



TRACK 1: COACHING ESSENTIALS

STUDENT GUIDE

Lesson 5: Steps toward a Desired Destiny

Instructions

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What is a Person's Destiny?

Without a compelling sense of purpose, people lose their reason to live. Without a vision of a meaningful future, relationships become stale, conversation is empty, and every day becomes an endless grind. No matter what a person's religion or creed, we all have an instinctive sense that we were put on earth for a reason. Our task as coaches is first to uncover and live out our own destiny, and then to help those we coach find and fulfill theirs. No one can fulfill another's purpose in life;

THIS LESSON COVERS:

What is a Person's Destiny?

Essential #1 S.M.A.R.T. Goals

Essential #2 The G.R.O.W. Model

Essential #3 Goals

Essential #4 Dreams

each of us is responsible for our own. What paths we take, what roads we go, how we reach that end is all determined by our choices.

The path to a desired destiny is a sequence of opportunities—sometimes disguised as colossal problems. What we do with those—which ones we grab, which ones we pass, what we endure and where we fail—is entirely up to each of us.

The opportunities and challenges we encounter are like paths and barriers on an open field. We can take an easy path or blaze a new trail. We can halt at a barrier, jump over it, or find a new path. The obstacles, though, don't determine our destination; our choices do. In effect, we have absolute control of our choices.

Purpose and destiny are existential issues of great importance. Create an acronym to assist in defining DESTINY:

D- _____

E- _____

S- _____

T- _____

I- _____

N- _____

Y- _____

Everything can be taken from a man or a woman but one thing: the last of human freedoms to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way.

