



# THE NEXT GREAT AWAKENING

*How to Empower God's People with a Coach Approach to Ministry*

J. Val Hastings MCC

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People with a Coach  
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People with a Coach  
Approach to Ministry**

**A COACHING4CLERGY TEXTBOOK**

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*Val*

# Introduction

**I**n 1999 I met my first coach. I'm embarrassed to say this, but my initial response to her was, "What sport do you coach?" After her light laughter, she explained to me that she coached individuals and organizations. I was intrigued. That intrigue has grown over the years into a global vision. The vision is that every spiritual leader has coach training in their professional toolkit. Your participation in this coach training event is helping this vision become a reality.

You may be wondering the motivation behind my vision. Like many of you, I am aware of the growing number of spiritual leaders who are ready to give up or feel ineffective and overwhelmed. Add to this the alarming number of today's churches that are closing, or are near closing.

Actually, there's a reason behind all of this. We are in the midst of a paradigm shift involving the DEATH of the pastor-centered (denominational-centered) approach to ministry and the RESURRECTION of the next great awakening in Christianity—the empowerment of all of God's people.

A coaching approach to ministry is one way to embrace this paradigm shift and that can have a tremendous impact, not only on the leaders of our faith communities, but also on the larger communities that we serve. The coaching skills contained in this book will help you gain greater clarity about who God is inviting you to become as an individual and as a faith community, as this paradigm shift unfolds.

Whether you are an ordained or non-ordained, paid or unpaid leader in your faith community, coaching is an extremely valuable

and useful tool. At its core, coaching is about empowering others. What if empowering and equipping people became the norm in your faith community? Consider the impact that your faith community could have locally and globally.

Whatever (or whoever) motivated you to learn more about coaching, I want to thank you for taking this step. You are beginning a journey that will add tremendously to your life and the lives of others.

Congratulations! Let's begin.

# Chapter One

## What is Coaching?

When people discover that I am a coach, they usually ask me what coaching is. As I start to explain, I usually observe a combination of confusion and intrigue in my listener. Coaching, while powerful and transformational, is hard for many to understand. One person has told me on several occasions that she believes that the real reason that people hire me as their coach is because they like the way my voice sounds on the phone. Others have hired me as their coach saying, “I don’t know what coaching is, but whatever you did for \_\_\_\_\_ (another pastor), I want you to do that for me.”

I still chuckle at one pastor’s response to my explanation of coaching: “So let me get this straight. You’re going to do lots of listening, you’re not going to tell me what to do, nor are you going to try to fix me. I’m going to do all the work AND I’m going to pay you. I don’t think so!”

Over the years, I’ve discovered that the best way to help someone understand coaching is to give them a firsthand experience of coaching. That’s why I give a LIVE demonstration at the beginning of every coach training event that I facilitate. Then I invite the participants to define what coaching is, based on what they have just witnessed.

And so, in addition to reading this manual, I invite you to experience your own demonstration of coaching by scheduling a complimentary coaching session. Not only is that the best way to understand coaching, you will also benefit from being

coached. All of our Coaching4Clergy coaches offer these complimentary sessions with no strings attached. You'll find them listed on the Find-A-Coach Service on our website: [www.Coaching4Clergy.com](http://www.Coaching4Clergy.com).

Let's define what coaching is and what it is not. The International Coach Federation ([www.coachfederation.org](http://www.coachfederation.org)) defines coaching as "partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential."

Here is how I define coaching: As a coach, I help people get the results they want by bringing out the best in them. Coaching isn't about fixing people or solving problems, rather, coaching is a developmental or discovery-based process. Similar to athletic coaches, we further develop the skill and talent already inherent in the people we coach.

Whether you use the International Coach Federation definition of coaching, my definition or develop your own, there are several key components that I want to highlight:

### **1. Coaching is a partnership.**

The coach and the coachee are involved in a collaborative process that is 100% about the person being coached. The relationship between the coach and coachee is of utmost importance. Safety and trust in this relationship create an environment in which fresh perspectives and new ways of being can be explored. A coachee is more likely to let you see who they really are, if they believe that they can trust you.

This is so important for today's spiritual leaders, many of whom report that they are extremely lonely and feel isolated. In fact, on

more than one occasion, I've had pastors report that there is no one they trust, nor anyone they feel close to. If nothing else, the rise of coaching in faith communities will provide today's spiritual leaders with a safe person to talk with. And that's a big win!

## **2. Coaching accelerates what is already underway or about to begin.**

This is a key distinction between coaching and other disciplines. Because our perspective is that the person is already whole and complete, we're not moving immediately into fix-it mode or bringing a scarcity mentality. Instead we look for clues and dig for treasures in what we see in front of us. Coaches enjoy spending time at the intersection of curiosity and wonder.

So many of the individuals and teams that I coach initially have little or no awareness of what is already underway or about to begin. One of the benefits of the coaching process is that it creates space in the coachee's schedule—even if it's only 30 minutes—to step back and see what is. Through deep listening and powerful questions, the coach helps the other person gain greater clarity about what they really want and also clarity about what God may be up to. Eugene Peterson, in his translation of Proverbs 29:18, captures the essence of this when he writes:

If people can't see what God is doing, they stumble all over the place. But, when they attend to the things of God (see what God is doing) they are most blessed.

Coaches help people see what God is already doing.

## **3. Coaches maximize potential, moving people from good to great.**

Coaches do more than inspire or cheer on; coaches help people develop and actually make forward progress. Have you ever heard of a masterful athlete who achieved any success without coaching? A coach will develop you further, faster and deeper than you could ever do on your own.

One of the ways that we maximize in coaching is by tapping into the greatness of those we coach. Coaches intentionally look for and develop the strengths and giftedness of the person being coached. I appreciate the way in which Benjamin Zander explains this in his book *The Art of Possibility*. Zander begins each term by informing his students that they already have an “A.” Our coachees also begin with an “A.” (We’ll talk a little more about Ben Zander later in this book.)

