that it will rule your days and nights as an individual who wishes to move forward in life. You can have the scarcity mindset and still be able to move forward with your goals in life.

The biggest hurdle to overcome when it comes to this mindset is the unwillingness to invest time, effort and resources to *new things*. Take for example a person who longs to learn how to make paintings, but has always been wary in taking art classes. This person thinks constantly of additional expenses like art supplies and the time she will need to learn and practice her new skills.

The Power of Life Coaching

Instead of seeing these resource expenditures as necessary, logical and good, she sees them as unnecessary and frivolous, even if she has the talent and passion for art. What happens is that her undertaking is hampered purely by the fear of expending resources and the end-result is nothing *but* resource conservation.

Big question: did the resource conservation actually help the person attain her goal, which is to learn how to make art? Obviously, the answer is no because you cannot take action without spending some amount of resources. One must deal with this irrational fear of losing resources if you want to begin succeeding in life. As for resource conservation, you can still be savvy with your time and resources without necessarily sacrificing your desires, goals and dreams in life.

The Truth About Beliefs

The beliefs that you hold *now* are a result of a lifetime of learning, unlearning and experiences. Some beliefs are reliable, logical and useful. Others *seem* reliable and logical, but in reality, aren't very useful. We have beliefs of both classes because we need to maintain a semblance of stability and control over our reality. A new belief is usually formed by the mind to explain a particular state of reality, in relation to the person who is thinking.

The big challenge about beliefs is they don't have to be logical in order to be considered allowable or usable beliefs by the mind. In fact, many of our beliefs are irrational and based purely on conjecture and not on rigorous testing and logical examination. We *also* do not engage in rigorous self-reflection constantly because there is a deeply-rooted fear that we would have to make changes and as you already know, humans in general do *not* like the idea of change at all.

Why do we have odd beliefs?

Let me define 'odd belief' as a belief that is so strange because it appears rootless and yet, we continue to believe it despite the fact that it doesn't make much sense. Some odd beliefs are merely superstition ("a black cat brings bad luck") while others are based on selective memory ("the toast always lands butter side down"). Beliefs are what they are: bits and pieces of information (or non-information) that we hold dear because we believe they are true.

Beliefs may *seem* harmless, but in reality, they can be the most powerful (or destructive) elements of the human mind. There are countless instances in history where people who held certain beliefs ended up causing chaos on a large scale. What's

The Power of Life Coaching

unfortunate is even after the test of time, some people still believe these destructive beliefs and even help in propagating them, which deepens the cultural damage to society.

Beliefs are extremely powerful because they can provide the *sole resource* needed for a person to pursue a singular line of thinking and way of life. That is why it is so important for a person to know what her beliefs really are. Once strongly held beliefs are **identified**, they must then be **examined** to find out why one has such beliefs.

In the real of personal development, **limiting beliefs** are a class of beliefs that are held as most harmful to individuals who wish to improve and thrive. A limiting belief, as the name implies, are beliefs that prevent a person from pursuing activities or endeavors because of imagined weaknesses or obstacles. Whether the obstacle is real or not is irrelevant. What is important in this context is that there is a belief that paralyzes a person from taking further action.

Limiting beliefs are also almost always negative in nature and can be summed up in a couple of words:

“I can’t do it.”

This is the be all and all of all limiting beliefs. These beliefs stop you dead on your tracks but offers little or no explanation why you can’t keep moving forward. And because we’re dealing with something that is already a *belief*, we do not usually question why we believe so because the belief is already part of your mental and emotional schema.

Examining Your Beliefs for the First Time

Life coaching wouldn’t work if important beliefs are not identified in the first place. Luckily, these beliefs can easily be surfaced through a simple process of self-examination. The following guide questions will help you identify your beliefs.

1. How do you see yourself as a person/professional/parent/etc.?
2. How can you describe the world that you live in?
3. What particular aspects of your world can you control or change?
4. What aspects of your reality would you consider immovable or fixed?
5. Who are the people who can help you the most at the moment?
6. Who are the people who offer little or no aid to you?
7. What aspects of yourself do you like best?
8. What aspects of yourself do you think needs a little or a lot of improvement?

