

Bright Connections

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Life Coaching

New in British Columbia - Life Coaching for Gifted Teens and Adults. This new service is being offered by Joanna Fletcher. We asked her to explain what she does.

When I introduce myself as a life coach, the first question I usually hear is "what's a life coach?" This question can be quite challenging to answer succinctly, because coaching is a model of individual development driven entirely by the client's agenda – meaning that the actions and the results are always unique, especially when working with gifted teens and adults.

Coaching began in the executive world to support extremely successful people as they dared to challenge themselves even more. They took on the ultimate goal of becoming their whole selves and living their lives according to their most dearly held principles. As interest in coaching grew, the potential of this model among many different populations became clear.

Coaching begins with the assumption that all people are creative, resourceful, and whole - that they don't need fixing before they can live the life of their dreams (although a coach will recommend therapy or other professional help if it seems appropriate.) The coach does not provide "expertise" or advice, believing the client already has the answers for their own particular life journey. Instead, the coach and client design a relationship to assist the client in discovery and achievement of the things in life they value the most. In this safe place, the client talks about their life and their dreams. The coach and client explore possibilities, identify and brainstorm around blocks, and together build a life for the client

that is so good they can barely stand it!

Most gifted people experience a great longing to really engage with life, beyond the everyday markers of success. Actualizing this true authenticity is particularly challenging for a gifted person, whose awareness of the multiple paths not taken can block them from action. Gifted people are sensitive to messages about life from all sources, Socrates to soap operas, many of which contradict each other. They can end up living out the dreams of a respected teacher, parent, or other role model. The coach engages deeply with the client, honours their individuality, and helps each gifted person make their special contribution to the world. The coach supports the client as they learn to hear their own music and begin to sing. And the most beautiful part is when the world around them, almost magically, begins to harmonize in response.

As a gifted teenager, I longed for someone to engage me on this holistic level and help me find the life I was meant to live. My journey involved the realization that no one could tell me what would make me happy and fulfilled. I had to learn to look inside for my own answers. As a gifted adult I have found my purpose – to use my gifts to release the gifts of others – and coaching lets me express it and hang out with gifted teens and adults all the time! I'm always happy to talk (or enthuse!) about coaching and I offer free sample sessions as the process is much easier to demonstrate than describe. Please contact me for more information.

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