



# WHAT IS A LIFE COACH, ANYWAY?

With Rhiannon Bush



# INTRO

“Do I need a life coach?” You’re listening to Episode 2, with Rhiannon Bush

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Welcome to the Do I need a life coach? Podcast. We’re here to discuss the ins- and outs- of the life coaching industry and give you tools to use, to see for yourself. I’m your host, Rhiannon Bush. Mother, management consultant and a passionate, certified life coach.



## **If a tree falls in the middle of the forest, and nobody is around to hear it, does it make a sound?**

Today I want to address anybody listening to this podcast who is feeling stuck, sad, overwhelmed, frustrated, confused, angry, nonchalant or any other demotivated way about their life. It may be about your life as a whole, or it may be about a particular part of your life. Unless you know firstly that there is help available, and secondly which kind of help is best for you right now, it's difficult to make an informed decision. This, in my experience, also adds to our demotivated feelings and enables us to stay where we are – it keeps you stuck. You don't end up making a decision because "ohhh I don't know" becomes a really valid excuse to stay put.

That adds on top of feeling content enough with our lives (what a horrible term to describe this one precious life we get) to stay put because it's safe and familiar. So let me start by saying you're worthy. You're worthy of having a red hot crack at this thing called life. You're worth being loved and going after what you want. You're worthy of being happy.



All humans are born hard-wired with two beliefs: One, we're unworthy and two, we're unlovable. I haven't done enough research on that to elaborate further because they're two things I don't believe are worthy my time delving into because they're completely untrue, and in times of struggle or hardship or when they chips are down, it's an easy story for us to buy into.

For some reason, our brains like to tell us these things and if we begin to buy into that and start to believe it, in my opinion it's a road to nowhere good or happy or fulfilling. Therefore, I don't go down that road and I would just ask you to check in with yourself to see if that's how you're truly feeling about yourself. Do you feel worthy of your dreams? Do you feel worthy of being unconditionally, truly loved? And do you believe you're worthy and valuable as a human being – because you are and only you can choose to believe that.



**I believe there are a lot of misconceptions floating around about what a life coach actually is and does. For someone fairly self-sufficient and ambitious, who already has a good awareness of humans – for people in high corporate environments and leadership positions, I believe life coaching can look fairly whimsical, spiritual and almost flaky.**





To other mental health professionals, there's an underlying negative bias because life coaching isn't regulated as others like psychology and counselling are. There are bodies that lend credibility and standardization to the coaching industry but for the most part, where are the lines drawn between someone who is just really compassionate and in tune with what's going on for others, versus someone with some coach training? As I've said, there are frameworks and tools and methods that life coaches are trained in that make the difference but that doesn't stop someone without training being able to help another by "coaching" them.



A man I used to work for, Graham, and I were talking recently and he said something to me, which he's said a number of times since I'd finished working with him. He said "I want to keep in touch and keep the conversations going". This is a pretty "normal" thing to say when a relationship comes to an end from whatever reason the friendship existed in the first place – in this case, I was consulting in CX, but it was the first time I realized that while it was a very energetically even conversation – I gained as much as I contributed, the reasons he wanted to continue talking to me was actually because each time we spoke, he felt clearer and better about his ambitions and what he was trying to achieve. I felt great about serving him and he felt great about me being there as a sounding board. We have a great relationship and I do ask myself just how much my coaching ability enables me to relate and assist him with complications he may be facing, and how he chooses to move forward. Honest answer is that I don't know who I was before I started coaching (remember position A) and I love being able to contribute as a friend, colleague or coach.





So what is a coach? Like actually? What is the difference between someone highly attuned to others, versus someone with formal training? When is someone actually a life coach?

Life coach tools and methodologies are tried and true, practiced and tested. They are rooted in neuroscience, psychology and years and years of incredible people's work – William Moulton-Marsden, Yacka Sappien, Carl Jung, Milton Erikson, Virginia Satir (?), Richard Bandler and John Grinder... to name a few. Then you get Jim Rohn, Tony Robbins, Eckhardt Tolle, Jack Canfield, Dr D Martini, Joe Dispenza and other incredible practitioners continue to develop this work, educate and popularize it.