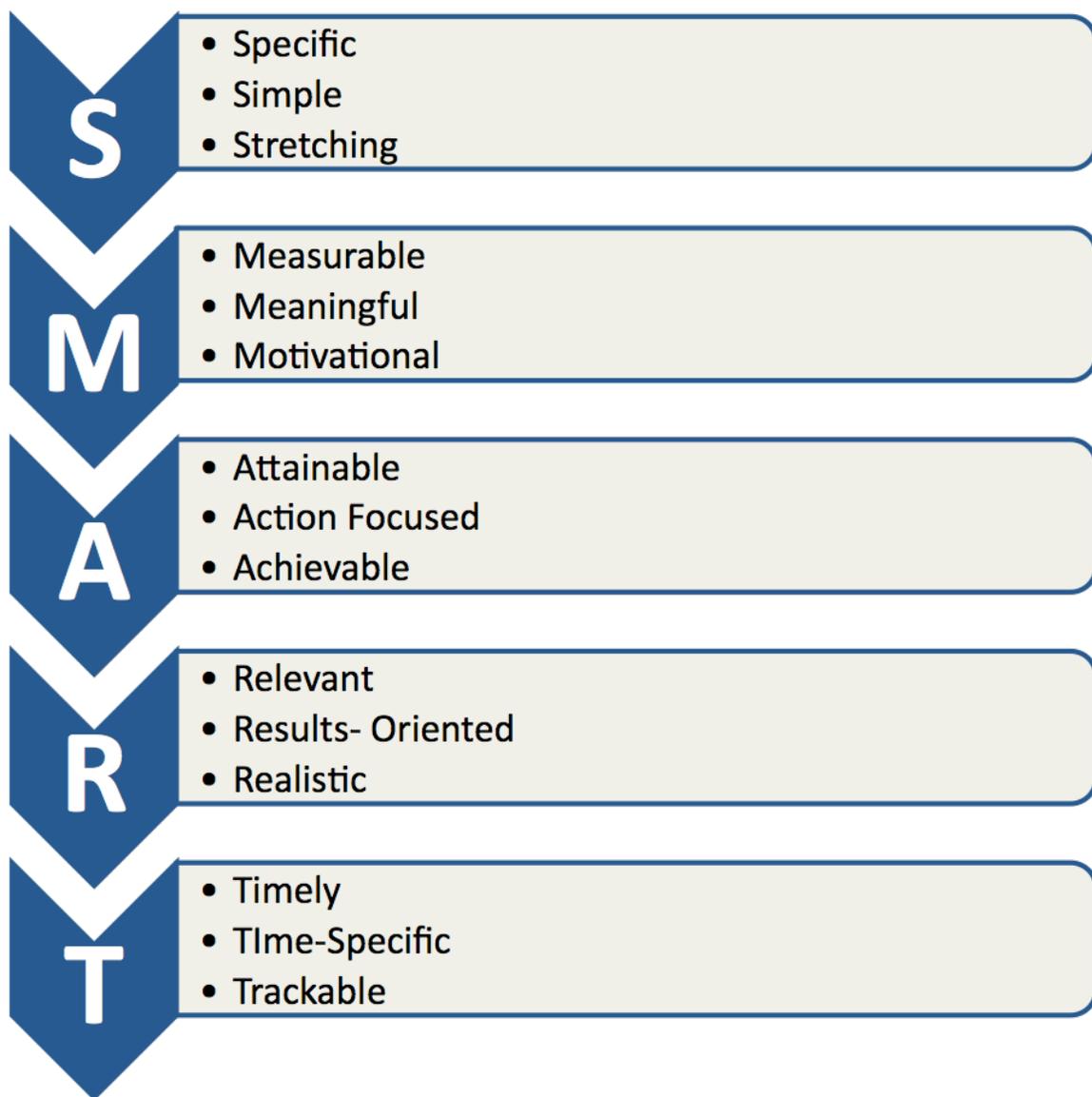
—*Victor Frankl*

Essential #1 S.M.A.R.T. Goals

In his book, *Attitude is Everything*, Paul J. Meyer describes the characteristics of S.M.A.R.T. goals. (This term first surfaced in the November 1981 issue of *Management Review* by George T. Doran.) This graphic provides descriptive words for each element of these goals.

Refuse to criticize, condemn, or complain. Instead, think and talk only about the things you really want.

