

Life Coaching: Is It The Right Profession For You?

Before we get into whether life coaching is the right profession for you, let's first define what coaching is, where it comes from, and why people hire coaches in the first place.

Where Does Coaching Come From?

Let's start with a bit of history. Where does coaching come from? Personal or life coaching has sprung from a handful of related yet distinct fields. These include sports, psychology, and personal development.

While some people were coaching in the 1980's and 90's, they may not have called it that. The first coach training organizations were established in the mid 80's and the first coaching association in about 1992.

Now, due to media exposure and the internet, the public is more aware than ever that life coaching exists.

What Is Coaching?

If you've looked at various sites on personal or life coaching, you've probably noticed that their definitions of coaching vary. There isn't a standard definition.

The International Coach Federation (ICF) defines coaching as:

"Coaching is partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential."

In other words, a coach supports each client to achieve their goals.

There are two main philosophies about how to 'do' coaching. The first group believes that the client has the answers so the coach just needs to ask questions and voice observations. The second group blends the above along with mentoring and consulting techniques, such as sharing steps or processes that work, to achieve the end result wanted.

What Do People Hire a Coach?

People hire coaches for a variety of reasons. Here are a few:

- To become more effective in organization and time management.
- To decrease stress and increase balance in their life.
- For support and guidance through a career transition.
- To find their passion and start living it.
- To make their life even better.
- For support in starting a business.
- and many other reasons...

They have a result they want to achieve and they know they can get there faster with the support of a coach.

You may be thinking, "I could get a friend to help me with that." The drawback is a friend may not be as truthful or blunt with you as a coach as they don't want to risk losing their friendship with you. Many professional coaches have invested time and money in coach training programs and are trained to ask powerful questions and to listen.

While talking with a friend may be cheaper than the \$200-400+ monthly fee a typical life coach charges, the latter is more likely to support you to achieve the results you're looking for.

Let's Ask Some Coaches Why They Became a Coach

I interviewed fifteen life coaches and asked each of them why they became a coach and what they love about being a coach now that they are a

coach.

Their answers to the first question, why they became a coach, can be summarized into four reasons:

- They wanted to help people.
- They wanted to make a difference in the world.
- Coaching was a calling.
- Their skills and values were a match for this profession.

Pay attention to that last answer as we'll come back to it.

Once they became coaches, most shared that they genuinely enjoy seeing their clients succeed and even get an emotional high from helping others reach their goals.

In addition, they love the freedom, flexibility and independence that self-employment (when done right) allows. They've been able to create a lifestyle that works for them.

Is Becoming a Life Coach The Only Answer?

The question is, do you need to become a life coach to help people, make a difference in the world, and create the perfect lifestyle for you?

Just think about that for a moment...

Frankly, the answer is no. If you were to ask people in other service professions - such as personal trainers, personal shoppers, virtual assistants, doctors, or web designers etc. - you would likely hear the same answers.

What Is The Solution?

It comes down to whether your values, skills, core genius, and passions match those necessary to become a great life coach.

If they do, it's a career that you will likely find fulfilling. If not, you may find yourself hopping from career to career until you find a match.

You need to take the time to 'go within' and find what career coach Barb Richards, of VisionWorkCoaching.com, calls your 'true north.' Discover your values, skills, core genius and passions. Then see if they are a match for the profession of coaching.

You can search haphazardly for the right profession or you can save time, money and frustration and do the inner work first.

Research the Profession

You may be thinking that becoming a coach is an easy way to make money. If money is your prime motive for starting any career, it'll be harder to keep going when the obstacles and challenges appear.

To really understand and get what personal coaching is all about, you need to experience coaching. How can you become a life coach if you've never experienced it?

Take into consideration that many coaches are self-employed. It can take 3-18+ months to create a profitable coaching business. If you have no marketing or business experience, you'll need to either learn these skills or hire someone with strengths in these areas.

By researching the profession and doing the inner work, you'll be able to tell if coaching is the right career choice for you. If not, your inner work will serve as the foundation from which to find the right career match.

Even if you discover that coaching isn't the career for you, learning coaching skills can be valuable. You can use these skills in all aspects of your life, both personally and professionally.

About the Author

Want to learn more about the profession of coaching? Get Chapter 1 from Sue Bond's "How to Become a Coach" ebook and the transcript from an interview with Barb Richards on career transition by visiting: [Becoming a Life Coach](#). For more on the ebook visit: www.how-to-become-a-coach.com

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