Where a lot of skepticism can come into the art of life-coaching (and yes, I believe life coaching is an art form because there are things that unless your eye was trained, you wouldn't necessarily know it was art, but if you appreciate and study art, you'll recognize it when you see it. Also, it is highly subjective, and the appreciation is in the eye of the beholder, in the case of life coaching, in the fulfilling, growth experience of the client). Where a lot of skepticism can come into life-coaching is where there are unexplainable things – and I mean unexplainable by scientific standards. This is called quantum physics.



Quantum physics is still a very unknown, vaguely explained scientific phenomenon. For anyone who has read or seen 'What the Bleep Do We Know?' or looked up the Dr Quantum Double Split experiment – there is so much we still don't know or understand about energy.

Fundamentally, to explain quantum in a life coach capacity - our belief or disbelief in something changes the outcome. Not being able to explain these things leave it open to interpretation, which for people like myself who are pragmatic and like to have a deeply rooted understanding of things and why they work, leaves me to disbelieve and be skeptical.



Years ago I said to my mum one morning in the kitchen, “how did you sleep?” and she said “oh the full moon, I had a terrible night.” And I thought, what does the moon have to do with our sleep? That’s ridiculous. Then when we were at the shack fishing, my dad, who is an avid fisherman, said “we’ll have to go around the point, because the tide is pulling us this way. If the moon was over there, we’d stay here.” And I said “what does the moon have to do with that?” Dad said “the moon controls the ocean’s tides.” I studied sports science in high school and learnt that as human beings, we’re made up of 60-70% water. So you tell me, if the moon controls the ocean’s tides with gravity what not, and we’re that quantity of water, how would the moon not have some kind of influence on us?



So my way into life coaching and getting to where I am took me being in a room and experiencing the tools for myself. I'll be doing a Coaching Tools series where you'll be able to do this for yourself and get a taste of it, if you're brave enough to give it a try, and you'll piece things together for yourself as you go along.

The fundamentals of life coaching have been tried and tested, practised and refined over time. This is what makes it more robust which personally, is why I like it. The mere fact that life coaching has been around now for as long as it has been, gives it legs. I've always had a fascination with the way our minds work. I remember having to do a psych experiment in high school where we had to ask about 20 people to remember a list of words, then wait a while and recite the list. It was already proven before I witnessed it for myself, that people will remember the start and the end of the list, more easily than they will remember the middle. Why? Why is that?



When somebody describes them as a life coach, there are a few basic things I look for to qualify them. Funnily enough, it is not what you'd think around having a certificate in this, and a qualification in that. They definitely add credibility, but the first thing I look for is their ability to listen and build rapport. A coach should be able to build rapport with anybody – not just naturally or with people who are like them. The coach-client relationship is the most important ingredient in a coach-client relationship. How I feel, matters. Because how I feel is going to dictate how much I say, where I go and how the coach can hold space for me.





I was coached a few years back by a brilliant coach who had trained me in coaching, and she said before she took me on as a client, “now you’re here to be client, not coach”. What she meant, was that I needed to sit and answer questions from the perspective of my life and where I’m at now, not from the perspective of a coach looking to get additional tips and lessons. It’s a surprisingly difficult thing to do when a skill set is so closely wrapped up in general social conditioning, but it’s an important one to know. I’ve also had a coach who did more talking than questioning, and not in a meditation/hypnosis/mindful way which would have served and been for a purpose. This is not coaching. This does not aid exploration or the client’s empowerment that arises from self-discovery.



The first skill is Neuro-Linguistic Programming (commonly known as NLP) and is mandatory. Can you coach without it? Yes. Absolutely. Will you be as effective? Absolutely not. No way. I don't believe it's possible. Coaches who have NLP, even if they say they don't use it, are, in my opinion, lying. Not maliciously, but they're not being truthful. Once you learn it, you can't unlearn it and therefore you can't not use it. It should be taught in schools, it should be part of every training. It's the basics in excellence and communication as Jo Wise would say. If you're a coach, then being a Practitioner of NLP level is great, being a Master Practitioner of NLP is obviously better.



