

CAN
COACHING
REALLY
CHANGE
MY
LIFE ?

by Felica Linch



Can Coaching really Change my life.

Written by Felicia Linch

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Thanks for signing up to my blog.

I wanted to give you this free e-book that can help you to decide if coaching is right for you and give you practical hints on how you could coach yourself also.

Many people wonder if coaching is simply the latest fad, or if it can live up to the claims that it can “Change your Life”.

Read on and see what you think, and don’t forget to join the conversation on our blog.

Change my life...really!

Many people are skeptical about coaching as major claims have been made about how coaching will change your life! That’s a big promise for sure and needs to be treated with caution.

Healthy skepticism concerning coaching is good, you should question whether coaching can really help you, because it’s a big investment and you are ‘putting yourself out there’ **BUT coaching IS NOT counselling or Psycho-therapy or even mentoring.**

Much of the skepticism comes from coaching being perceived as the same as counselling and psycho-therapy, which it’s not. The table below shows the differences between coaching and other forms of support:

Define	Differentiate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Counseling</i> – hurting people, looks to the past 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaching – Healthy People, forward looking
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Psycho-therapy</i> -the treatment of mental disorder by psychological rather than medical mean 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaching – is not treatment and so the coach is not a psychologist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentoring – expert, teaching you 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaching – Not in the role of an expert, provides perspective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Consulting</i> – advisor, knows the right answers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaching – Not an advisor knows the right questions to ask

So now you know what coaching is and is not what about that promise to change my life?

Well coaching puts you in the driving seat, you determine your goals, you determine what actions you take and you determine whether change happens or not. So can it change your life? Yes, to the extent that you want to make that change.

Coaching will provide you support, encouragement and accountability to make the changes.

What do you do in a coaching meeting, what does it look like in practice?

Firstly, I recommend you start by having an introductory meeting to see if we are a fit. No two coaches are alike, even if they use the same methodology, you need to be sure that the coach you will work with is someone whose style you can appreciate.

A great way to look at the ingredients in the coaching process is the acronym C.L.E.A.R.- coaching provides C.L.E.A.R. perspective:

C – Curiosity - Ask powerful questions, suspend judgments, don't make assumptions (seek first to understand);

L – Listening - Listen to the client, with both head & heart;

E – Encouragement - Encouragement means empowering people to solve their own problems and supporting them as they take action;

A – Action – Help client's take action through setting goals and providing accountability;

R – Reflection – Prompt the client to look back and identify lessons learned, what could be done differently to achieve a more desirable outcome.

Whilst the above gives you a sense of what goes into the cake mix of coaching it doesn't tell you the order or how to make the cake. I wanted to give you a glimpse into how coaching works, beyond the case studies that you can read on our Kitch Consulting and Coaching website. So, I wrote a series called "Physician heal thy self". It's essentially me coaching me so you get to see how the process works, and could even replicate the process for yourself.

Once you've had a read if this interests you then **text me or What's App me on: +1 649 347 4420 and let's see how I might be able to help.**

Enjoy!

Goal setting – Part 1

As a certified coach I am used to helping others set and achieve goals.

I try and practice what I preach, so I do set goals for myself and work through personal strategies and action plans to achieve them. However, there is one goal that has eluded me and that's making exercise a lifestyle. As I tweeted this morning, I have nutrition down pat, but the exercise thing....well here goes.

Coach: You have talked about the exercise thing for a while now, it is something that is high on your agenda?

Me: Yes, like my clients I can always find good reasons as to why this hasn't come to fruition, e.g. I've had some health challenges and just don't have the energy (knowing full well when I exercise I have increased energy), I have deadlines to meet and so they must be the priority for now...etc BUT I'm not convinced! Whilst all these reasons, well let's call a spade a spade as my hubby says – excuses, may be true, it's got to be something more as it's the one goal I repeatedly start and cannot achieve.

Coach: So what exactly is, or has been the goal?

Me: Typically to lose weight and feel better and to make exercise a lifestyle.

Coach: Is that just one goal?

Me: Point taken I guess it's several goals. I have I had achievements... I can be motivated to lose the weight or follow a programme. What I find is that I revert to type, even after doing a programme for the minimum amount of time it requires to make it a habit, which is about 6 weeks but I never reach the embedding stage. I keep being derailed, or rather allowing myself to be derailed.

Coach: Do you think the goal may be part of what's de-railing you, not being specific enough?

Me: Maybe, the real goal is not a target weight, but more to make exercise a Lifestyle.

