

## First Steps Self-coaching Guide

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First, I need to clarify this title. It implies that "self-coaching" is somehow different from just "coaching". In actuality it is not. ALL coaching is SELF coaching. There is no other way to do it. Like eating or drinking, no one can do this *for you*.

There is also no shortcut.

It is about becoming more consciously aware of yourself, and your life at this point in time.

And for full disclosure, and a strong recommendation: To do this properly and for the most effectiveness, will require a degree and commitment to self-management, and self-discipline that may challenge many people.

But as I wrote there are no shortcuts, besides the support you can ask for, and a real willingness to listen to your heart and inner voice, rather than your mind, or ego.

So understand that any significant issue (for you), that you do not address or confront now, may come back again, even more intensely, as you journey to true self conscious awareness.

### **First steps: Self-discovery phase**

I normally ask clients to focus on these areas first:

- Beliefs
- Values

- Fears
- Worries
- Judgments

**Beliefs** - This is consciously asking yourself why you believe what you believe, and if it still serves or benefits you at this point in your life.

Our beliefs are usually the key ingredient for the majority of our decisions and choices - personal, and professional. They also can, through habits or routines, become so integral to our thinking, and responses, that we do not consciously consider that they might need to be changed or to allow for more flexibility.

For this exercise, you must allow yourself the opportunity to question yourself, and be brutally honest with yourself.

Remember, if you are concerned about looking at a particular belief too closely, then that may lead to other questions.

This exercise might be approached by paying attention whenever you make a choice or decision, or comment, even small ones, throughout your daily life. ( When I first did this, I would literally stop on the street, sometimes in shock, when I realized what belief system was actually behind some life choices I was reviewing.)

It is said that up to 95 percent of our life is based on automatic, or learned responses we have adopted over time. And once learned and adopted it can be difficult to change them significantly, or over time, even notice that we have them.

This is why for the self-coaching process, they are an important area for self-discovery.

This exercise is only for you. It is private. Take this opportunity to honestly and openly explore yourself at this point in your life, and see what your belief system is, and you may be surprised at what you discover.

It should also be understood that there is no "right" answer. Life is not often black or white, the shades of gray in between usually dominate.

For example: This is a real life example. One of my clients from the corporate world is confronted with the "belief" that professional competency is equal to professional profile.

More specifically, although he is regarded as being very good at his job as head of a key department. His superiors are *encouraging* him to have more visibility. The connection for him is not readily apparent. And so you the have the potential for a conflict, which overall could lead to a lose-lose situation, based on a set of certain beliefs.

The question becomes where do these sets of beliefs come from, and what is their benefit?

You are being asked to focus awareness on any part of your life where your beliefs might not be in congruence with who you are, or want to be, at this point in your life.

**Values** - Values are considered the fundamental elements, or principles of how we view life. They are much stronger than beliefs, which you can more easily change, whereas values speak to "who you are".

The objective here is to become consciously aware of what they are for you, and if perhaps, they are not quite as solid as you may believe.

For example, honoring life is a basic value, personal integrity or accountability are values. They do not easily change based on circumstances.

For example, if you consider yourself to be an "honest" person, and by some chance were in a position to be offered a "bribe", would you take it?

And if for instance your superior asks you to "optimize" the sales numbers so that he, you and fellow employees would exceed the "target", and receive bonuses?

If you are asked to complete a job, or task either professionally or personally, how seriously do you take your commitment? Is your "word", or promise a personal guarantee? Would it offend you to be accused of not "keeping your promises"? Or if someone called you a "liar", or a "cheater"?

If you have strong personal values in this area, not being seen as upholding these values, (unless the accuser is themselves unethical) would affect you, because they would not agree with "how you see yourself", or how you want others to see you.

Values are not just beliefs, they are the very principles that you try to live by, and as such, are even more important for any decisions, or choices you make.

Religious values are another. But separating religious values from religious beliefs may prove very necessary, albeit, challenging for some people.

An example: Broadly speaking, most major religious institutions accept the idea, in theory, that we are all (equally) the “Creators children”, having the same source. That is a generally shared value.

However, it is clearly apparent from the history of religious wars, and various disputes, and differences in ideology, that beliefs among religions vary widely.

And yet, it is very probable that some adherents to a particular religion, who accept in whole or part the ideology of a religion, consider them not “beliefs”, but rather the “values” that they must live by.

Even while many of the ideological beliefs are in direct contradiction of the “shared value” of unity (coming from the same source) under the Creator.

Consciously considering these types of “dilemma’s” should be expected, and are a critical part of this journey.

Again, this is not necessarily about changing anything at this point, it is just becoming more consciously aware of what they are for you, and how

they may influence, positively or negatively, the choices, decisions, and life that you currently lead.

**Fears** - Fears are seemingly a part of our everyday existence. We often feel powerless at certain parts, and in certain situations in our lives. When these times occur, we are confronted with the unknown, which may lead to a fearful response.

Nobody likes feeling fearful. And yet we think it is unavoidable. While this is not true, it does not change how we may feel.

And so the objective here is, as in the other aforementioned areas, to honestly consider what you are afraid of and why, and if this fear is really justified at this point in your life.

You may want to further categorize them as rational, versus irrational fears, if you can be brutally honest with yourself.

Rational fears can be considered those that actually put your life in danger. Being confronted by "life or death" circumstances. Whereas more irrational fears might be a fear of something you have no influence over, or a phobia, that could be addressed through therapy.

