



Illustration by John Petersen for The Partner Channel

Live Your

Best Life

✍ Diane Gasal

I wanted “something” more. I wasn’t sure what it was. I was less sure how to get it. I was tired and dreaded Monday mornings. Meanwhile, my life was so blessed I felt guilty wanting more. I seemed to have such a great job, great family, great everything...how dare I want more? But I did. I wanted “it.”

I hired a life coach, and my life is different now. I found the “it” for me. Hopefully this story will encourage you to find it, too.

While using a life coach, I chose some big changes, like switching careers. However, the way my daily life is different is the more significant change. Those improvements will be

with me regardless of my career.

For example, I used to push myself through life -- discipline was my tool of choice. If you think of the carrot and stick analogy, I used the stick most of the time. Now I leave the stick at the door and focus on the carrot. Even writing this magazine article is an example. In the past I would have fretted about it, researched it, and procrastinated until the day it was due. This time, on the day I first agreed to write the article, the article just flowed out of me. No kidding; it just flowed! What a pleasure! No procrastination! I am now attracted toward what I do rather than pushing myself to do it. And get this: it’s not just true

for my work life. For example, I’m president of my homeowners association. That used to definitely be a “chore.” Now I see how that role fits into my larger picture, and the chore has switched to something meaningful.

I’ve also learned to live from the “inside out” rather than “outside in.” (I know this might be getting a little woo-woo for some of you here, but hang in there.) I used to look to others to tell me what to do and who I am, rather than looking inside myself. That’s living from the “outside in.” I remember one time I was preparing a presentation for some executives. My manager told me to do one thing, and another manager contradicted that advice. I was confused and unmotivated. My life coach suggested I look at my values and consider how they were showing up in my presentation. That exercise completely shifted my energy, and my strength came back.

Here’s one clue to know if you are living “outside in.” Notice how many times you say “should” to yourself or others. Then consider where the “should” came from. This was an issue for me. As a result, I wasn’t true to myself. (You may have heard the phrase “I ‘should’ all over myself.” Well, that was me.) Living from the outside-in sucked the energy right out of me. Now I clearly understand who I am and my purpose. With that clarity, it is easy to stay true to myself.

My life coach asked me powerful questions that changed my thinking. She helped

engaged a life coach:

- » My life is out of balance. It seems wherever I spend my time, some other person or aspect of my life loses. I want to find the winning balance that works for me.
- » I used to love my job. Now something isn’t right. I want to find where I belong and how to get there.
- » I am in the process of a big change in my life (career, relationship, health, etc). I want support to best navigate my next chapter.
- » I have always wanted to do X (write a book, open a business, move to the country...) I never actually do it. I’m stuck and want to move forward.
- » Money is the thing I worry about. My relationship with money is out of whack. I want to change it, yet I hesitate. I want to be confident and secure around money.
- » My life is actually great right now. I can taste how good it can be. Now I want to accelerate even faster, and I’d like some support to do it.

How does coaching work? Once again, the first thing that pops to mind is that each coaching engagement is different because each person needs something different. However, here are some guidelines:

A typical coaching relationship lasts three to six months. There is usually an initial session where you define which aspects of your life you want to focus on and where you want

me notice limiting beliefs that I needed to let go. She helped me find my unique strengths and use them. I’ve always thought of myself as a positive thinker, so it surprised me to see how many things about me she saw worth celebrating that I hadn’t noticed. Her questions nudged me to continually think bigger. She did all this while always maintaining an environment of complete acceptance.

So that’s me. I now live my best life. How about you? How does your best life look? What if you could engage someone to kick it up a notch?

Is a life coach for me? People engage a coach when they want more from their life than they have today. Everyone’s story is unique. Here are some reasons people have

to be at the end. Then most clients meet weekly, usually over the phone, for sessions that last 30 or 40 minutes.

Many are surprised to hear life coaching is done on the phone. They wonder how the coach can listen well without the benefit of non-verbal communication. There ends up being plenty of non-verbal communication just through the tone of voice, the speaking pace, and so on. Little is lost without being face to face. However, there is a big gain – convenience. Most clients are busy; maybe even too busy. They love the time the phone saves in eliminating a commute. Also, this allows them to choose a coach from anywhere in the world; geography doesn’t matter. They can work with the person they click with best.

What does a life coach do during the call? Coaches ask powerful questions. They want you to gain clarity and forward your actions. Coaches will ask you questions that cause you to look deeper. They will encourage you to explore and examine your assumptions. They will reflect back at what they heard you say, since it sometimes looks different when you see your beliefs in a mirror. They will ask you what you want to do and hold you accountable to your commitments. They do all this while creating an environment that is safe and supportive.

How is a life coach different than a consultant or a therapist? Many people are familiar with consultants or psychotherapists, so it helps to understand how coaches are different. While these activities sometimes overlap, they are distinct in their focus of attention and intended results.

A consultant is usually hired because of his/her expertise in a certain area (such as marketing, manufacturing processes, etc.). A consultant gives advice. A life coach doesn’t. That is because you are the expert on your life. You are the best person to find the right answers. By asking powerful questions and using other techniques, a life coach is an expert at helping you find the right answers for you. (If you’ve ever hired someone to give you advice, and then you didn’t follow it, you will especially appreciate these techniques.)

Psychotherapist are especially helpful if you want to heal a pain or know why you do something. They often focus on understanding the past. A life coach focuses more on today and where you want to go. A coach focuses less on why you do something and more on what you want to do and how you want to be. Coaching may also go faster than therapy. Some even choose “laser coaching” where calls may be 10 minutes and get to the point quickly.

What’s next? The Partner Channel is committed to your growth. Each person attending The Partner Event-BBC in October will receive Live Your Best Life Certificate. This entitles each attendee to one free 30-minute sample session of coaching. If you are registered for The Partner Event-BBC, take advantage of this offer to experience what a coaching call is like.

Earlier in this story I told you I found “it” for me. The “it” is knowing who I am and my purpose. I am fulfilling that purpose as a life coach. You now know my story, and I’d enjoy hearing yours. What’s your story? Contact me, Diane Gasal, at dgasal@hotmail.com. (You can even contact me on Mondays...I like them now.) ✨