One of the best illustrations of beginning with an “A” is the story of young David preparing to fight the giant, Goliath. King Saul, who was tall and strong, put his own armor on David for the fight. (King Saul viewed David as lacking his own strength. Definitely not an “A.”) Young, small David could barely stand up while wearing King Saul’s armor. David took off the armor, picked up five smooth stones and killed Goliath. (1 Samuel 17:38-40)

David already had all he needed to fight the giant; he was already an “A.” He just needed to tap into his strengths, gifts and God-given greatness. Coaches help people tap into what’s already there and use it in their current situations.

Another way that coaches maximize potential is by looking beyond solutions to shifts. Shift work involves internal perspectives, beliefs and assumptions. I like to tell people that, as a coach, I “shine a flashlight” on their perspectives, beliefs and assumptions, and help them see how these support and limit their forward progress. Let me give you an example. Many years ago, I had a belief that

I was “just a pastor” and that no one would hire a pastor as their coach. There were no external solutions or action plans that could adequately address this internal belief. Instead, my coach helped me create an awareness of how this internal belief was limiting me, plus he helped me gain an entirely new perspective on this belief.

Eventually, one day, the shift happened and I saw the same thing completely differently. All of a sudden I just knew that there were people who would want to hire me as their coach because I was a pastor. That was all that was needed. A giant leap forward followed.

Another way that coaches maximize the potential of coachees is to walk beside them, rather than trying to lead them. The coachee remains in the driver’s seat, but the coach is invited along for the ride. I really like this expression: A coach is not a sage on the stage, but a guide alongside. How true! We fully help others develop their potential, but not by doing for them or telling them what to do. In this role of “guide alongside,” the coach becomes:

- Your partner in achieving professional and personal goals.
- Your sounding board when making decisions.
- Your support in professional and personal development.
- Your guide in communication and life skills.
- Your motivation when strong actions are called for.
- Your unconditional supporter when you take a hit.

## **How Is Coaching Different from Therapy, Consulting and Mentoring?**

Let me first say that coaching is not the “be all and end all” of helping people. While there are tremendous benefits to coaching, the same is true of therapy, consulting and mentoring. All are of value.



Taking that a step further, I believe that it is absolutely essential that we, as coaches, appreciate the important contributions that therapists, consultants and mentors make to the ongoing success of those we coach. In fact, about a third of those I coach are also using the services of a therapist, consultant or mentor.

During a break at a training event I was facilitating, there was a consultant in the group—obviously hot under the collar—who stated that because I was training all these people to be coaches, no one would need him anymore. My response to him was that I believed just the opposite. That as the coaching industry grows, more and more individuals and organizations are recognizing that there are times when the expertise of a consultant, therapist or mentor are exactly what is needed. I don't think he believed me.

Second, there is much overlap between coaching and therapy, consulting, and mentoring. Consultants identify with the brainstorming, designing the plan, and follow-through elements of the coaching process, while mentors relate to our "guide alongside" philosophy. During a recent coach training event for therapists, a participant stated that many of the listening concepts and skills he was learning were very similar to what he learned as a therapist. Another marriage and family therapist defined coaching as "therapy for healthy people" and declared how refreshing it would be to work with people who were basically whole and complete.

Third, many coaches see the benefits of combining coaching with these other treatment modalities. A perfect example is the mentor-coaching that I offer coaches. Those I mentor-coach benefit from the access I have to both mentoring and coaching skills and techniques. Sometimes I blend the two; other times I use one or the other. There are also many consultants and therapists who now blend coaching into their practices. Note that it is very important

to clearly understand the similarities and the differences when intentionally overlapping coaching with another discipline or skill set.

Fourth, coaching is still new enough that there are many competing perceptions about what it is. Someone who offers coaching may or may not be adhering to the techniques and approaches you are learning here. I once attended a coach training event where the trainer stated that when he works with his clients, “I just tell them what to do. That’s what they are paying me for.” That’s definitely NOT how we define coaching around here!

## **Coaching Versus Therapy**

Over the years, I have gathered several key distinctions between coaching and therapy. One distinction is that therapy is about recovery, while coaching is about discovery. For the most part, therapy is about recovering from a pain or dysfunction, often arising from the past. The focus is on recovering overall psychological health.

Coaching, on the other hand, assumes an overall level of health and wellness and therefore isn’t focused on recovery, but rather on discovery. The coaching process happens in an environment of curiosity and wonder as we seek peak performance in those we coach. Using a timeline, therapy is usually recovering from the past, bringing the person into a healthy present. Coaches begin in the healthy present and launch out to create and discover the future.

Another helpful distinction is archaeology versus architecture. Therapy, like archaeology, digs into the past to uncover hidden meanings that help us understand both the past and the present. Coaching, similar to architecture, builds on the solid, healthy

foundation of the person as they are today, with the primary focus to design, create and support. I often remind new coaches that, unless there is forward progress or signs that forward progress is coming, it's not really coaching.

One more distinction: therapy versus therapeutic. Many individuals and groups report the therapeutic benefits of coaching; they generally feel more positive about themselves, as well as their present and future, as a result of coaching. Yes! It feels good to really make progress and actually accomplish what you set out to accomplish. Coaching is therapeutic, but it's not therapy. Those who coach have an ethical obligation to make referrals for therapy when needed. Indicators may include:

- An increase in overall sadness
- Difficulty focusing
- Changes in sleep patterns, appetite and anger
- Feelings of hopelessness
- An increase of risk-taking behavior
- Thoughts of suicide

## **Coaching Versus Consulting**

There are two questions that come to my mind when I consider the distinction between coaching and consulting:

- Who is the recognized expert?
- Who is responsible for the outcome?

In consulting, the recognized expert is the consultant. Most people work with a consultant because they believe the consultant's expertise will benefit them or their organization. Usually the consultant helps diagnose problems and prescribes a set of

solutions. In coaching, the recognized expert is the person or team being coached. The coaching perspective is that the coachee is capable of generating their own solutions. The role of the coach is to provide a discovery-based framework that taps further into the expertise of the person being coached.

In fact, sometimes the biggest contribution I make to another person is three simple words: “I don’t know.” It is by being open to not knowing that a coach propels the coachee forward.

As far as who is responsible for the outcome, in consulting, the consultant is responsible for the desired outcome. By following the consultant’s advice, their client will achieve their desired outcome. Contrast this with coaching. Coaches seek to empower the one being coached. It is the coachee who is doing the work and is responsible for the outcome; they generate their own plans and take their own actions. The coach is responsible for holding the framework of the coaching process, but not for the outcome.

