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## Do You Need a Life Coach?

### How a little support — and accountability — can help you achieve your goals

You're constantly late picking up the kids from school. You're feeling frustrated at work. You can't find the time to take guitar lessons, even though it's been a dream for years. Sound familiar? Busy parents and working adults often struggle to prioritize tasks or accomplish all they want to in a day, a week and for the long term. If that rings true for you, a life coach might be just thing to help you get your life back on track.

"A life coach helps you identify your personal or career goals and then focus your efforts and attention to achieve them — many times faster than you might on your own," says Rebecca "Kiki" Weingarten, M.Sc.Ed., M.F.A., co-founder and president of Daily Life Consulting in New York City.

And perhaps most important, a life coach holds you accountable. "If you make a promise to yourself, no one is checking to see if you've kept it," Weingarten says. "If you tell your life coach your goals, you're on the record." Here's how a coach can help you in each area of your life.

#### At home

For many people, keeping a household organized — grocery shopping, doing laundry, tending the garden — means mastering time-management skills. "It can be hard to know what task to allot time for and how much time to allot," Weingarten says.

Coaching provides personalized strategies and shortcuts to organize your day and keep you on track. Or you might finally get your closets organized — and keep them that way. "A coach doesn't just solve time-management or organizational problems for you, he or she helps you identify them and teaches you how to develop solutions to prevent them from recurring," says Weingarten.

#### At work

A coach can help you navigate the tricky waters of office politics. "As a neutral sounding board, a life coach helps you remove emotion from on-the-job conflicts with co-workers or managers," says Gabriela Cora, M.D., M.B.A., president and founder of the Executive Health and Wealth Institute in Miami and corporate consultant and wellness coach.

Even a procrastination problem can be solved with a little support. "A coach can teach you to break down a big project into several smaller ones that are less overwhelming and easier to complete," Cora says. If you need help with long-term goals, coaching can help you objectively review your future employment, promotion or salary goals.

#### In your personal life

Personal life coaching, Weingarten says, is different from talking to a friend or family member. "Friends mean well and can certainly lend a supportive ear, but completing homework assigned by a life coach can break down mental barriers such as 'I can't draw', 'I can't run a mile' or 'I don't know how to sew'". A coach understands that the idea of running a mile can feel daunting for someone who's never jogged down the street. "She works with you to find creative ways to break down the 'can'ts' into a series of small triumphs and 'cans'," Weingarten says.

Of course, you need to find a coach you can connect with and trust. When interviewing potential life coach candidates, Weingarten recommends including these five questions:

- Can you provide references?
- What are your privacy and ethics policies?
- Do you offer a written agreement?
- How will we document and track progress?
- Would you be able to provide names of other coaches if we're not compatible?



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