The second skill is hypnosis is also a great skill to have as a coach. I personally find that in the busy-ness of the world we live in, where we're trying to work, live, play, grow, survive, that hypnosis offers a very different perspective to our every-day thinking and being. The reason this is important, is that we get bombarded with so much noise every day – from marketing and advertising, TV, work, life, social media, that we can't help but let in a lot of noise. This means we lose how we truly feel about ourselves, our choices and the way we're navigating life – it often ends up navigated for us. Being trained in hypnosis means coaches can induce trance states and embed resourceful, client-led messaging. I was listening to one of my favourite podcasts this morning – Goal Digger and she was saying that as she's working, she often listens to spa music or meditative music and the odd line that she subconsciously hears - because she's focused on achieving what she's trying to achieve, is helpful for her to keep in the mental state she finds most effective for her. Things like “take a deep breath” and “relax your forehead” ...



We all have little quirks we've developed to cope with our thoughts, which have been driven by the environment around us. I know for myself, I clench my jaw and raise my eyebrows. My tension is also across my shoulders. Being reminded to relax and release helps blood flow differently through my body and has an impact on my overall wellbeing and therefore the thoughts and focus I'm able to have.

Other skills such as mBit, enneagram, reiki and EFT are hugely beneficial additional tools to any coaching tool kit. Anything that helps our clients get from A to B, but NLP is, for me, the fundamental difference between a coach and a non-coach because NLP is communication on steroids.



All coaches, before they have their NLP training, will receive question frameworks and other neuroscience and psychology training and basic building blocks of coaching – I'm going to cover the basic building blocks in future podcasts, but NLP really kicks it up a gear and takes good coaching, to great. No matter how naturally you were able to build rapport with the client or not, because you know how to do that to serve, as an NLP practitioner.

It's important to understand that NLP is a powerful tool and when added to hypnosis and the induction of trance states and other techniques, it is highly manipulative – and that's why people see a coach, for it to be manipulative in a way that is resourceful and aids growth, self-exploration and moving forward. A to B.



The tools are used in accordance with the ethics of the user, so do your research. It's important to remember throughout your exploration that everybody has free will. Everybody has an ability to say no and walk away. But also, as a coach, my clients come to me with the utmost trust and belief in my intention to help them. That's it. I had a fellow coach let me present to her clients on enhancing their ability to sell. It was a great opportunity and I did one-on-ones afterwards with three of them. I know I made a huge difference to those women, in one conversation. That was my intention. To listen, to serve.

Credibility is where the NLP presuppositions (also known as convenient assumptions) and bodies like the International Coach Federation (ICF) are beneficial, by providing the expectations and setting out the standards of coaching in their code of conduct. If you're wanting that extra layer of credibility, look there. There'll be links in the show notes.





Other skills coaches have will often be skills they've developed alongside or outside of their coaching qualification. This may be through development of their leadership abilities at work, their journey in relationships, their parenting, their money success, etc. Anything they've personally struggled with and have had to overcome, to then get better-than-average results. This adds to their ability to coach their clients in that particular thing and get results. Coaches will refer to this as their niche.

A therapy of some kind is a great tool also – this is because a lot of the time, a client can't move forward until they've briefly looked back. A block can often be something in the past that needs clearing, shifting or resolving. I practice Matrix Therapy and Timeline therapy, they're beautiful and had a huge impact on me when I was the client. There are other forms of therapy – Cognitive Behavioural Therapy is one of them. Coaches shouldn't stay in therapy mode for long with the one client. It's not our training and not our domain and if a client is still suffering from a lot of trauma, or unable to focus forward in their lives because of that trauma, then my recommendation is that they're referred to a counsellor, psychologist or someone qualified to assist with trauma and other forms of recovery.



The last skill I'll mention, and it's one I use with most of my clients is behavioural profiling. I'm a Level 2 Extended DISC consultant, and my qualification in this particular profiling tool made my entire world and my entire toxic team where I was working at the time, make sense. I love it as a tool and find it incredibly valuable. You may be familiar with Myers Briggs, with PRINT, with Kolbe A, Gallup Strengths, etc there are so many tools out there but I love DISC because of its simplicity. It's very easily to learn, easy to remember, and yet it's so complex that I learn more every time I do it and that it's applicable to every workplace, social network, family and society. Amazing.

