

Coaching Fulfillment

Fulfillment coaching tools —Life Purpose, Captain and Crew, Saboteur — are powerful in many kinds of coaching situations. One simple approach is to have your clients take a look at their values, identify a value they'd like to honor more fully in their lives, and create homework assignments to move them in that direction. What makes this kind of coaching effective is to get the client into the experience of the value they'd like more of rather than just talk about it. What you're looking for here is — you guessed it — resonance.

Fulfillment is about who your clients are becoming, and a big part of that hinges on the action they take along the path. Let's say your clients have something they want to do (like a slice of their life vision) or something they really do need to do (like do their taxes before April 15th). And they're just not getting it done. On the "wanna do" stuff, one or more Saboteurs may be whispering or bellowing messages supporting the status quo. On the "gotta do" front, the thing may feel so flat — like such a chore — that it has no life in it at all and the very thought of it sends the client to the couch for a nap. (Believe us, the Saboteur probably has a hand in this, too.) The result in both cases is that the action is missing.

Here are some of the ways Fulfillment coaching can come into play. Let's look at the want-to piece first. You might want to approach this with your client as if it's already accomplished. "Okay client, you finished your book and a publisher accepted it... what do you have now? What values have you honored? What Saboteur voices did you have to set aside in order to accomplish this? What does your Captain have to say? The point is to get the client so grounded in the vision of what's possible and resonating with the deliciousness of what it will be like to make this happen, that the "doing" part almost becomes a foregone conclusion — how can they not?

The same basic approach applies to "gotta do" situations. Maybe the issue without zing is the scary mess in the attic or learning how to use all that software on the new computer. These typical examples — and many others — can be transformed into the means for the client to experience a more fulfilling life. Helping the client make that shift is your job, coach!

These situations don't have to be odious slogs. The question to ask is, "Client, what would have you get out of bed looking forward to working on this?" The key is to find the ways that completing this task would fulfill the client's deep-seated values. As long as it's a "should," the client is likely to seek ways to avoid it. "Should" is often a clue that the Saboteur is the gatekeeper on this. You can almost see its wagging finger — Do your taxes! Floss your teeth! Lose 15 pounds! Not to mention all the judgment lurking right behind the curtain — You're a hopeless procrastinator! What's the point of flossing when your whole family has bad teeth? You'll always be fat, so why try? Hmmm. Motivating, isn't it?

So the alternative is to look with the client into the values honored by completing the task and then find ways to keep that vision alive as the client goes to work.

Here's an example. Let's say your client loathes grocery shopping to the point where there's no food in the fridge and she's shaking the toaster for crumbs. You might ask, "What happened to your value of self care, client? If you could make grocery shopping a radical self care experience, what would it look/smell/feel like? How could you make it ten times more luxurious than that? What does your Captain have in her larder. If your cupboards and refrigerator were fully stocked, what would you have? In what way would total deliciousness support you in who you are becoming? What is a structure that will help you take this vision of delicious abundance to the supermarket with you — as soon as we hang up?" Again, the notion is to create aliveness by linking the task to the client's fulfillment.

Fulfillment coaching is much more than finding a positive spin on things. It's linking the action to the internal core, the true heart of the client that is motivated to create a rich, full life. And if it turns out that the task can't actually be linked to the clients' key values? Well, then, that might be an important clue this action item doesn't belong on the client's To-Do List after all.