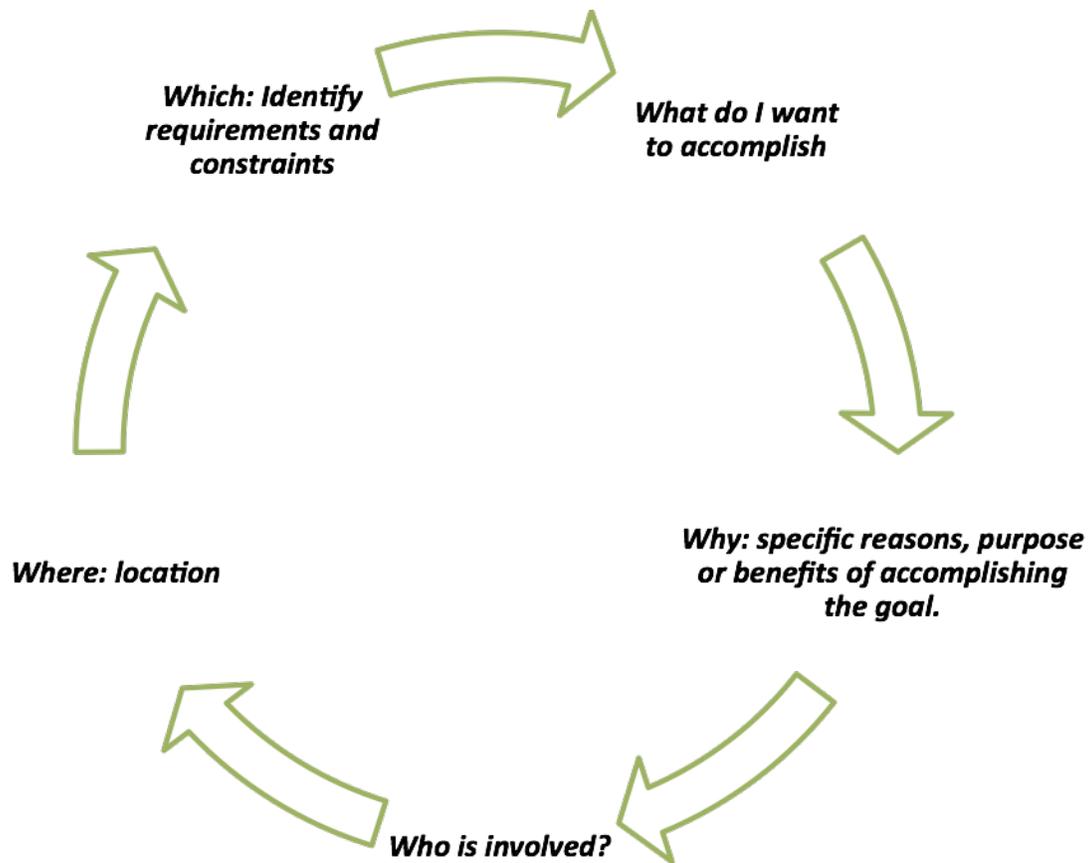
—Brian Tracy



Specific/Simple/Stretching

Goals should be specific, simple and stretching. This means the goal is clear and unambiguous, and it should stretch the person's mind and heart with a bigger vision of the future. Some people resort to clichés to avoid thinking too deeply. Specific goals allow the client to know exactly *what* is expected, *why* it is important, *who's* involved, where it is going to happen, and *which* attributes are important.

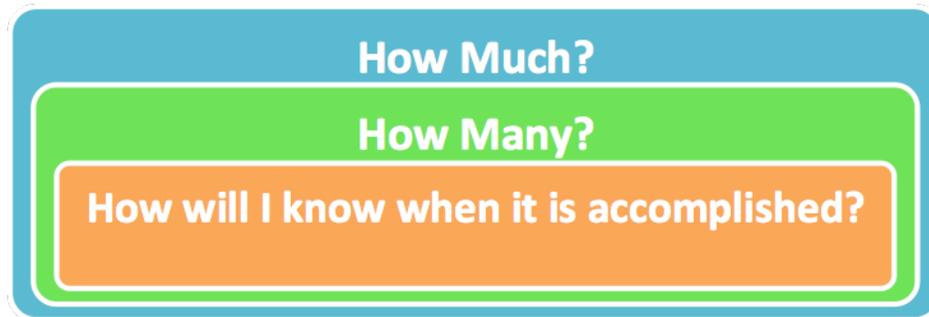
Specific Goal Questions:



Measurable / Meaningful / Motivational

The goal must be measurable, meaningful and motivational. The person setting goals needs clear criteria for measuring progress and a sound reason behind the goal. The goal should motivate the client toward genuine change. The ability to measure progress will help the client stay on track and reach target dates. A compelling meaning underpinning the goal provides the motivational fuel to reach the goal.

Measurable Goal Questions:

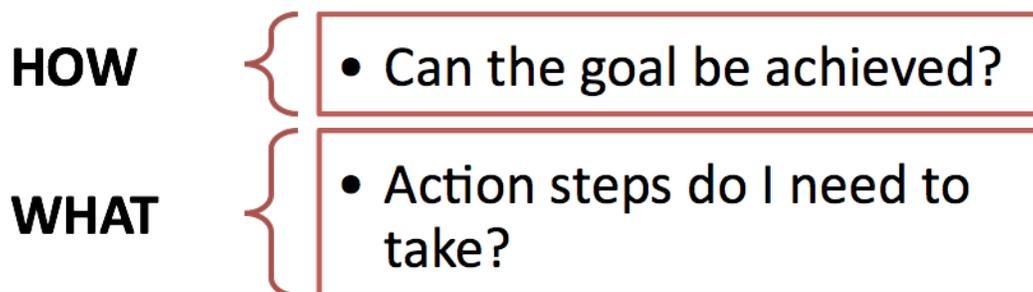


Attainable / Action Focused / Achievable

The goal should be attainable, action focused and achievable. Good goals should stretch people, but not to the breaking point. People need to see “small wins” so they stay motivated. To make progress, the goals need to focus on specific steps the person can take—not broad, general concepts.

All goals aren't of equal importance. By identifying goals that are most important to the clients, the coach can remain focused on the priorities in clients' lives. The clients, too, focus on their priorities and avoid getting distracted by secondary hopes and problems. In this way, clients develop attitudes, abilities, skills, and financial capacity to reach their goals. When one set of goals is reached, the coach and client may then identify the next goals to tackle.