Coach: so what does that look like?

Me: Exercising 2 times per week but being active everyday, most days I just sit at a computer and do't move.

Coach: O.K. so articulate that as a SMART goal.

Me: Within 6 months to have established the habbit of being active everyday and exercising at least 2 times a week for 20 mins.

Coach: Is that realistic for you?

Me: yes, I can manage two times a week for 30 mins, I can do things at home, I'm not a big gym person.

Coach: What does being active everyday look like?

Me: I think it's doing about 10,000 plus steps; I'm going to get a tracker.

Coach: OK. So you have your goal – what will your action be for next week?

Me: I know I have to build up slowly so I'm going to buy the tracker and work on the 10,000 steps and then the next week start the exercise.

Coach: Great, see you next week.

Key Points

- Really drill down and see what the real goal is
- Articulate the Goal as a SMART Goal (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-framed)
- Think about what your constraints are to achieving it
- Determine your action step

Making Progress – Part 2

O.K. so I sat down and thought through how I'd coach a client and what my personal responses, as a client, would be...so here it is:

Coach: So how was your week?

Me: Good, I got over my 10,000 steps everyday

Coach: Great. So remind me of your goal again?

Me: To make exercise a lifestyle, i.e. doing 10,000 steps everyday and eventually working out about 2 times per week for 20 mins.

Coach: Have you ever done that consistently?

Me: Yes, at various periods in my life. I was an exercise fanatic at one point and worked out every day?

Coach: So what changed?

Me: I got an auto-immune illness and found I had less energy and even after recovering I never went back to exercising.

Coach: Why?

Me: May have been because that was a social thing and I moved/changed friends and it fizzled out.

Coach: Have you had any success more recently?

Me: yes, several times

Coach: Tell me about those times?

Me: Usually a crisis...meaning just can't stand not fitting into my clothes, need to address a pressing health issue.

Coach: Does crisis motivate you?

Me: LoL... Does it ever. I'm results focused so I tend to set goals in a crisis and get on with it!

Coach – Well you have a goal so the obvious question, not wanting to assume, is what's missing?

Me: The crisis!!! I suppose when I really start feeling unwell, or not fitting my clothes I'd get motivated again.

Coach: O.K. so how can you sustain motivation once the crisis is averted?

Me: Good question. O.K. As a coach I know that **Support, Encouragement and Accountability (S.E.A.)** play a key role in that.

Coach: Do you think when you said previously that you were an 'exercise fanatic' but that was more social, that it was providing S.E.A.?

Me: Yes, now I think about it. I love to exercise with a partner...just not my husband...LoL. Though to be fair that has worked in the past depending on the exercise.

Coach: O.K so what can you do to build S.E.A.?

Me: I need to find an exercise partner.

Coach: Any other ideas?

Me: Yes, the tracker is actually working. Because I'm goal oriented I like to make the goals and hear the beep and I'm competitive so am now competing against my husband. It's not the same as having an exercise partner, but I can get an accountability partner who I give permission to call me on whether I made my weekly target, but one who will also check in on me to encourage me.

Coach: O.K. so could an action step for next week be to find either an exercise partner, or an accountability partner?

Me: Yes

Coach: How likely on a scale of 1-5, 5 being the highest, are you likely to do this?

Me: Assuming I don't get swamped with project work about 2 for the exercise.

Coach: O.K. when you say get swamped with work do you mean a crisis?

Me: Yes

Coach: How likely, if it's possible to predict, is a work crisis?

Me: Actually, not very likely as nothing pressing and am practicing letting my clients know they can't over-run or delay and then expect me to jump when they are then ready!

Coach: So then this is a realistic action step?

Me: The bigger issue is taking time to think of a partner who can go the distance with me and lives nearby. Did it once with a girlfriend by phone and it worked for a bit, but not the same. But, the Tracker really is working for me and competing with my hubby so if I simply have to get an accountability partner, someone who will check in on me, don't need to be doing the exercise with me – that's more likely, on a scale of 1-5 it's about 4

Coach: So what are you going to do?

Me: The Accountability partner of course.

Coach: Great, so let's talk next week.

Key Points

- Check your Progress?
- What helped/hindered it?
- What can you change to increase your success?

Accountability – Did that really help? Part 3

Coach: so how was the week?

Me: Good

Coach: What were your high points and low points?

Me: Low points were trying to wrap up some projects that have been hanging over me for a while. In particular one where I had a difficult client and the project seems never ending and the team is frustrated.