The Power of Life Coaching

9. Do you have any beliefs that cannot or will not change regardless of what you learn or is explained to you?
10. What are your biggest assets as a person?
11. What things or experiences causes fear, anxiety or sadness?
12. How do you view other people in general? What are their traits?
13. When faced with setbacks in life, what do you believe in?
14. What do you think is the best recourse when something doesn't work out, despite adequate planning?
15. How do you see your future at the moment? What is unfolding?
16. How do you handle the past?
17. How mindful are you of the present?
18. What immediately comes to mind when someone tells you that you can't do something?
19. Do you believe in luck? Why or why not?
20. How do you deal with stressors in life?

Self-examination of beliefs is essential for your mental and emotional well-being in the present and in the long-term. Why? Because many of the challenges that we encounter in life are caused by faulty beliefs that clash with our genuine desires in life. Yes, it is possible for a long-standing belief to actually contradict what you want to happen in life. One would think that old beliefs would be “there for you” because they've been serving you faithfully for years.

What many don't know is that beliefs are only comfortable to have and hold *if* the current schema of your life conforms to the old life mold. Once the old life mold is broken and you become dissatisfied with it, old beliefs become chains that prevent you from moving adequately.

What's the next step?

After listing down individual beliefs and your observations about how you perceive and process the world, the next step is to find out which of your beliefs are truly useful and which ones *aren't*. The following exercise will help you accomplish this:

1. First write down an important goal that you are working on at the moment. An important goal can be big or small. Scale doesn't really matter as long as the goal strikes several chords and you feel that your life is going to be better once you accomplish it.
2. Next, write down five to ten beliefs you have that revolve around the goal. Don't think too much at this point. Let your beliefs float to the surface of your mind and

The Power of Life Coaching

just write them down. Pass no judgment on what you write.

3. After writing down the beliefs concerning your goal, make two columns on your journal. Title one column with “Can” and the other one with “Can’t.”

4. Categorize the beliefs you have written down. Beliefs that allow you to pursue the goal should be put underneath “Can.” The ones that impede or prevent should be placed under “Can’t.”

5. Analyze the placement of each belief and take apart each belief. Does the belief have a logical basis? Does it refer to sensible or realistic premise?

The process of belief examination can be extended to beliefs in other areas of your life. Whether they are about romance or making business decisions, it doesn't matter: your beliefs can be categorized into either negative or positive beliefs. Of course, we want to focus on positive beliefs but some positive beliefs are also irrational. This is why it is still necessary to examine *each belief* within the current matrix to test their soundness.

What do you do with unsound beliefs?

There's nothing else to do with unsound beliefs but to discard them, bit by bit, until you are able to form new beliefs as you encounter new experiences. For the most part, beliefs either prevent or allow you to do things. Negative beliefs (i.e. limiting beliefs) prevent people from taking risks and blazing new grounds for growth and personal development. Remove the limiting beliefs and you will be able to try, for the first time, if your goals and desires are worth having or pursuing.

You will never really know unless you give them a try, remember that. We can only conjecture so much about how things will turn out but in the end, it's putting your ideas into practice that will give you the right set of experiences and knowledge. As for risk, we all experience risk even in the smallest things that we do. Risk is an inherent thing and therefore, it doesn't make sense to hold back from pursuing a passion or grand idea just because there are risks involved.

Why do we stubbornly hold on to negative beliefs?

Believe it or not, people don't let go of limiting beliefs or negative beliefs in general because there are *payoffs* involved. It sounds a bit off the rocker, but it's true. The

The Power of Life Coaching

human mind is constantly turned toward rewards/benefits/payoffs. Everything and anything about the human mind is centered on *gains*, however twisted or illogical. Let's examine a couple of common beliefs and their extrapolated payoffs.

"I don't want to pursue my passions."

Payoff: *I don't have to risk anything by staying right here where I am.*

"I don't want to lose weight."

Payoff: *I won't have to spend on a gym membership, personal trainer and non-junk food/ non-processed food.*

"A career change is not for me."

Payoff: *I will remain unhappy with my current career, but at least I won't have to look for another job and my cash flow won't be affected.*

"I need to stay in my unhappy marriage."

Payoff: *I feel unhappy but I'm afraid that I won't be as stable if I'm on my own.*

"I can't stop smoking."

Payoff: *I've been smoking for so long that I can't live without nicotine. Plus, I don't think I can be stable without cigarettes, even if I can't breathe right nowadays.*

You can't compete with payoffs of negative beliefs directly. You can't just discard or disregard a negative belief without dealing with the payoffs. Once the payoffs are identified, it's imperative that you provide *yourself* with new beliefs and *even better payoffs* to change your perspective on things.