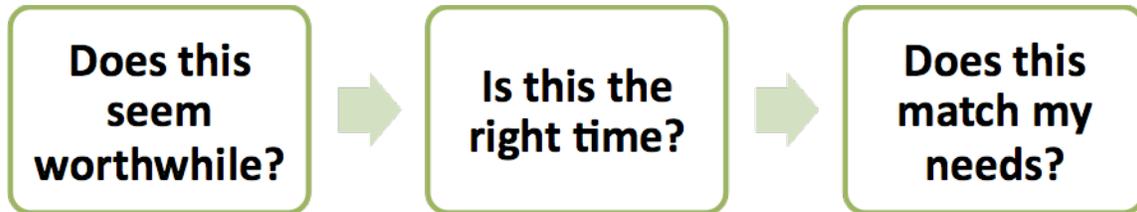
Questions to target attainable goals:



Relevant / Results-Oriented / Realistic

Goals that don't inspire or challenge quickly become irrelevant to the client. For example, a bank manager may set a goal to "make 50 peanut butter and jelly sandwiches by 2:00 pm." This goal is specific, measurable, attainable, and time-bound, but it desperately lacks relevance! Relevant goals drive the client forward by providing continued motivation.

Questions about relevance:



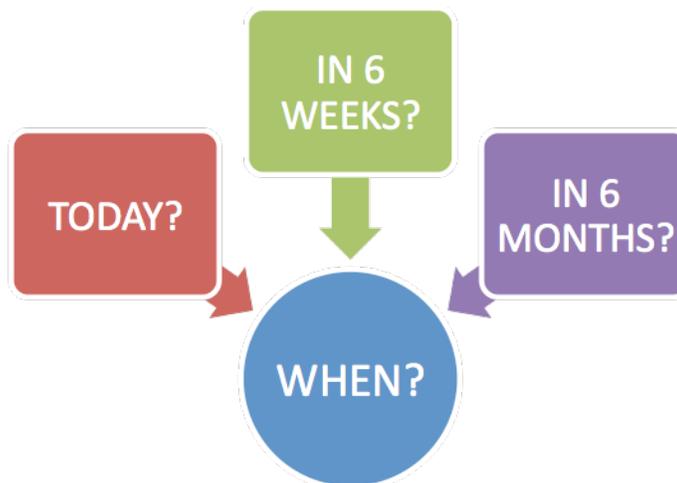
Timely / Time-Specific / Trackable

Goals must be grounded in a specific time frame. Target dates keep the client focused and enables coaches to hold them accountable. Without deadlines, other priorities can easily rearrange the client's daily list of things to do, crowding out the top goals he or she has set. A time-bound goal is intended to establish a sense of urgency.

Who does what by when?

—This is a question Sam Chand requires to be answered at the end of every agenda item.

Questions about time-specific goals:



Essential #2 The G.R.O.W. Model

The G.R.O.W. model is an acronym that was developed in the United Kingdom by Sir John Whitmore; it is frequently used as a coaching tool. GROW stands for Goals, Reality, Options, and Will.

This model enables the coach to structure effective coaching sessions. This model is powerful because it is easily understood, straightforward to apply, and very thorough. It provides a structured process for goals and challenges, breaking down an issue into its constituent parts. Once these are clear, solutions can be developed more readily.

G	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Request the client set an agenda for a coaching conversation•As coach you may wish to check the goal against the S.M.A.R.T. goal standard.•Example: "I would like to have three new alternatives to explore by the end of our time together"
R	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•This step defines the starting point such as where things are at this moment.•Ask for actual data, not impressions.•The purpose of the reality check is to be as objective as possible about the current situation.•Example: "How much do you weigh now?" or "How many times in the last week did you go to the gym?"
O	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•This is the point in the process where you begin to help the client explore possible solutions.•Most likely the client will be thinking inside the box, attempt to identify the box and stimulate the client to look at the problem from a new angle.•Simply try to get new alternatives on the table at this point•Example: What options have you considered? - What else could you try?
W	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•The course of action step•Help the client to examine the options that were generated and decide on a course of action.•Spend a little time anticipating the obstacles that might come up•Talk about what kind of support structure needs to be put in place for the change to occur.