High Points: I walked the dogs almost every day with my husband and had forgotten just how much I enjoyed that time with him and them....and I got my steps way over the 10,000. I also got back on my bike and rode twice this week so definitely got my exercise in.

Coach: So what made the difference with the exercise this week?

Me: Well I asked my hubby to be my accountability and exercise partner. He's great at getting up to go on the bike. What worked well this week was that although he didn't go with me when there as any hint of me saying I'll go he encouraged me by pumping up my bike and walking to the door with me.

In fact this morning as he was tired he said I'm not even riding but I feel like I'm in this with you. I said that's the point 😊

I think the other thing that happened is related to the low points in my week?

Coach: How so?

Me: As I said I'm very goal and results oriented. This week, just with the healthy eating I've adopted I actually started to see results so that was motivating. But also, I realised much of my frustration is coming from being too goal oriented. What came to mind "Godliness with contentment is great gain"

I realised that this isn't about relentlessly fulfilling purpose or a calling so if I don't achieve my goals in the time I set, or ever, does that mean my life has no value? Of course not because the journey and the transformation in me, rather than the manifestation on the outside of me is what really counts and that can occur even if you don't achieve the goal.

It kind of made me much more relaxed and to think about my 'healthy lifestyle' more holistically. Placing exercise within the context of enjoying life, being present in the moment. So walking the dogs becomes spending time with family (yes my dogs are family), riding my bike becomes an opportunity to appreciate the beautiful country I live in – as I ride I can see over the ridge and see the sea it's an awesome view.

Coach: That's quite a discovery you've had. If I said what was the principle you learned – in just one sentence – what would it be.

Me: I'd say learning to enjoy where I am at on the way to where I am going.

Coach: How can you ensure you remember this lesson?

Me: I journal so I captured my thoughts.

Coach: Would it be useful to capture your one sentence principle for future reference?

Me: Actually, that's a good idea.

Coach: O.K. so what are your thoughts for next week?

Me: Given I want to make the exercise part of enjoying my life I think I need to come up with a list of activities, things I can do, both alone and with others that get me the exercise but that I enjoy.

Coach: O.K. Do you want to look at the project that was your low point?

Me: Maybe

Coach: Has this impacted you achieving your goal of a healthy lifestyle?

Me: Yes, it has as it took much time and effort and sucked my motivation for other things.

Coach: So do you want to evaluate the project for next week. Consider - What worked well and what didn't work well and what you could have done differently.

Me: O.K. I can do that, it needs to be done so I don't have this happen again in the future, for me and the team. Actually, on a personal level placing it in a larger context, than work, and more in the context of how the project impacted the life I want to lean is likely to lead to different conclusions about what I could have done differently...like not allowing the client to 'manage or monopolise' my time.

Coach: So till next week

Me: Yep...Bye

Key Action Points

- Examine your high and low points?
- Identify anything impacting you achieving your goal?
- What can you do to maintain your progress ?

Are challenges really learning opportunities? Part 4

Coach: So what's happening in your world?

Me: Lots!!!

Coach: Want to share?

Me: Not right now, am processing and want to stay focused on what we discussed last week.

Coach: O.K. so today you want to discuss your evaluation of the difficult project you mentioned?

Me: Yep

Coach: O.K. so what is your goal today?

Me: I want to articulate 3 learnings and what I would do differently regards each going forward

Coach: Have you had sufficient time to consider – what happened so you can now examine the learnings?

Me: I think so...had to write a report on it for the client!

Coach: So perhaps start there. What were your top 3 challenges?

Me: (i) Managing expectations, (ii) Project Management issues and (iii) Compromise

Coach: How so?

Me: O.K. in terms of managing expectations I was told they were a difficult client. In fact from the inception meeting it was clear they did not have a clear grasp of roles - I mean their role as client and my role as consultant; this was magnified by their highly academic orientation. They treated the reports like a dissertation not a consulting report! My learning is that client's don't always know what the role of the consultant is, especially as I may not work quite like many other consultants in the region, I take more of a coaching approach. It's led to me having a better understanding of my own, and my company's strengths and how that is of benefit to the client, I guess our USP.

Project Management – The problems started from the outset with the contract. There were a number of clauses that should never have stood, like payment on approval instead of submission. Also, I offered to do some value added things and this should not have been included on the contract as it immediately extended the scope of the assignment without a negotiation concerning additional time or fees. What I learned, and has probably been staring me in the face all along is that whilst I am a competent project manager it is not what I enjoy doing.