## **Coaching Versus Mentoring**

Mentoring is a process of guiding another along a path that the mentor has already traveled. The sharing or guidance includes experiences and learning from the mentor’s own experience. The underlying premise is that the insight and guidance of the mentor can accelerate the learning curve of the one being mentored. Although in many instances a coach and coachee might share a similar experience, it is not the coach’s personal and professional experience that is of greatest value. In the coaching relationship it is the coachee’s experiences that are of most importance.

Does that mean that the coach never shares their experiences or expertise? Not at all. At a recent International Coach Federation conference, I learned one of the things that coachees value most

from their coach is when the coach shares advice and experience when asked for and when appropriate. Notice those qualifiers—when asked for and when appropriate.

When coachees come right out and ask me to tell them what to do, I usually preface any reply by saying something like, “Based on those that I have coached in a similar situation, here are a few ideas. What do you think?” In other words, I’m holding my advice lightly—remembering that it’s my best-guess opinion and nothing more.

When is it appropriate to share our experiences and expertise? Sometimes the person we are coaching may be genuinely stuck and offering advice may serve to prime the pump and get them thinking. Another time may be when a bigger goal can be met more quickly and effectively if they can leap over things of lesser importance. In all of these cases though, it is presumed that you have already established a coaching relationship of trust and safety, and you are both clear that this is only your opinion.

Initially, I recommend that new coaches refrain from offering advice. Most people have learned how to offer advice in ways that are not helpful and are, in fact, disempowering of others. First, we must learn how not to give advice. Then, we can begin to learn anew the art of advising. We’ll talk more about this later in the book.

## **What Does a Typical Coaching Session Look Like?**

In this hypothetical coaching scenario, a pastor stated:

We’re stuck! We’ve tried everything and nothing seems to work. We have the BIG picture...but can’t seem to get

started. The result is that we're losing momentum. It feels like we're taking one step forward and then two steps backwards. Leaders are bailing. I'm beginning to question my ability to lead. Help!

A coach might employ one of these five strategies:

1. **Ask the pastor to say more.** One of the best places to begin is to simply invite the person to share further.
2. **Mirror back what you're hearing and observing.** It is amazing how helpful the simple act of mirroring can be. For the coachee, it is very beneficial to hear what they are saying and see how they are being heard.
3. **Invite the pastor to describe the vision or BIG picture.** In this scenario, the pastor states that "We have the BIG picture...but can't seem to get started." As the coach, I want to confirm that they really do have the BIG picture. Over and over again, I discover that leaders think that others have the BIG picture when they really don't. As a next step, I might encourage this pastor to facilitate more conversation about the vision. The group may have been too quick to move into strategy mode, and really needs to hang out a bit more with the vision.
4. **Ask about the plan.** This could very well be an implementation issue. It's not uncommon to develop a wonderful vision, hang it on the wall and assume it will just happen. A vision needs a plan. One of the top reasons a vision is never implemented is that it lacks a plan or the plan is poorly communicated.
5. **Ask about their support system.** Who can help them with this? In addition to a coach, other pastors and church members can be of tremendous assistance. There are numerous colleagues who have valuable insights and have learned from similar

experiences. Tap into their experiences or seek them out for a sounding board and an encouraging word.

## **What Do You Mean by a “Coaching Approach” to Ministry?**

A growing number of today’s spiritual leaders are pursuing coach training as a way of enhancing the mission and ministry of their own local church. Many are viewing coaching as a tangible way to address their role as “equipper.” Ephesians 4:12 highlights the primary role of the spiritual leader as that of “preparing (equipping) God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.” Coach training offers practical and proven tools and skills to equip God’s people to build up the body of Christ.

One way to incorporate coaching into ministry is by coaching the groups and teams that we work with, instead of taking a more traditional leadership role. We can help these teams gain clarity about what they really, really want, then get out of their way and let them make that happen. What is the result of this coaching approach to leading a team? You get a more effective team whose members are working from their strengths and greatness, rather than from their weaknesses.

When we supervise and evaluate others, imagine giving them an “A” before they even start. How much more empowering would that ministry setting be? Add to that the powerful questions we ask and the deep listening we offer, and we have a recipe for success.

Our churches are filled with people experiencing personal, family, physical and spiritual transition and who can greatly benefit from the coaching approach of support, clarity and accountability. Many spiritual leaders run small groups. Imagine if these groups

were characterized by an environment of support and trust, led by group leaders who were skilled in bringing out the best in others. Personal transformation and life change are bound to follow.

The other day a new coach said to me that he believed that coaching was really a luxury for those in ministry, especially in this economy. My response: Effective leadership is not a luxury, but a necessity. Imagine the difference in you and your church if you partnered with a coach whose sole purpose was to bring out the very best in you and to help you to continually perform at that peak level. If our faith communities are going to be all that God intends us to be and if we are going to have the global impact we want to have, then coaching must not be seen as a luxury, but rather as a necessity.





# Chapter Two

## The Building Blocks of Coaching

One of my favorite sections in any bookstore is the “How to” section. It’s amazing how many “How to” books there are, and they cover an endless array of topics: how to build a deck, fix your car, knit, cook, find your perfect mate, etc.

This section is your coaching “How to.” Over the next several pages you will discover the core competencies and skills of coaching—we call them building blocks. These building blocks will provide a framework for your coaching.

### 1. Deep Listening

All coaching begins with listening!

Don’t read any further until you really, REALLY get this. It all begins with listening. Far too often we take listening for granted. How many times has someone tried to help you by offering you a solution without hearing what the problem was? They mean well, but they aren’t really helpful. Years ago, I had a medical doctor who would listen to me describe my symptoms for about 13 seconds and then he would begin backing out the door, prescribing before I’d finished. I quickly learned the art of standing in the doorway.

So coaching begins with listening—deep listening. The quality of our listening has a direct bearing on the quality of our coaching. We can’t draw out the best in another person, or tap into their greatness, if we haven’t listened for it.

Listening is one of the greatest gifts that you can offer another person. Listening, in and of itself, provides tremendous benefits. Consider the following case study:

Nancy Kline provided an opportunity for every member of a senior management team to listen and be listened to. The result reported was a time savings of 62%. This translated into 2,304 manager hours per year. (Time to Think: Listening to Ignite the Human Mind, page 70).