By the end of this process, clients should be able to answer the following questions:

1. What will I do?
2. When will I do it by?
3. How will I meet the obstacles along the way?
4. Who will provide support, encouragement and/or accountability?
5. Am I committed to this course of action?

Think of a challenge in your own life, or pick one of the challenges a client is facing. Use the G.R.O.W. chart to map out a strategy.

What are your *goals*?

What is your current *reality*?

What are some viable *options*?

What specific actions *will* you commit to achieve?

Essential #3 Goals

What are goals?

A goal is an end result or achievement in which effort is directed.¹ This is how the dictionary defines a goal—it is the first step in turning dreams into reality.

The difference between a fantasy and a goal is that we don't really anticipate achieving a fantasy. Goals are concrete things. To achieve them, we take bold, clear, achievable, intentional steps.

Without a goal, we are just fantasizing about our desires, but we're not making any steps toward genuine progress. There's nothing wrong with being a dreamer. In fact, it's sad when people are too afraid to dream. But dreams have to take shape, and specific goals give them shape and substance.

How do we use goals?

Goals are the yardstick of life. We set goals to accomplish specific steps of progress, and we may need to set short-term and intermediate goals to fulfill our long-term goals. Goal setting is both art and science. We develop the skill by lots of practice. Some people are naturally gifted in establishing clear benchmarks of progress, but most people need some help to clarify the destination and the path to get there.

Getting started by setting personal goals

If you're new to goal setting, get your feet wet with a few, small, personal goals. "Small wins" will keep you motivated and provide clear direction for larger goals.

Examples of "small wins":

- » Sending out appreciation cards to people who matter to you.
- » Drinking one less can of soda a day.
- » Finally getting your credit report to see where your credit stands.
- » Making sure to tell your kids you love them at least once a day.
- » Taking your lunch instead of going to the drive-thru at least once a week.

Setting personal goals doesn't have to be a big deal. Start small; make progress. It's getting started that's important.

Setting goals that challenge and inspire

It's important for a client (or a coach) to set goals that really matter. If a goal doesn't capture our hearts, it will end up in the trash can—and pretty quickly. Solid goals should make a difference in our sense of purpose, our vision for the future, and our most important relationships.

Identify and define one solid goal.

Example: "My goal is to begin to realize my dream of _____ (name dream) by taking the first action step which is _____ (name step)."

Your definition:

List 3 short-term goals you have established:

1.

2.

3.

List 3 long-term goals you have set that will help you fulfill your destiny:

1.

2.

3.

Common problems in goal setting

1: Setting unrealistic goals

The most common mistake made in setting goals is setting the bar too high. When we expect too much from ourselves or from others, the most likely outcome will be disappointment. We need to “keep it real.”

The greater danger for most of us is not that our aim is too high and we miss it, but that it is too low and we hit it.

—*Michelangelo Buonarroti, Renaissance artist*

2: Focusing on too few areas

We need to be able to see the “big picture.” Yes, we need to focus on short-term goals, but if we have no view of where we ultimately want to go, we have little motivation to make the small goals become reality.

3: Underestimating the time it will take to accomplish a goal

Expecting too much too fast sets us up for disappointment. It’s like saying you’ll build a house from the ground up in a few weeks. You have to keep expectations realistic and make room for the unexpected.

4: Devastated by failure

Most people don’t realize that failure can be one of the most positive forces in our lives. It can motivate us to be more creative instead of causing us to give up in frustration. A famous inventor once said he didn’t fail a thousand times before he succeeded. He only found a thousand ways it didn’t work first!

5: Setting “other people’s goals” instead of our own

We need to respect the boundaries of other people—especially those we love and those we work with each day. We have our dreams; they have theirs. We have our goals; they have their own. We can become partners, but only if we work hard to have compatible visions of the future. We can’t allow ourselves to try to live someone else’s dreams. We can be inspired by others, and we can inspire them, but each person has to own his own destiny, purpose, and goals.

6: Not reviewing progress

It’s important to move our focus off past frustrations and achievements, but we need to learn from the past. If it weren’t for the small steps, we wouldn’t appreciate our progress. It’s small steps, not huge leaps, that get us to our destinies.