The key with behavioural profiling is that it should be centred around energy investment, not pigeon-holing participants into "well you can do this but not that" and "this is you but this isn't". That's not resourceful, not helpful and let's be honest - you know who you are better than any profiling tool. The tool should enhance your ability to recognize parts of yourself, parts you like, parts you may like to address... and it should ultimately help you communicate better with yourself and others. More kindly, with more compassion and with more care.



Studying Extended DISC, I was able to place my entire team and directors onto the diamond. I was able to see exactly what was going on and shortly after, I left that organization. It was not one I wanted to be a part of and I couldn't see how it was going to be resolved. All I knew was that I spent more time talking and worrying about the beurocracy and people's wellbeing, more than on the work I needed to complete for my clients. Not my idea of fulfilling or resourceful behaviour. And that was my personal choice.

It also showed me that I've feared parts of myself. I had feared stepping into certain parts of myself because in my mind, she's a bit scary and unable to be controlled. There've been instances in the past where I've said what I was thinking without filtering. It's a very energetically balanced way to behave, until I realized the fall-out of what I said and how easily it was misinterpreted or taken out of context. And the hurt it could cause people when misinterpreted.



Extended DISC enabled me to step more into my power, aware of behavioural traits I had that worked for me but may be not for others or what I wanted along the way. It's supported my development and grew my confidence by allowing me to recognize really positive skills and attributes I have and where energetically I need to sit more often to conserve energy and avoid burn-out.

Extended DISC taught me that people who are certain behavioural types, on the balance of probability because without profiling them I wouldn't truly know, are people I need to dramatically tailor my behaviour towards to pre-empt and manage the communication exchange, and how to deal with them to get the ideal outcome.



My boss at the time was experiencing mutiny. He was our team's senior director and there was another director based in another state who was trying to take his role. There was a team in either state, all working under the one cost-centre across multi-national clients that were also based in either state. Our team had to behave as one. The senior director, Adrian, was one profile type, and the ladder-climbing director, Tom, was another. I got along with Tom really well. We're the same behavioural profile, by the way, but he was very supportive of me and senior to me but I didn't agree with what was going on. The arguing at the top, created unrest and toxicity amongst the team members. It created clicks and division and trust was broken. Nobody knew what was being said to who. It was eye-opening and very consuming. Also very time inefficient. Instead of focusing on delivering great work and collaborating to create even better work, we were distracted. Well I was anyway.



I am so grateful to have had coaching because it gave me a resourceful outlet and a way of observing what was going on from an outside perspective, and Extended DISC topped it off. As I said, I made the decision to leave.

So the skills I recommend looking for in a coach are:

- Listening and rapport
- NLP – Master Practitioner preferred
- Hypnosis
- Behavioural Profiling
- A type of therapy – Timeline, Matrix, CBT

Additional skills to really create a holistic practice can include:

- mBit
- Reiki
- EFT
- Enneagram





Utilisation of these techniques, with purpose and client-focused intention are the difference between a casual conversation to a coaching conversation.

Have a think about what will serve you. What's happening in your life? Where are you? What are you feeling on a daily basis? Are you living your life the way you'd a) imagined you would; or b) the way you'd choose to?

Start investigating parts of your life and ask yourself if it could be any better? If so, how?

I'll leave it there for now, have a beautiful week and I'll see you soon.





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# OUTRO

Hey! Before you go, I always find reviews really helpful when looking for new information or insights...

If you've found this podcast valuable, please take a minute to write a quick review about what you've found most beneficial for you, so other people can benefit from your insights, and listen in too. I would LOVE that!

Also, if there are any topics you'd like me to cover specifically about life coaching or the life coaching industry, visit [rhiannonbush.com](http://rhiannonbush.com) to contact me. Thanks for joining and I'll see you in the next episode of Do I Need A Life Coach?!





THANKS FOR LISTENING!