A really simple way to demolish limiting beliefs is by changing the very language in which they are expressed. Through simple deletions and substitutions, limiting beliefs can be turned on their heads and transformed completely. Here are some examples:

"I can't do it" becomes "I can do it"

"My art skills suck" becomes "My art skills are a work in progress"

"I can't drive well" becomes "I can drive like everyone else"

"I can't start a business" becomes "I can start a successful business"

The Power of Life Coaching

“I can’t swim” becomes “I can swim”

The important thing here is that you are able to turn a negative, hampering belief into a positive, enabling one. That’s all there is to it. The moment you change a belief statement into something more positive, you’re bound to make headway into your endeavors.

Let’s Talk About Values

Values are things that matter to you. But unlike beliefs, values are tied integrally to needs. Each person has a different set of needs, depending on what the person grew up with and what she sees in her world particularly. The concepts of reality and world are extremely subjective. In the case of personal growth and self-improvement ‘world’ refers to the specific external variables that a person has to work with. Reality is a Janus-faced concept, too. It is both enabling and limiting. Since resources are inherently limited, reality can be limiting. However, creation remains possible and thus, reality is also enabling and empowering.

Why are values important?

It is essential to look at our values because they affect how we form *beliefs*. The hierarchy of the human core system can be summed up in the following linear chain:

Values → Beliefs → Behavior

Values *precede* beliefs because they form the groundwork based on a person’s perceived needs. Every person has different needs. A person’s needs are dependent on her social background, upbringing, education, profession/career and day to day life. A central component in a person’s day to day life is her lifestyle. A person’s lifestyle encompasses *everything* from a person’s family life all the way down to her professional life outside the home. Therefore, there is a close and inextricable link between lifestyle *and* values.

Another reason why values are so important is that they are the easiest source of motivation to do things. Our values motivate us more than our beliefs because they’re closer to the core of our instincts: they touch upon the survival, longevity, happiness, contentment, etc.

The Power of Life Coaching

Mapping the Road of Values

Since no two people are brought up exactly alike (even twins living in the same home would have marked differences growing up), it's necessary to create an actual mapping of values in order to fully understand what motivates a person to think and act. There is no universal roadmap for values – each map has to be drawn up carefully by the person who wants to know herself better.

There are two general classes of needs that come into play every single day: emotional needs and higher needs. Emotional needs are tied with our personal lives – our relationship with our loved ones, our romantic bindings, how we relate to people professionally, etc. Since we feel emotions no matter what we are up to, we can say that this class of needs is permeating and all-encompassing, too. This means you really *cannot* ignore or deny your emotions because they have a huge impact on how you think and behave.

There is definitely no such thing as “working without emotions.” You can pretend that you don't have any emotions while doing something, but at the same time, you know for a fact that you still do, no matter how much you deny your emotions.

What do emotional needs look like?

Here are some examples of essential emotional needs:

- To feel secure in one's surroundings.
- To experience pleasure.
- To enjoy different kinds of comfort.
- To feel one's importance in a social unit or social units.
- To gain new skills, experiences and build memories

Now, you may have noticed that a person's emotional needs are tied integrally with one's way of life and how one functions in society, too. Emotional needs aren't just about emotions specifically – rather, they refer to states and needs that have a direct impact on a person's emotional wellbeing. The human mind almost always has a clear idea of what it means to have secure surroundings, stable relationships, a comfortable life, etc.

In addition to emotional needs, people also have what we call *higher needs*. Higher needs are those needs that satisfy not just the person herself but also *other people*. Needs that have something to do with contributing something to others (or even the world at large) are good examples of higher needs. Here are some examples so you

The Power of Life Coaching

can have a clearer perspective of what higher needs are:

- To be able to reach out to people with learning disabilities and share with them your expertise as a teacher.
- To help those in less fortunate or less wealthy nations.
- To create businesses that are environmentally sound and as much as possible, ethical to both the planet and people who work in it.

As you can see, these needs don't necessarily contribute directly to the self *but* that doesn't mean that they aren't genuine needs. Higher needs contribute to the emotional, mental and even spiritual wellbeing of a person by providing purpose and direction. Additionally, higher needs often empower *others* and this naturally makes people feel good about themselves! Nothing beats the feeling of being able to uplift others through one's actions.

