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Q CAN A LIFE COACH HELP ME GROW?

THE LIFE COACH SAYS...

A **BILL GATES PUT IT THIS WAY: “EVERYBODY** needs a coach.” That may not be the most inspiring quote you’ve ever read but it certainly makes a point, especially coming from a man who you might assume wouldn’t need a coach at all. But he’s right; we can all use the support and guidance of a professional coach to help us navigate our lives, make great choices and see things through.

The coaching profession has grown enormously in recent years and for good reason — coaching gets results. A coach can help you in many areas of your life including: Choosing and getting started on a new career; improving work relationships; working through life’s transitions; becoming a better parent; and making the job you have more satisfying. Sometimes you just feel like you’re outgrowing your life and aren’t sure what you want. We can help with that, too.

Life coach, success coach, leadership coach — different coaches frame their work in different ways. Many, like me, are in private practice working with people in all stages of life.

IS COACHING THERAPY?

No, coaching is a unique process that combines mentoring, consulting and some psychotherapy principles. Therapy usually focuses on exploring your problems and what might have caused them, guiding you towards insight and change. Coaching is action- and solution-oriented. We acknowledge the negative thoughts and repetitive patterns that get in your way but we take a strong, clear stance: You’re fully capable of living the life you want, and you have the internal resources to make that

happen. Those “saboteur” voices — let’s just move them aside and focus on how capable you are of creating the life you want. Therapy asks, “Why?”; coaching asks, “What now? What’s next?”

If you’re looking for a coach, you’ll quickly discover there’s no shortage — and of course we all have websites that talk about what coaching is and how we approach it. Good training matters; today many coaches, myself included, train through the highly regarded Coaches Training Institute. Experience, whether years of coaching or rich life and professional experience beyond coaching, makes for a coach with range and depth. Ask around; you likely know someone who’s worked with a coach, and trust your intuition. Every coach will want to have a good conversation or even a sample session with you before you commit. And remember, you’re the expert on you, not the coach; if it doesn’t feel like a fit, move on. Try another.

As for cost, you’ll find a range, with coaches charging from \$100 to roughly \$250 per 50-minute session. Insurance doesn’t generally cover coaching unless the coach is also a trained mental health professional.

You might be surprised to learn that most coaches work by phone or Skype rather than in person. Coaching is absolutely as effective by phone as it is in person, which means you can choose someone who isn’t in your area. I work both ways and have clients in California, Nova Scotia and France as well as in Toronto, my home base.

Like most coaches, I love this work. It’s exciting to be a part of someone’s self-discovery and life journey in all its richness. Regardless of your circumstances, your life is full of possibilities and you’re full of potential. To decipher what you want and put it into action — that’s pretty astounding, don’t you think? *✍*