Here's another case study—Luke 19:1-10:

In Luke 19:5 and 19:6, Jesus spent time alone with Zacchaeus. As a guest, Jesus would have spoken, as well as listened, to Zacchaeus. Based on the crowd's response to Jesus' actions (Luke 19:7), it had been years since anyone had listened to Zacchaeus. The results were immediate and life-long. A changed life. (Luke 19:9)

What is listening? Listening is...

- Being curious about the other person.
- Quieting your own mind chatter so that you can be fully present with another person.
- Creating a safe space for someone to explore.
- Conveying value. You are important to me!
- Not about giving answers, but exploring possibilities.
- Reflecting back, like a mirror, what you experienced from the person.
- Really getting another person.

And note that there's a huge difference between hearing and listening:

- Hearing is an auditory process. Listening is an intentional process.
- Hearing is done with the ears. Listening involves all of the senses and the total being.
- Hearing includes words, details and information. Listening adds deeper layers.
- Hearing is to know about someone. Listening is being with someone.
- Listening is a skill to be developed.

Coaches listen so closely that the answers almost come out on their own. The ideal listening ratio is to be listening 80% of the time and responding 20% of the time. Someone once told me that words comprise about 7% of what we communicate. In other words, most of our communication does not involve words. Coaches know this. That's why coaches listen at multiple levels. Here's a sampling of what a coach is listening for:

- Listen to what the other person is saying, as well as what they are not saying.
- Listen from deep within (gut-level listening).
- Listen to "get" the other person.
- Listen without judgment, criticism or agenda. You are creating a safe place for the person to share.
- Listen without thinking about what you will be saying next.
- Listen for values, frustrations, motivation and needs.
- Listen for the greatness in the person you are coaching.
- Listen for limiting beliefs and false assumptions. What does this person really believe the outcome or future will be?

- Listen for shoulds, oughts and musts. They are frequent indicators of obligation and guilt versus what the person really wants.
- Listen for the obvious. What is the other person not seeing or not aware of?
- Listen for the tone, pace, volume, inflection and frequently used words. Also, notice when these change.
- Listen for the larger context.
- Listen attentively to the end of the statements. Remember the old faucets with well water? You needed to let them run awhile before you got the good water. The best words often flow out last as well!
- Listen to your reactions as you listen.

To be able to listen at multiple levels, a coach must quiet their mind of any mind chatter or internal conversations. They must create a physical environment that promotes deep listening, by attending to the space and pace of life and by managing their scheduling and calendar. Coaches grow to be comfortable with silence—resisting the urge to fill the space. As a new coach, I recall a seasoned coach saying that deep listening is similar to standing in a pool. In order to see the bottom clearly, you must be still—absolutely still.

Pause for a moment and consider your own potential barriers to deep listening. What are some steps you can take to address these challenges?

Here are some exercises to improve your listening:

**Mute the TV.** Since most of what we communicate is non-verbal, why not mute the TV and have some fun trying to guess what's being communicated? To really test your ability, tape the TV show,

watch it with the sound muted, and then watch it again with the sound playing.

**Mirroring.** Pair up with a partner, with each person taking a turn to talk and to listen. When you're the listener, do your best to listen as if you were a mirror. Reflect back what you heard. Then ask: Did I get that right? Did I hear you correctly?

**Tape record a conversation.** With the permission of the other person, tape a conversation in which you intentionally attempted to listen deeply. Right after the conversation, write down what your deep listening revealed. Then, go back and listen to the recording of the conversation. What more did you hear? What had you missed?

**Practice selective listening.** Decide that for the next week you are going to be selective in your listening and really listen for one specific element. For example, you might choose to identify the values you hear underneath people's words. Or you might listen only for signs of frustration, or for signs of greatness. Over the course of the week, pay attention to that one select area, training yourself to listen for this one item. Notice when you hear the item clearly—what circumstances made that possible in you and around you? What was going on in the times when it was challenging to hear the item?

Remember, great listeners hear with their:

- **Ears.** They listen to the spoken words, as well as tone, pace, pitch and inflection. They listen for the essence of what is being said.
- **Eyes.** Most of our communication is non-verbal. Great listeners notice body language of the one speaking.

- **Full body and being.** Gifted listeners notice how they are receiving the message. They pay attention to what is happening inside of them as they listen.

## **2. Powerful Questioning**

On my recent travels to deliver a coach training program, I heard a statement on the radio that stopped me cold: History changed when a single question changed; when we stopped asking, “How do we get to the water?” and started asking, “How do we get the water to us?”

What a radical shift for us as human beings!

My thoughts went immediately to how this relates to us in ministry. How would our churches change if we were to change our questions?

For example, here are some of the questions you might be asking now:

1. How do we get “them” to come to us?
2. How much longer can we afford a full-time pastor?
3. How do we get people to fund our budget?

Boards and leaders literally spend hours on Question #1, but I think that if we changed that question, we could produce entirely different outcomes. What if we asked, “How can we go to them?” Or, we could ask, “How can we have a positive impact on our community-at-large?”

Question #2 suggests scarcity thinking—focusing on what’s lacking instead of what’s abundant. What if we ask, “What more can we do with the resources we have?” What if we look at, “How

can we develop the people we have so they can make a bigger contribution and everyone wins?"

In Question #3, it sounds like we're trying to cajole or even manipulate people into doing something they don't really want to do. What if we ask, "What are people most excited about, and how can we give them the opportunity to support us while fulfilling their own interests and passions?" People are happy to invest time, energy and resources when it is also satisfying to them.

I invite you to listen for the questions that you and your church are asking. Are they limiting, like our examples above, or are they powerful? And what's the difference?

One of a coach's greatest tools is powerful questions. Powerful questions are usually open-ended, leaving room for contemplation and reflection, instead of being limited to yes or no or specific choices. Powerful questions promote the exploration of new possibilities and stimulate creativity. They place the individual or group in a place of responsibility. They empower individuals and groups to consider what is right for them.

Powerful questions open us to possibilities beyond the reality that's in front of us today, stretching us into the territory of our visions to ask, "What is God's invitation for us in this situation today?"