#7: Setting “negative” goals

When we think negatively, we act negatively. We become obsessed with our failures, the people who have blocked our goals, and all we’ve lost in the process. Resentment poisons the hearts of those who develop negative goals of “getting back” at those who hurt them.

#8: Setting too many goals

The old phrase, “Keep it simple” is still good advice. If our “to do” list is too large, we get frustrated and give up. We need to look at our list and prioritize what’s most important so we can avoid becoming overwhelmed.

Write down a goal that you would like to share with the tele-conference group:

Earlier, you wrote 3 life goals that you would like to accomplish. Now, narrow it down to one and state why this is your #1 Life Goal:

Essential #4 Dreams

Most people have dreams, even though sometimes we keep them secret, close to the heart so no one can laugh or sneer at us. Dreams are powerful factors in our lives. If we fail to dream, we probably fail to really live.

Dreams can be simple or complex, grand or achievable. Perhaps it's to own your own home or experience a new level success in your career, marriage, or sport. Maybe it's providing a college education for your children. Whatever your dream is, it's an important part of who you are.

Defining your dream

Can you define your dream? If not, this is a good time to begin. The first step in going after a dream is knowing what you want. What is it that you envision yourself doing with your life? What's that passion that makes you jump out of your skin with excitement and makes you feel alive? What's that giant goal for your life that you keep tucked away and strive for? What are your secret desires?

Now, write it down. Putting it on paper gives you something tangible and inspires you to keep aiming high. First, identify your most compelling dream, and then be more specific about your marriage, your children, and your career.

The vision of the future that keeps me awake at night is:

My dream for my marriage:

My dream for my children:

My dream for my career:

In the closing of the film *Pretty Woman*, a man crossing a street says, “Welcome to Hollywood! What’s your dream? Everybody comes here. This is Hollywood, land of dreams. Some dreams come true, some don’t. But keep on dreamin’—this is Hollywood. There’s always time to dream, so keep on dreamin’.”

You don't have to be in Hollywood to have big dreams. And like he says: some come true, some don't. But that's the thing about dreams. If you really go after yours, you may experience absolutely amazing things.

D.R.E.A.M. Example by: Kathi Chavous-DRC Alumna

Determine Goals

Reality

Explore options

Action Plan

Measurable

Learning to "DOL"

In social networking, acronyms are often used to abbreviate common expressions. One of the most popular is LOL, which stands for "Laugh Out Loud."

During your quest to become a Master Coach, a similar acronym may be helpful for you and your clients. It's DOL, or "Dream Out Loud."

Many people are afraid to dream because others might make fun of them, or they might try and fail to reach their dreams. Verbalizing dreams with a trusted coach can help people become more comfortable and confident.

What does it mean to DOL? Start by writing a few down.

Too many of us are not living our dreams because we are living our fears.

—Les Brown

What are some of your dreams that you've shared with those you trust?

1.

2.

3.

What are some of your dreams that you've never spoken out loud?

1.

2.

3.

What are some reasons a person may not DOL?

1.

2.

How To Deal With Disappointment

Everybody handles disappointment in his or her own way. Some feel sorry for themselves, some get mad, and others go into denial. The question is, “How do you handle disappointment?”

Feeling sorry for yourself only blocks you from achieving your goals and keeps you from moving forward. When faced with an obstacle or delay, ask yourself, “What’s the worst that could happen?” You need to do something constructive, because life is a limited window of opportunity, and you don’t want to waste your time on what didn’t work for you. A better alternative to self-pity is to seek out other opportunities or find a positive role model.

Channeling energy in a positive direction is a choice, not a feeling. Once you get started, you may soon find that your mood will lighten, you’ll be able to focus on your goals, and you’ll be more thankful (instead of sullen and grouchy).

Self-pity soon sours and turns into bitterness and resentment. But being mad at yourself or someone else weakens your emotional and physical immune system. All your energy goes into dealing with your anger, and you have few resources for anything else. In reality, no one gets everything they want. When you feel disappointment, getting mad or pouting is only going to make the situation and your feelings worse.

