

Define Yourself

health and career coaching



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"It is not the ship so much as the skillful sailing that assures the prosperous voyage"

George William Curtis

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Are You Flexing Your Life Skills?

If a business owner comes to me with a problem, or a cancer survivor, or a frustrated mom, their challenges are rarely related to their intellectual capabilities or their physical environment. Most often it relates to their personal foundation. Life skills or personal foundation skills are rarely things we are naturally talented at doing, nor are they habits taught in school, rather they are vitally important ingredients for success in any area of our lives. They are skills that can be learned, and fine-tuned with practice.

Victor Frankl suggests that there are three central realities in life: the experiential, that which happens to us; the creative, that which we bring into existence; and the attitudinal, our responses in difficult situations, such as a terminal illness. His thinking makes it clear to me that I am the designer of the life I want to lead. Steven Covey and Nathaniel Branden tell me that my life design is successful when it is based on my innermost truths or values. I am then joyfully motivated to achieve. Define Yourself Coaching is in alignment with my values, and supports my personal mission. Have you discovered your true values? Are the circumstances that motivate you present in your life today? If you are bored, drained, or restless and don't know why, the problem could be you are out of balance with who you truly are.

In today's world, survival of the fittest is about reframing our attitudes to adapt, not our bodies. Successful survival is about creatively responding to our external stimulus based on our values. Difficulties are opportunities for enormous shifts in the way we live our lives. They are a way of flexing our thinking muscle and growing it. If you feel flabby in some area of your life there is a good chance that strengthening some component of your personal foundation will let you run strong again. Coaches, like personal trainers, elicit growth responses in their clients.

Successful lives are created, practiced, and fine tuned through active living. Active living is about being engaged physically, emotionally and spiritually with yourself, others, and the world.

Distinction:

Inclusive vs. Exclusive

Inclusive means we go with the flow, honor the rights of others, and maybe enjoy all parts of ourselves. If we are all inclusive, and also sensitive, we may need strong boundaries to protect us from people who upset us.

To be **exclusive** means we are trying to get rid of, control, deny, or interpret something powerfully requiring lots of energy. Being exclusive can be unhealthy.

Use The Best Words

If the words we use impact delivery and our goal is collaborative relationships then we need to frame our messages accordingly. A single word can create a positive space for communication. The following are examples of words that can empower or discourage.

We or **I**, vs. **You** - **We** is teamwork oriented, **I** takes responsibility, and **You** points the finger of judgment.

Should vs. **Could** - **Should** is controlling, **Could** is open to possibilities.

But vs. **And** - **But** discounts what was previously said, **And** is more inclusive of other ideas.

Try vs. **Will** - **Try** is an excuse for not succeeding, **Will** is a commitment.

Common language is clear and simple and does not exclude any listeners. Using jargon, industry specific terms, or acronyms can create confusion. Choose when to use these possibly more efficient and effective communicators based on your listeners.

In January the Define Yourself website will include a page dedicated to those of us living with cancer. My intent is to share the latest traditional studies as well as include information that supports the person as a whole – body, mind, and soul.