Limiting questions, on the other hand, might not be questions at all. They may only be thinly masking a statement of blame, obligation or guilt, e.g., "Why did you do it that way?"

Have you downloaded the FREE e-book *The E3-Church: Empowered, Effective and Entrepreneurial Leadership That Will Keep Your Church Alive*? Each chapter contains 10 powerful questions that are guaranteed to shift your mind. Here are just a few samples:



- How could you make better use of the strengths of your church?
- What kind of leader would you be if you were driven by passion?
- What dream have you long since given up on?
- Which of your roles could someone else be doing, and probably better than you?
- What's the worst thing that could happen if you did less?

What makes a question powerful? Powerful questions are:

- **Directly connected to deep listening, enabling the coach to craft the most effective question.** Early on in my coaching I believed there was only one right question. I would even equip myself with a long list of questions that I could scan while coaching. What I quickly discovered was that the most powerful questions were created in the moment and the power of the question was directly related to my ability to listen deeply.
- **Brief.** They get right to the point. It can be difficult to resist adding an explanation or another question instead of just waiting for the person to respond.
- **Free of any hidden agenda.** They are not leading or suggestive. In the coaching profession we refer to leading questions as “que-ggestions.” Powerful questions help the person or group being coached move further along the path of discovery.
- **Usually open-ended, promoting further conversation.** For the most part, yes/no questions usually result in a yes/no response, which forces an end to the conversation and enables either/or thinking. Powerful questions promote both/and thinking, opening up the coachee up to a fuller range of possibilities.

- **Clarifying.** They help clarify and slow down automatic responses and thinking. Coaching clients have told me time and time again that they appreciate how coaching creates the opportunity for them to step aside—push the pause button—and discern what they really want.
- **Perspective-shifting.** Powerful questions invite us to walk across to the other side of the room and look at the same thing from a different angle or perspective.
- **For the benefit of the one we are coaching.** Remember that the coach is not the expert, and does not have to figure anything out or come up with solutions. Therefore, our questions must be designed to help the coachee discover and develop their own perspective and wisdom about the situation.

## **Types of Powerful Questions**

Questions that help the person gain perspective and understanding:

- What's the truth about this situation?
- Who do you remind yourself of?
- What keeps you up at night?
- Is there anything else that would be important for me to know?

Questions that evoke discovery:

- What do you really, really want?
- What's perfect about this?
- What is the gift in this?
- What additional information do you need?
- How much is this costing you?

- Who can help you with this?

Questions that promote clarity and learning:

- What if things are as bad as you say they are?
- Where are you sabotaging yourself?
- What's the cost of not changing?
- What's next?
- What's past this issue?

Questions that call for action:

- What's possible today?
- How soon can you resolve this?
- Who do you know that's going through this?
- What does success look like?
- What's the first step? When will you take this step?

The scriptures are a rich resource for powerful questions. For example, in Genesis 3:9, God asks the first powerful question of Adam and Eve saying, "Where are you?" Think about this. Why does an all-knowing God need to ask a question, when obviously God already knows the answer. Why then did God ask this question of Adam and Eve? The reason is just what we've been talking about: God asked Adam and Eve this powerful question for their own benefit, as well as for the benefit of the reader.

Here are some other powerful questions that God asks in the Old Testament:

- God asked Cain two questions in Genesis 4:6 and 4:9, "Why are you angry?" and "Where is Abel your brother?"

- God asks Moses, who is offering one excuse after another, “What is in your hand?” (Exodus 4:2)
- In the year that King Uzziah died, God asks, “Whom shall I send?” and “Who will go for us?” (Isaiah 6:8)

Likewise, the New Testament also contains many powerful questions. As you read through the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, you discover that Jesus was masterful in his use of questions. My all-time favorite question that Jesus asked is found in John 5:6. Jesus sees the paralyzed man waiting for the waters of the pool of Bethesda to stir, so that he could get in the healing waters first, and asks, “Do you want to get well?” What a great question! In the man’s response, he blames others for not putting him into the pool. Jesus follows his powerful question with a direct statement, telling the man to get up and walk. And he does.

Here is a sample of other questions that Jesus asked:

- When the disciples were in a boat in a terrible storm, Jesus asked, “Why are you afraid?” (Matthew 8:26)
- He asked the disciples, when they were faced with feeding a crowd of over 5,000 people, “Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?” (John 6:5)
- He asked the 12 Disciples, when many of His other followers were abandoning him because of His message, “You do not want to leave too, do you?” (John 6:67)
- He asked the Pharisees, “Why do you want to kill me?” (John 7:19)
- He asked the woman caught in adultery, “Where are your accusers? Has no one condemned you?” (John 8:10)
- After teaching the crowds about how much God cares for

them, He asked them, “Why do you worry about what you will eat and what you will wear?” (Matthew 6:31)

- He asked the man who was born blind—the one that Jesus had healed of his blindness—“Do you believe in the Son of Man?” (John 9:35)
- When Peter made his claim that he would die for Jesus, Jesus asked, “Will you really lay down your life for me?” (John 13:38) And then after his resurrection, Jesus asked him, “Do you love me?” (John 21:17)
- When Pilate asked Jesus, “Are you the king of the Jews?” Jesus replied with a question: “Is that your own idea, or did others talk to you about me?” (John 18:34)

At the beginning of this section on powerful questions you read that history changed when a single question changed. And you’ve just read how our scriptures are filled with examples of how a single question dramatically changed lives. Questions are a powerful tool at our disposal. A powerful question, created out of deep listening, can change everything. Change the questions, change your church.

Below are exercises, strategies and examples to further develop your understanding and use of powerful questions:

Scenario #1: Your leadership team has been unable to take action on something decided months ago. Your team seems stuck on this issue. What powerful questions could you ask?

Scenario #2: You are designing a worship service and are looking for a specific response from the congregation. What powerful questions could you ask?

Scenario #3: You are meeting with a couple who is struggling with an issue in their relationship. They have a fairly healthy

relationship but are stuck on this one issue. Each one is blaming the other, saying things like, “She doesn’t understand me,” and “He never talks to me.” What powerful questions could you ask this couple?