Coach: When you say it's been 'staring you in the face all along what do you mean?

Me: Well I use a number of psychometric tools but my favourite one is the motivational gifts tool. This tool shows individuals their 'gift mix'. I believe we all have more potential and competencies than we are often led to believe. The issue is we may not be motivated to exercise each gift to the same extent. So for example when I look at my career I have always been thought to have project management/administrative skills and always ended up, even in my voluntary work taking on that role. It often stressed me, which is no surprise because my

gift mix profile shows that the competencies I am most highly motivated in are teaching and big picture thinking/intuition and then encouraging and administration comes about 4 and the score is much lower than my top motivational gifts!

Coach: That is significant. How do you feel having come to this?

Me: Relieved. I have been successful in the project manager role, so it's not an issue of capability, it's an issue of motivation. I want to do what motivates and energises me. Otherwise the impact is negative, especially because as my business has grown I am managing multiple projects and no wonder I was getting burned out – also I don't really have the detail orientation hence the issues with the contract.

Coach: That's interesting as you were a lawyer?

Me: Yes, again it's a motivational thing. I can do detail if I have to but people who know me well would recognise I much prefer the big picture stuff. I'm results driven so I will do what needs to be done to get the result ...so I can suffer the detail if I have to.... It makes sense to me - why I just felt continually burned out as a paper-practice lawyer, whereas I loved being an advocate!

Coach: O.K. so what about the last challenge you mentioned – Compromise?

Me: I believe in partnering with my clients and so that means an element of compromise, because whilst I may be the expert no-one should know the client's business better than them. In this case that wasn't so. In any event when the client started to try and use my work to validate their own views I needed to say much earlier that I would not allow that. Instead, I allowed their requests for tweaks and additions to the point that the report did not have any clear authorship, or certainly didn't feel like it was authored by me, and so did not reflect my professional independent opinion. At that point I put my foot down but I should have managed that better from the early....I guess it was all a part of my not managing expectations.

Coach: So what would you do differently?

In terms of managing expectations I would clearly state what the roles and expectations are for both the client from KCL, and KCL from the client and place this in a schedule in the contract

Regards project management - I want to focus on the technical lead role so I now collaborate with a project manager who manages all KCL projects. We work well together and I can see how

she excels in this whereas I was just competent. This arrangement has really reduced my stress levels enormously.

Me: The last thing ...lost my train of thought what was it again?

Coach: Compromise

Me: yes, it really is about the management of expectations – but also about stating from early when compromise starts to impact...well basically my integrity, that I feel unable to continue. I'm prepared to wear the financial loss to maintain my professional integrity as that's important to me. In any event, if I make that stand early enough it reduces the potential loss, whereas in this instance I made it when the financial loss would have been huge for me...but it was a lesson I won't forget!

Coach: O.K. so when will you make these changes...I know you have started.

Me: Yes I have. So the project management piece is addressed. Regards managing expectations the project manager is helping me but I will work with her to add what the client can expect from KCL and what KCL expects from the client.

Coach: By when?

Me: By the end of July 2014.

Coach: What about the issue of compromise?

Me: The more I think about it that's really a part of the managing expectations and addressing issues early. I have already found in other projects that the project manager has helped me to spot those issues earlier and to address them so we need to continue that.

Coach: What specifically did the project manager do to help you spot issues early?

Me: I guess we have regular de-briefs, not just with me but the team and discuss challenges and then place those challenges in writing with the client. I guess going forward I would also re-state expectations that were contractually agreed in case of a problem as those will be in the contract going forward.

Coach: Great – so did you achieve your goal for this appointment?

Me: yes, surprisingly...not J

Coach: O.K. so...Oh, how are you doing with the exercise?

Me: Actually, doing great. I'm maintaining my 10,000 steps and I'm now also doing a 30 min cycle ride 2 times per week.

Coach: How long has that been now, about 3 weeks? O.K. so any strategies for keeping you motivated so you can embed this as a habit?

Me: The accountability partner is helping and I think that should do it. Plus I'm finally seeing the benefits in-terms of improvement in my health....and weight loss so that's encouraging....we'll see.

Coach: O.K. so you let me know what's next

Me: Will have to think about that for when next we meet.

Coach: O.K. no problem, remember it's you that sets the agenda.

Me: O.K. Bye

Key Points

- What have you learnt through the process?
- Are those learnings applicable to other areas of your life?
- How will you stay motivated?