Life Coaching Questions

Life coaching wouldn't be as effective if the life coach didn't know how to ask the right questions. *Life questions*, as I'd like to call them, centers not just on the idea of opening a conversation between the subject and the life coach, but also exploration of the *self*, which is difficult enough in today's fast-paced atmosphere.

When a life coach asks a question, she's not just reaching out to the subject – she's opening an avenue for discussion and quite possibly, she is also allowing the subject to meditate on the possibility for change.

Remember our discussion on change at the beginning of the book? Change is something that we avoid because it disturbs our equilibrium. However, change is also inherent in nature and it exists primarily not to cause chaos but to make dynamic growth possible for all.

A person's life reflects the dynamism of nature itself: there is a need for constant change and growth. Lack of change causes stasis and malaise and people who are unable to bring themselves to make the right changes in their lives often end up feeling inadequate and incredibly unhappy.

If questions allow people to think of change, then what kinds of questions are best for life coaching? How do we go about formulating these life-changing questions, too?

I. Did You Hesitate?

Hesitation is an instinctual feeling that one shouldn't be doing something because of a possible negative impact on oneself. Hesitation is *not* equivalent to a limiting belief or misconstrued value in life. Instead, hesitation is a state wherein the mind is trying to communicate something to you, but is unable to form a clear picture immediately.

If the subject hesitated doing something that matters to her in the past, the life coach must delve into that hesitation to find out what's really going on. The question structure would follow this linear trend:

- *How does it feel like when you're hesitating?*
- *What do you feel when you hesitate?*
- *What thoughts run through your mind when you hesitate?*
- *What particular emotions boost the thoughts in your mind?*
- *How does your mind work when you're hesitating?*

The Power of Life Coaching

- *What do you think the hesitation really means?*
- *What aspects of your past do you think contributed to the present hesitation?*
- *How clear or foggy is your mind when you hesitate?*
- *What do you think is necessary to make your mind clearer and more responsive during times of hesitation?*
- *What factors or variables do you think are also causing the hesitation? What can you do about these variables?*
- *What is the nature of the goal and why do you think you're hesitating?*

When a life coach delves into the root cause of hesitation, she paves the way for the resolution of *surrounding issues*, which can greatly improve a person's ability to make concrete and substantial decisions. Before any potent action can be done, the subject first needs to be able to make firm decisions. You cannot make firm decisions if you're constantly hesitant. Another challenge with hesitation is that it often brings a host of negative emotions that can also affect a person's decision-making capacity.

II. Types of Life Questions

There are five classes of life questions that you need to be aware of if you want to make headway as a life coach: *open questions, probing questions, clarifying questions, closed questions* and *reflective questions*.

Let's take a look at how these questions differ from one another and what particular functions they play in the broad scheme of life coaching.

1. **Open questions** – Open questions are simply questions that aim to explore a person's current conditions in life. A good open question should can be broad or specific, but must be presented in a way that doesn't pass any overt judgments on the subject. A life coach must not maneuver a subject to think about himself negatively in *any way*, even if the life coach thinks that she will be able to teach a vital lesson if she does so.

While challenging, it is imperative that a life coach maintain a high level of positivity in the interactions and she should make sure that the subject does not 'bring home' any kind of negativity from the coaching sessions. That last thing that we want to happen is for a subject to dwell on a negativity so much that all other positive gains during the previous coaching sessions are erased.

2. **Probing questions** – Probing questions tend to be highly specific and they are

The Power of Life Coaching

used most often when the subject is dodging the main issue that is the central focus of the coaching session. Probing questions should be cast gently, lest the subject feel that the life coach is delving too deeply into the subject's personal life.

The proper framing of questions is of paramount importance. Here are some examples of probing questions that are cast in a way that won't make the subject defensive or resistant:

"I'm really interested in your idea of becoming wealthy through a chain of small websites. Can you tell me more about how this would work?"

"You said that you felt hurt by all of the people who didn't believe in what you did for a living. How do you feel now that you are surfacing from the hurt and you feel more empowered to pursue your old dreams?"

"Your physician recently told you that you needed to have more control over what you eat. You also told me that you are an emotional eater. Can you tell me about the steps you're taking to tone down the emotional eating?"