### **Val’s Top 10 Questions**

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate...?
2. What’s the payoff of not taking action?
3. What’s the truth about this situation?
4. What’s your vision?
5. What’s past this?
6. What keeps getting in the way?
7. What’s the simplest solution?
8. Who can help you with this?
9. What do you think about when you’re lost in thought?
10. What do you really, REALLY want?

Some people collect stamps, coins or spoons—I collect questions. I’m positively intrigued by questions. For more of my favorites, please see Appendix A at the end of the book.

Jump start your next meeting with powerful questions.

A common complaint I hear from leaders is about poor discussion and input from team members: “How do we get people to share their ideas and comments at our meetings? We even send out the agenda ahead of time and no one seems prepared to discuss things.”

Let me offer a simple change that often jump-starts the discussion. Instead of creating an agenda with topics to discuss, develop a

couple of questions from your original agenda that start people thinking. For example:

Original agenda:

1. Financial Update
2. Pastor's Report
3. Worship Team Items
4. Etc.

Revised agenda with questions:

1. What are some ways to encourage consistent giving over the summer months?
2. Who can help us discern the current state of our church and begin brainstorming God's unfolding vision for our church?
3. It's standing room only at our 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. services. What is our next step?

### **3. Artful Language**

Many of us grew up hearing the statement, "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never harm me." Nothing could be further from the truth!

Our words matter. Our language can provide a platform that propels someone closer to their hopes and dreams. At the same time, our language can reinforce doubts and limiting disbelief—dashing hopes and dreams. Think of language like a scalpel; in the hands of the skillful and altruistic it can be invaluable, while in the hands of the reckless or malicious it can have devastating or deadly effects. Language is like the paint brush in a coach's hand; it is the playground for our meaningful work.

Let's check out four pieces of equipment on the coach's playground:

- Our actual words
- The matching of words
- Distinctions
- Acknowledgment

### **Our Actual Words**

Ask yourself—how are my chosen words resonating with the other person? In coaching, we often refer to this as how something “lands.” Are my actual words fostering a safe and inviting environment that encourages the other person to go deeper below the surface to the core issues? Or, is the other person so busy dodging and ducking the zingers that you're hurling at them that they can only say “ouch!”

In our day-to-day conversations, words often contain assumptions, presuppositions, judgments, manipulation and suggestions. In coaching conversations, we intentionally choose words that are neutral, non-manipulative and free of any agenda. Our tone of voice is equally important. The same word with a different tone can be received entirely differently.

### **The Matching of Words and Language**

Coaches notice the words and phrases of the other person. When appropriate, a coach will match their words and phrases with the person they are coaching and introduce new words or phrases. Coaches also pay attention to the pace and pattern of the other person's language. For example, when asked a question, introverts tend to process first and then talk, while extroverts tend to process by talking. The seasoned coach will sometimes match the other



person to convey a feeling of acceptance; other times he or she will intentionally change up the pace and pattern to get the coachee's attention and make a point.

The coach is also listening for words that help the other person learn, describe their values and define their reality. These can be very useful in facilitating a shift. Often these are popular words or phrases from current or past culture. They can include TV, movies, music, metaphors, stories and quotes.

Examples of metaphors:

- The fruit doesn't fall far from the tree.
- Breaking the glass ceiling.
- Swimming in a sea of choices.
- Drinking from a firehose.
- Pulling yourself up by your bootstraps.
- It sounds like you're on a see-saw.
- It doesn't work to leap a 20-foot chasm in two 10-foot jumps.  
(American proverb)

Examples of stories:

- Joseph's story in the Old Testament. "You meant it for evil. God meant it for good."
- The Emperor's New Clothes and the importance of truth-telling.
- Forrest Gump's "Life is like a box of chocolates."
- Humpty-Dumpty's lesson, that some things in life can never be put back together again.

Examples of quotes:

- “And the day came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom.”  
– Anais Nin
- “It is a terrible thing to look over your shoulder when leading, and discover no one is there.” – Franklin Delano Roosevelt
- “Most leaders don’t need to learn what to do. They need to learn what to stop.” – Peter Drucker

Examples from popular media culture include:

- The song “Don’t worry, be happy.”
- “You’re fired!” from Donald Trump’s TV show *The Apprentice*.
- The TV Show *Survivor* and the phrase “getting kicked off the island.”
- A place “where everybody knows your name,” as revered in the theme song of the long-running TV show *Cheers*.

## Distinctions

Distinctions are two words or phrases that are close in meaning, yet convey subtle differences. Those subtle differences create a new awareness that is instrumental in propelling the individual forward.

Consider the following distinction and the subtle, yet huge, shift it creates:

Definition by obstacles versus definition by opportunities.

- To define yourself by obstacles means that you are defining who you are and the decisions you make based on the

challenges that you are facing. A life defined by obstacles is reactive. It is moving away from someone or something.

- To define yourself by opportunities means that you define who you are and base your decisions on your opportunities. It's not that you're ignoring the obstacles, you've just decided to keep your sights on the bigger picture—your vision. It is moving toward someone or something and is usually proactive.

Additional distinctions:

- Perfection versus excellence
- Adding more versus adding value
- Living by default versus living by design
- Working hard versus producing results
- Either/or versus both/and
- Prioritizing what's on your schedule versus scheduling your priorities
- Doing powerfully effective things versus being powerfully effective
- Planning versus preparing

If you've read our free e-book, *The E3-Church: Empowered, Effective and Entrepreneurial Leadership That Will Keep Your Church Alive*, note that distinctions are a much more subtle version of the huge mind shifts I ask you to make in that book. Below are the six shifts that I invite you, as a leader in your church, to make:

- From diagnosing to developing
- From doing to empowering
- From telling to exploring

- From mindlessness to mindfulness
- From excellence to effectiveness
- From professional to entrepreneur

## **Acknowledgment**

Most people, when asked to create a list of their weaknesses and also a list of their strengths, find it easier to list their weaknesses. Why? Many people assume that if I can just fix my weaknesses or if I could only correct what's wrong with me, eventually I will be great!

Consider the following: The average person, on any given day, has between 12,000 to 50,000 thoughts per day. By the age of eight, most of those thoughts are negative thoughts (e.g., I'm not good enough. I can't do it. What's wrong with me?). Your church and, in fact, the entire world are made up of people who already speak to themselves with judgment and disapproval.