Instead of getting mad, choose to look at the blessings, benefits, and other things that make you smile. Take a walk. Go to a game or a museum. Do something fun and get your mind off your troubles. Things may not be moving as fast as you’d like, but maybe they are going at the right speed. If you force the situation, you may not like its outcome.

Sometimes we get upset with ourselves because we have unintentionally hurt someone we love, or perhaps we feel like an idiot because we did or said something stupid. If you’ve wronged someone, have the courage to admit it and ask for forgiveness. Don’t blame, excuse, or deny the event and your part in it, and don’t expect instant love, joy, and forgiveness. Give the person time to grieve, heal, and forgive you. Everyone involved will be better for it, especially you.

Denial of reality—harm done to us or harm we’ve inflicted on others—stunts our emotional, spiritual, and relational growth. We need a safe, wise person who can help us process our pain and show us the path to love, peace, and reconciliation. Holding back your feelings

is the first ingredient in a recipe for disaster. Holding things in or ignoring them will only make you feel worse. Those around you will get the vibe and perhaps pull away, ultimately hurting you and them even more. So, the next time you don't get what you want, remember that what you wanted may not have been what you really needed. Every pain and every setback is a classroom for us to learn life's biggest lessons.

Vengeance is having a videotape planted in your soul that cannot be turned off. It plays the painful scene over and over again inside your mind... And each time it plays you feel the clap of pain again... Forgiving turns off the videotape of pained memory. Forgiving sets you free.

—Lewis Smedes

What was one of your life's greatest disappointments?

How did you handle it?

Looking back, what would you have done differently?

As a coach, how would you coach a client through a life disappointment?

Faith and Coaching: Which Goals?

A person's goals can be tricky things. Our desires can be right or wrong, pure or tainted, self-giving or supremely selfish. As coaches, our purpose isn't to give people "the right goals" as we define them. We ask questions, tell personal stories, and help them clarify their purpose, goals, and path to the future.

Clients who are Christians, though, often feel very conflicted. Virtually all the messages they hear every day (even from many churches) are that the highest goals in life are to pursue power, pleasure, and popularity—and they expect God to help them achieve these goals. These goals, they assume, will give them ultimate meaning—the more the better! The problem, of course, is that God has made us so that only he can fill the gaping hole in our hearts and give us true purpose and fulfillment. Power, pleasure, and popularity aren't evil, but they aren't primary. When we try to put secondary things in the primary place in our hearts, we get confused, anxious, and angry. And we miss out on God's best.

As a coach, you may be able to provide clarity in the midst of these loud and confusing voices. King David had a lot of pressures and responsibilities, but he had his heart in the right place (at least at the time he wrote this psalm). He described his laser focus:

"One thing I ask from the Lord,
this only do I seek:
that I may dwell in the house of the Lord
all the days of my life,
to gaze on the beauty of the Lord
and to seek him in his temple.
For in the day of trouble
he will keep me safe in his dwelling;
he will hide me in the shelter of his sacred tent
and set me high upon a rock."

Paul had been one of the most powerful leaders in Judaism, but when he met Christ on the road to Damascus, his world was turned upside down—in a good way. Years later, he wrote

about his new passion, his new goal in life. To him, the things that used to matter so much now paled in his love for Christ and his desire to please him. He explained, “But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith” (Philippians 3:7-9).

As you coach clients who have a heart for God, realize they hear very conflicting messages about the purpose of life and the goals they should embrace. When the time is right, share your struggle to align your goals with God’s plans. It’ll be light and salt to your clients.

Next Steps

- » Save this PDF to your desktop after you’ve completed the lesson.
- » [Click here](#) to watch a 15-minute video on Dreams by Dr. Brenda Chand.
- » Write a 1-page summary of your observations from the videos.
- » Read Chapters 13-15 in Gary R. Collins’ book, *Christian Coaching: Helping Others Turn Potential into Reality* (USA: NavPress, 2002) and write a 1-page reflection paper.

Go to the Next Steps, Lesson 5 assignment page. When you’ve completed the assignments, email the forms to your coach.

[Click here to access the Lesson 5 assignment page.](#)

Endnotes

- 1 *Merriam-Webster Online*, "Goal," <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/goal> (14 August 2012).