For example: Being afraid of being alone is not so uncommon. Depending on where you are in your life, this fear can move to the forefront of your thoughts. The feeling or emotion is one of helplessness, often mixed with confusion of "what is wrong with me?"

This is the ego view. The ego consciousness has no understanding of spirit or souls. And as such has a very limited view. From the soul's

point of view this fear of “being alone”, is irrational. A soul lives in harmony with all other expressions of the Creator, and its essence is pure unconditional love.

Unconditional love, is just what it means, without condition. If you are able to achieve this, you are free to love whomever you may choose without expectation of needing that love returned. Making you a very secure person.

That connects directly then with your own self-confidence, and self-esteem. And magically you “become” exactly the type of person that you are looking for to “complete you”.

Fear is considered one of the strongest negative emotions, because of the paralyzing, and destabilizing impact it can have in all areas of our lives, leading to periods of sadness or depression, apathy, and minor to serious health issues. As our thoughts are directly linked to our physical state.

So be specific as possible when reviewing these for yourself. Avoiding this area is both counterproductive, and unnecessary. ALL fears are able to be addressed. But they must be honestly recognized first.

**Worries** - Some might closely associate worries with fears. That is quite reasonable. We may often interchange the two words when we speak about a particular situation. But in reality they can be markedly different.

We know people may fear the unknown, which is more abstract. Whereas people are usually worried about "something" more specific. This may be losing a job, or about their child, parent, partner, etc.

The exercise again, then is to consider what and why, or who you are worried about as step one. As step two, think about how much time and energy you spend worrying about something. And step three, ask what does worrying do to change what you are worried about?

The last two steps are to consciously recognize where your attention is focused. Even if you may not believe it yet, you will come to understand that whatever you put your attention on, expands. One message about this says: "It's like telling the universe, 'Yes, more of this!!'".

So worrying is actually quite counterproductive. Obviously, thinking, and considering potential problems, issues, or such, is just practical.

But first consider what is in, or what is outside your "sphere of influence". For example: If you are worried that your family is not spending enough time together. This is "actionable", meaning, it is (or should be) within your sphere of influence, you can actually take, or suggest some action about this worry.

If, by contrast, you are worried about "the world, the country, immigrants, the economy, etc", your ability to have an actionable response may be limited. These things are not within your "sphere of influence", unless of course you have some position of authority in these areas.

With this in mind, consider if "what" you worry about, is perhaps, actually worth your time and energy. Or if perhaps it has become an addiction, habit, or pastime.

**Judgments** - Judging we like to think is just "human nature". While that may in part be true, it does not mean it has to be that way. Judging can be defined as an observation with comment. This exercise is to first, notice why, and how often you are judging something or someone, and secondly, to try and just observe without judging. Or, when you are judging, look for something positive rather than negative in everything you see.

Being consciously aware of your judgments, and how much time and energy you spend doing this, may reveal some interesting information about you, to you.

And finally with judging, ask yourself the more practical question. What changed by you judging something, rather than just observing? How do you feel, and how much energy do you spend thinking about it later?

### **First Steps Summary**

For first steps, this is all. As I will reiterate, this is a process. For many who have never considered this type of self-examination, starting slow is best. This part can also be fun (yes, o.k., for *some* people). Generally, we like to focus on ourselves, but we may not feel that we should, or have the time.

Because we all have our preferences, how you personally summarize the results from your self-discovery is your choice. However, I would suggest at a bare minimum, to record your impressions or thoughts, in as much detail as you choose, in some written form, for each of the areas.

As the title of this Guide implies, it is self-coaching, so there is no one, except you, who will review this first steps process, without your express agreement. The amount of serious effort and energy you employ is strictly your choice. You will find that "self-management", will become a significant factor in your life.

For the "first steps", I think that two weeks to one month, is about the minimum someone might take to do this in any meaningful way, if they choose to do so, typically considering life's other demands. But do not be restricted by any time frame. This is for your benefit. You can always choose what you think is best for you. The focus should be on results which allow you to move in the direction that brings you satisfaction, and personal peace.

### **What Next?**

What is next is your choice. The next step in this process is about acceptance. Accepting all that you have discovered about yourself.

As difficult as that might sound, it is only through full acceptance, do you understand that if you have created the state of your life, only you can also change it.

This can be both scary and self-empowering.

The key step for you is to decide what you want your life to look like, and to believe that you can change and create it.

Take some time to really look beyond any limitations and restrictions you feel that you have and recognize that in EVERY case, a choice has been made. Understand that choice does not mean a GOOD choice - just a choice. What you may need to seriously consider in your life, is the cost of the choices you have made. As some choices may lead to years long domino effects, which you may be experiencing now.

In general, situations themselves can be seen as neutral. How we choose to respond to them however, is within our power.

For some reading this, it may sound too simplistic. It is not meant to be “unrealistic”. The mysteries of this “reality” are deeper than you may be ready to accept or understand at this point in time.

But when you are ready, you will find that any limitations you believe you may have, can be overcome. But you must mentally prepare yourself for a paradigm shift for how you see “life”.

And if you wish to continue your journey to yourself, you will find that there are many resources, primarily via the internet that are free of charge, as well as many professional coaches, whose approach and style may be suited for you. What you choose, like yourself, is very unique and individual to your taste.

The free resources will require you to have some dedication and motivation. Whereas, more professional services are varied enough to fit a variety of needs.

In closing, this document has been provided to aid you to begin this process. I hope it has been useful, and I wish you the best of luck and success!!

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