Acknowledgment creates an environment of acceptance and safety. When people feel safe and accepted, they are more likely to be curious and explore new things.

The scriptures contain one acknowledgment after another from God to us. Consider the following acknowledgments:

- So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them...and God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. (Genesis 1:27 and 1:31)
- For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. (Psalm 139:14)

- Jesus acknowledges Peter. In John 1:42, Jesus looks at Simon (known to us as Peter) and acknowledges him by saying, “You will be called Cephas,” which, when translated, is Peter—the Rock.) Long before anyone saw evidence of rock-likeness in Peter, Jesus acknowledged what was there. This acknowledgment was a major turning point in Peter’s life. Yes, the transformation of Peter into “Cephas” was a rocky one, but it happened.
- There are different kinds of gifts, but the same spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works in all of them in all men. (1 Corinthians 12: 4-6)

The book *Living Your Strengths* includes a Hasidic tale that teaches the importance of acknowledging our strengths.

When he was an old man, Rabbi Zusya said, “In the coming world, they will not ask me: ‘Why were you not Moses?’ They will ask me: ‘Why were you not Zusya?’” That is God’s question to each of us as well. We are not expected to be who we are not. We are expected to be who we are (*Living Your Strengths*, by Albert L. Winseman, Donald O. Clifton and Curt Liesveld, page 10).

Ben Zander understands the importance of acknowledgment. In *The Art of Possibility*, a book he coauthored with his wife, he describes what he announces to every new class of students: “Each student in this class will get an ‘A’ for this course. However there is one requirement that you must fulfill to earn this grade: Sometime during the next two weeks, you must write me a letter dated next May, which begins with the words, ‘Dear Mr. Zander, I got my “A” because...’ And in this letter you are to tell, in as much detail as you can, the story of what will have happened to you by next May that is in line with this extraordinary grade.” This practice

acknowledges the greatness within people and invites them to live into that greatness.

Our God and our faith is about the giving of an “A”. It makes sense then that our churches also be about giving an “A” — genuinely tapping into people’s greatness. Imagine if the average church in a local community gained the reputation of giving “A’s”, instead of judgment. Or, if the focus in a church shifted from what they are not to who they are, as well as who they are becoming. See your church as a place that is regularly telling people that they are fearfully and wonderfully made. How different would our world be?

P.S. In Nancy Kline’s book *Time to Think* (pages 62-64), we read about how society teaches us that to be positive is to be naïve and vulnerable, whereas to be critical is to be informed, buttressed and sophisticated. Many people are taught that to be appreciated is a slippery slope towards gross immodesty. It is as if, when you hear something nice about yourself and don’t reject it instantly, you will, presto, turn into an out-of-control egomaniac. This is ridiculous.

Actually, change takes place best in a large context of genuine praise, Kline asserts. Appreciation (what we are calling acknowledgment) is important not because it feels good or is nice, but because it helps people to think for themselves on the cutting edge of an issue. We should aim for a 5:1 ratio of appreciation to criticism. Being appreciated increases your intelligence and helps you to think better.

## **4. Action and Accountability**

When we began exploring action and accountability, a participant at a coach training event declared, “Finally, the good stuff!” When

I asked what he meant, he said that everything we had discussed up until now, while helpful information, didn't really matter unless action happened. In many respects, he was right. One of the primary reasons that a person or a group decides to work with a coach is that they want to take action and reach their goals. Action and forward progress are indeed the good stuff.

There are three components to action and accountability: brainstorming, designing the action, and follow through.

It's really tempting at this point in the coaching process to jump right in and design an action plan. I want you to resist that urge and instead take a few more moments to brainstorm. Why am I suggesting this? Our coachee's tendency is going to be to take similar action steps as before, if not the same exact actions. The trouble is that those same action steps are going to generate the same outcomes. The reason this person or group is in coaching is to get different results! A quote on my office wall reminds me of this principle—nothing changes, if nothing changes.

Brainstorming helps someone see the same thing differently. Brainstorming enables the individual to discover for themselves different perspectives and possibilities. This involves distinguishing between fact and perception/interpretation, as well as gaining clarity and defining success.

A great example of brainstorming occurred during an episode of the TV sitcom *Seinfeld*, featuring Jerry's friend, George Costanza. George was one of those people who couldn't do anything right. He was in his 30s, he still lived at home, he had no job or relationship and was losing the rest of his hair. And he was often thought of as being unattractive.

And then George Costanza had a major epiphany. George said something like this: "Jerry, it's very clear to me that my life is the

opposite of everything I want it to be. From now on I'm going to do the opposite."

Do you remember what happened when George did the opposite? Things turned out very well because George was willing to look at things entirely differently and step out of his comfort zone.

I want those I coach to have those kinds of epiphanies when we brainstorm together before creating an action plan. I usually start by asking them to identify a next step; what they would usually do next. Then, I ask them to set that action aside for the moment and come up with 50 other possible actions. Most laugh at this request. Many are speechless. I re-state my request and give them some prompts, such as:

- What's the most outrageous step you could take?
- What's the simplest next step?
- Who could help you generate more ideas for next steps?
- What possibilities have you repeatedly dismissed?

Years ago I coached a pastor about casting the vision of his church. His usual method of vision-casting was to preach a rousing vision sermon on the first Sunday of the New Year. Upon inquiry he acknowledged that this method stirred people for a couple of days, but produced no real progress. I then asked him to set that action step aside and I requested that over the next two weeks he identify 50 other ways to cast vision. He repeatedly stated that he didn't know any others. I repeatedly requested he come up with his list.

Two weeks later he came back with a list of 50 ways to catch the vision. Here's how he did it: The evening after our previous coaching session, he went to the praise team rehearsal and he kiddingly told the praise team about the outrageous request his



coach had made of him—50 ways to cast our vision. The lead guitar player began playing the rock song “50 Ways to Leave Your Lover” and within minutes the vocalists began singing “50 ways to cast our vision.” In the following moments, with the help of his praise team, he had his 50 ways to cast vision. Now he was ready to design the action plan!

