



Every great athlete has a coach; shouldn't every great life?

Life Coaching 101: Are You Ready for a Life Coach?

What is coaching?

In the 1500s the word *coach* described a horse-drawn vehicle - a stage coach that would get people from where they were to where they wanted to be. Today coaches are people who help athletes, musicians, public speakers, business owners and actors, to improve their skills, discover their unique design, overcome obstacles, remain focused, and get to where they want to be.

Athletic coaching and Life coaching are not necessarily the same, though. Athletic coaching is often very directive, and rightly so, especially when an athlete is first learning the sport. Personal development coaching, on the other hand, is helping people to change without telling them what to do. Most models of helping people, whether counseling, mentoring, consulting, advising, teaching or training, rely on an expert giving advice to a person. Coaching doesn't depend upon advice as much as it does on discovery. People change when they understand, value and apply what you help them to discover, not what you tell them to do. So, in coaching, we want people to take full responsibility for how and where they want to change. The person being coached chooses the coaching focus, goals and action steps they would like to take to get from where they are to where God wants them to be.

More and more people are seeing the need for a life coach in their journey. Christian life coaching is the art and practice of guiding a person or group through a process of inquiry and discovery, from where they are to the new territory where God wants them to be.

How can coaching help you reach your goals?

Coaches stimulate better skills. Good coaching helps people anticipate what they could become, overcome self-defeating habits or insecurities, manage relationships, develop new competencies and build effective ways to keep improving.

Coaches stimulate vision. Coaches work with individuals and organizations (including churches) as they think beyond the present, get a clearer vision of the future, plan how to get there and then hold them accountable to their action plans.

Coaches help people grow through life's transitions. Whenever we encounter major changes in our lives--like a new job, promotion, a move, the death of a loved one, the launch of a new career, or retirement--we face uncertainty and the need to readjust. Experienced coaches enable people to rediscover their identity, clarify their values, reassess their life goals, refine their visions, create life mission statements, develop strategies and action plans and help them work through obstacles. Life coaches are cheer-leaders for your life.

Coaches help people discover God's work in their lives. Many believers understand the basics of what they believe but they would like to spend focused time with somebody who can help them identify barriers to growth, hear what God is saying, and provide support, encouragement and accountability to help them grow in Christ.

What Can You Expect in a Christian Coaching Relationship?

Client-centered and goal directed

Life Coaching is a relationship that is client-centered and goal-directed. Every coaching situation is unique because we begin by exploring the issues that the client wants to change. The client chooses the goals, strategies and action steps that they believe will help them move forward in their life.

Life assessment

If there is a need for better awareness of where the client is at present we can explore the use of assessment tools to enable the client to learn more about themselves.

Vision oriented

Where are you going? Life Coaching empowers the client to formulate life-vision and life-mission statements. Coaches might ask, for example: "Considering your gifts, abilities, driving passions, and unique personality, what is your vision?" It takes time to answer a question like that, but without a clear vision, people tend to drift with no direction. I can help you set goals, plan strategies to reach those goals and encourage you along the way to complete your goals.

Overcoming obstacles

When obstacles get in the way, coaches listen deeply, challenge, encourage, and offer an accountability structure so the client can get past the obstacles and experience a higher level of fulfillment in their life. A coach can help the person being coached to gain a new perspective, and give support as the client moves forward. A coach listens to your concerns and asks questions that lead to greater clarity on your situation, get you past your own fears, help you realize your potential, and challenge you to be your best.

Are You Ready for a Life Coach?

Look at the statements below and answer T or F or fill in the blank. Which areas did you struggle with? Life coaching will help you find fulfillment in all of these areas, but it's up to you. Are you ready for a life coach?

1	I know who I am and what I love to do. T or F
2	I have had a persistent longing all my life to:
3	Lately I have been feeling bored, restless and sometimes stuck. T or F
4	I know what my legacy will be. T or F
5	I am happy with my career choice. I am in my dream job. T or F
6	I have a positive attitude about my future. T or F
7	I understand how my life experiences (including suffering, pain and joy) have helped to shape me into the person I was meant to be. T or F
8	I know what my unique purpose is and I have a strong desire to live out my calling in life. T or F
9	I am prepared to invest the time, energy and finances to live the life I was meant to live. T or F
10	The biggest obstacles hindering me from entering into a life coaching process are:

- ✓ If you answered any of statements 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, FALSE, you may benefit from meeting with a life coach.
- ✓ If you have difficulty completing # 2, it may indicate that you have some obstacles that are blocking your big dreams. Or, if you answered it with a great deal of clarity, are you acting on your dreams?
- ✓ If you answered # 3 as TRUE, that is often an indicator that life coaching would be beneficial.
- ✓ If you answered # 9 as FALSE, then you may not be ready yet for a life coaching relationship.
- ✓ If you don't have any insurmountable obstacles in # 10 then what are you waiting for?