



Why would you see a Life Coach

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Twenty years ago life coaching was almost unheard of. Today most people have heard of the term even if they don't know what a life coach does. People are recommended by friends and colleagues to see a life coach. I have even had referrals from doctors. But, do you really need to see a life coach? Let's talk about life coaching.

Firstly, who would benefit from seeing a life coach.

1. If your life feels like a mess, you feel like you are going nowhere in life, or you feel stuck, then a life coach will help you get clear on what you want for your life and show you how to go about achieving the life you want.
2. If you have problems in specific areas of your life then you can see a life coach for that particular life area. For example: career, relationships, finances, health, mental wellbeing, emotions, behaviours, habits, etc. Your coach will help you understand what is wrong, work out with you how you want that life area to be, and help you achieve the end result you want.
3. You can even see a life coach if you feel your life is actually all right, but you know you have more potential and you want to be more and do more. Life coaching is similar to sports coaching in that it is about making you excellent in that area. A swimming coach will help you improve bad habits and wrong strokes and guide you to be the best swimmer you can be. A life coach will help you do life better. So, even if you think your life is okay, you can still learn, through life coaching, how to do life very well. Life coaching will help everyone realise more of their potential.
4. Life coaching is for the healthy and unhealthy. Physically and mentally. If you have major physical or mental illnesses then you also need a doctor to care for you, however, life coaching helps you deal with any illnesses and build good life habits so you manage and master your situation.

What does a life coach do?

I am going to talk about what I do because other life coaches may do things a bit differently.

1. When you see me for the first time, if you have a specific issue you want help with, for example interview coaching, or public speaking coaching, or coaching on asking for a promotion or salary increase, often one session is all that is needed and the coaching session

will focus on giving you the tools and techniques to address the issue you want help with as well get you to practice the important actions to take so you do meet your objective.

2. If you have more than one specific issue to deal with and more than one coaching session is needed, then typically the first session is about understanding what is not going right in your life. I will ask you questions about all areas of your life to help you verbalise what you don't like about your life. Essentially, in the beginning we work on understanding what is not going well for you and then look at the future in terms of how you want it to be.
3. The first session and perhaps some part of the second session is typically also about using the information obtained on what is not working in your life and how you want your life to be different, to define objectives and goals for the coaching.
4. Then the bulk of the coaching which follows is about showing you how to achieve these goals and objectives. It is not usually just a general discussion. So, the part about getting clear on what you want from coaching is important. I will help you get to where you want to be. It must be what you want to have in your life though. We cannot start working on the plan to achieve your goals if you don't know what your goals are.
5. Once we have goals / objectives outlined and clearly understood, we (mostly I) put together a plan to achieve exactly those goals / objectives. This means learning new tools and techniques, it means improving self-awareness, it means gaining skills and taking actions. I coach you through this.
6. And then the coaching process continues following the plan to ensure you achieve your goals, with changes to the plan as needed. Achieving your objectives/goals can mean including other professionals such as medical, financial and legal experts and I have used many of those and referred clients to them.
7. Although there is structure in the coaching process it is not rigid. So, goals can be changed and other issues can be brought up as needed.
8. An important part of coaching someone to achieve their goals is understanding, as the process unfolds, where they are self-sabotaging. Coaching is not just about helping you achieve your goals, it is about understanding why you have not achieved them on your own yet. What thoughts, emotions, habits, and actions have stopped you from being successful to date. Usually when we start to uncover these, we realise that these have been obstacles in other parts of our lives as well. Coaching can be full of "ah-ha's" when you realise how you act is not always how you think you act.

That is pretty much a general view of how I go about coaching. We start with understanding what is not going right and what you want to change. We define the future you want and create goals and objectives for coaching. These goals and objectives can be around emotions (for example reducing anxiety, stress, depression) and behaviour (being more focused, productive, changing habits, etc.) as well as goals around careers, finances, health, and relationships. Then we work a plan to get you there. The strategies, tools, methods, actions, etc, that I use come from many fields – all types of coaching, all forms of psychotherapy, business, education, and peak performance psychology. I use whatever works best for the person you are, the way you learn, and the objectives you want to attain. No one will ever have the same coaching programme. It is very much customised for you.

We also look at how many sessions you are looking at and what you can afford and work the plan around that. Some coaches have a fixed number of sessions they require you to attend, however, I don't have that. There are actions to take and tools to practice using in between sessions. This is very important in order to rewire new ways in which you want to think, feel, and behave.

I am often asked by new clients what to prepare for a coaching session. You don't have to prepare anything. About 18 years ago I attended a talk by someone who was both a psychotherapist and coach from the USA. In his view you need two things for coaching. 1) show up. 2) deal with what shows up. I work like that. You don't need to be anyone or prepare or be a certain way. Come as you are, and we will deal with whatever we need to, so we can get things to start working out for you.