Rephrasing is an important aspect of a chain of statements that carry a probing question. To rephrase is to essentially let the subject know that you have been listening and that you are interested in knowing more about what she is thinking, as opposed to the idea of just feeding more and more information as the life coach. Viewed from this perspective, it's easy to see that a life coach plays the role of a facilitator more than anything. What a life coach facilitates is the reorganization of the subject's thoughts and emotions so she can move forward in life.

3. Clarifying questions – A life coach may use a clarifying question when the subject's feedback is too vague, general or it tries to dodge the original question. Clarifying questions are easy to formulate: simply ask the subject to repeat what she said until the real facts start to come out.

The presence of vague statements during a coaching session means the subject has *inner resistance* to what is being offered in the coaching session. What's interesting about inner resistance is that it doesn't make itself apparent and you have to keep asking the right questions to encourage the subject to be more straightforward with you.

4. Closed questions – Closed questions are answerable by either a yes or no. This type of questions can be used to clinch a point or to limit the scope of the conversation if the topics seem to be winding out of control.

The Power of Life Coaching

Used closed questions only when you have elicited sufficient feedback from your subject, as closed questions can be severely limiting and they do not offer an open avenue for additional discussion because the subject either negates or affirms these questions only.

5. Reflective questions – When the subject needs to contemplate a path of change or the variables that have brought upon her current state in life, we turn to reflective questions. As the name suggests, this class of questions encourages a person to meditate on specific aspects or points. The questions are guided, but they remain open to both negative and positive feedback, which is healthy for coaching sessions.

Here are some examples of reflective questions:

- *What aspect or aspects of the current endeavor make you uncomfortable?*
- *How do you perceive yourself when you begin taking on this endeavor?*
- *What kinds of emotions would you feel when you finally succeed?*
- *What variables or factors are preventing you from taking action?*
- *What particular benefits or advantages would the current endeavor bring you?*
- *How do you feel about succeeding in your current undertaking?*
- *What kinds of goals are you setting right now?*
- *What aspect of your current undertaking do you like least/best?*
- *How would you know that you have finally succeeded in your goal?*

Life Coaching Redefined

To many people, life coaching sounds strange because it sounds like you're about to hand over the reins of your life to someone else. Don't we all believe that we are the masters of our lives?

And yet, this is a massive misconception about life coaching in general. Being a life coach isn't about grabbing the reins of someone else's life. It isn't even about directly making plans and preparations for other people. What life coaching can contribute to people is a solid groundwork for accomplishing different kinds of endeavors.

The human capacity to learn, adapt and thrive is boundless. The challenge is that many people don't seem to understand that they shouldn't be hampered by things like: other people's perceptions, old beliefs, values, etc. Once these unnecessary obstructions are removed from the equation, the possibility of doing and *succeeding* is magnified a hundredfold. A life coach can help a person get into that particular state of mind where old emotional and intellectual baggage are no longer a burden, and the subject is focused on what needs to be done to make things happen.

Do you want to become a life coach?

If you have the heart and passion to help other people (and this is the only requirement), then you're ready to become a life coach. A powerful new path beckons to you and the truly amazing thing about this is that you will be able to help not just yourself (by having a new career) but others who wish to gain satisfaction and happiness in their lives, too.

A life coach doesn't need to be rocket scientist smart in order to make great strides in helping other people achieve their goals. As evidence by all of the things that we've discussed in this book, life coaching is all about facilitating and opening up avenues for exploration. It's something that many people can't do by themselves, but become possible once an agent (that's you) enters the picture.

For the most part, you would be utilizing the natural resourcefulness of the subject herself and you will see your subject bloom as you continue with your coaching sessions. You will also learn more about yourself as you hear about other's people struggles and successes in life. Nothing could be more enlightening and intellect-building than being accorded the privilege of hearing how other people are managing obstacles in their lives. The more you practice life coaching, the better you will be in helping others.

The Power of Life Coaching

Helping others is really the core of life coaching. It's never about glitz and glamor: it's about reaching out, dealing with thought processes, stabilizing emotions and leading people to mental states that are most beneficial to them. Through stimulating discussions alone you will be able to aid in the resolution of life issues that have bothered your subjects for years. If that's not amazing, I don't know what is.

So don't hold back: do you feel that it's time to become a professional life coach?

Hopefully this book has inspired you to dive into the wonderful world of life coaching. I encourage you to begin your journey!