## **Designing the Action by Creating a Plan**

Within the context of brainstorming, a plan begins to emerge. The plan includes next steps that are attainable, measurable, specific and have target dates. In most cases, the plan addresses both what you need to do and who you need to become in order to reach your goal. Commitment, like the “50 ways to cast our vision,” usually comes naturally and effortlessly.

Techniques useful for designing the action include:

- **Baby steps.** Sometimes people are immobilized with all that needs to happen. Breaking the action steps into smaller steps can help them begin taking action.
- **Backward planning.** Begin at the end (the goal) and then move backward and develop steps to get to the goal.
- **Acknowledging.** Recognizing what has been accomplished.
- **Creating structure.** Identifying what and who will keep the client focused on the task at hand.
- **Strategizing.** Considering what might derail progress and designing action steps in advance.
- **Anchoring.** Regularly reminding the person or group of the importance of what they are doing and where they are in the plan.

- **“Blitz Days.”** Helping them carve out solid blocks of time to tackle everything that is getting in the way or needs to be done to stay on task.
- **Identify daily action.** These help create daily movement and momentum.

Sometimes formulas can be helpful. Consider the G.R.O.W. Model.

<b>G</b> Goal	What’s the goal?
<b>R</b> (Current) Reality	How are we doing?
<b>O</b> Opportunities	What are our current opportunities?
<b>W</b> What	What’s the next step?

### **Follow-Through**

In an ongoing coaching relationship, there are built-in natural opportunities to check in regarding ongoing progress and to make course corrections. In most cases, I coach people twice a month—that’s two times every month for us to follow through. I usually begin each coaching session with questions like these:

- What’s happened since the last time we met?
- What didn’t happen that you really intended to happen?
- What got in the way? What were the challenges?
- What will you report back to me the next time we meet, regarding this action?
- What do you want to focus on today?

Notice that the accountability is palatable as we define completion. There is no judgment or shame involved. There is no guilt or manipulation. This ongoing accountability is a natural part of the coaching relationship. A pastor once stated that accountability is really about “goaltending.”

## 5. The Coaching Relationship

In real estate, the three most important things are: location, location and location. It can also be stated that, in coaching, the three most important things are: relating, relating and relating. The coaching relationship is the vehicle of change and transformation.

One way to view the coaching relationship is as a dance. Let's use the example of that great dance couple, Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, to describe the dance of the coaching relationship. Consider Fred Astaire as the coachee and Ginger Rogers the coach. Notice that Ginger did everything Fred did (only backwards and in high heels!), but that she takes her lead from Fred.

Let's stay with the dance of coaching to further understand the unique and skillful way in which a coach relates. Fred and Ginger developed a safety and trust that let them draw close to each other. A level of intimacy was present, yet was never violated. This allowed them to really "get" each other and almost anticipate each other's moves. Coaches are able to be totally spontaneous, while also being fully present and in the moment. This total spontaneity involves a knowing that is beyond what is typically, or rationally, known and observed. It's similar to the athlete who can anticipate where the ball will be thrown, before it's thrown.

New coaches often ask me how to further develop coaching presence—a deeper level of knowing. There are no shortcuts to develop a deeper level of knowing. It all begins with deep listening. Practice listening, and then practice again and again. Develop and use powerful questions, and make artful choices with your language. Here are some additional tools that have helped others I've trained:

- **Note-taking.** The act of writing helps many go deeper. Jot down what you're noticing in the coaching session. Remember,

deep listening uses the eyes, as well as the ears. The challenge of note-taking is to take notes in such a way that it enhances, rather than interferes with, your deep listening.

- **Self-care.** It's hard to go deeper when you're barely managing life on the surface. Go for extreme self-care. It's time!
- **Review your coaching.** Make a recording of a coaching session and then review it. Then take it one step further and ask your mentor-coach to review it and give you feedback, specifically about your coaching presence.
- **Prayer and meditation.** Intentionally quiet yourself before and after a coaching session. How you show up matters.
- **Risk.** Share your hunches, inklings or gut feelings. Preface your hunch by saying something like, "I'd like to go out on a skinny branch for a moment with you, and I could be completely wrong, but here's what I'm wondering (or noticing)..."
- **Listen from the heart versus the head.** Be intentional in shifting from intellect to intuition. Request that the person you are coaching also get out of their head and listen from the heart. Ask them "What are you feeling in your body right now? What might your body be trying to tell you?"

Let's go back to Fred and Ginger for another unique component of the coaching relationship. Notice that Fred and Ginger aren't trying to correct or judge each other's steps while they dance. There is a mutual respect for the other's level of skills and competence. They each have their unique experience, strength and gifts. And the way that they relate to each other brings out the best in the other. On the dance floor they are tapped into each other's greatness.

How do you tap into the greatness of the other person or group? One resource to explore is my e-book, *The E3-Church: Empowered, Effective and Entrepreneurial Leadership That Will Keep Your Church*

*Alive*, which has a chapter devoted to this shift from diagnosing to developing. In your day-to-day work and personal life, practice intentionally listening for greatness. At first you'll probably notice how much easier it is to diagnose, and how frequently you miss the greatness. Be kind to yourself—most of today's spiritual leaders, paid and unpaid, have been formally and informally trained to diagnose problems. Over time you'll begin to notice greatness more readily.

Next, begin to tell others about the greatness that you observe in them. They may dismiss it or disqualify it. Keep telling them anyway, because what's important is the shift you're making in how you relate to them—as a whole and complete person or team. Eventually, like Fred and Ginger, you'll be tapping into the greatness of others with ease and grace. And you'll also notice that your new way of relating will be an attractive magnet for drawing people to you and your coaching.

The complimentary coaching session is an ideal opportunity for a coach and a prospective coachee to discern whether you relate to each other well enough to develop a powerful coaching relationship. A positive coaching relationship will increase your coachee's likelihood of success. Since they relate well to you, they are more likely to explore further and take bigger steps, plus they will stick with their plan of action longer.

## **6. The Coaching Agreement**

As a pastor, I would often find myself needing to say, "If you need something from me, please tell me. If I don't know what you need or want, I can only guess at what you need and want. And I am not a mind reader."

The same is true of coaches—we aren't mind readers, and that's why we have a coaching agreement. A coaching agreement is a way to define the requirements and process behind the coaching relationship. The coaching agreement takes most of the guesswork out of coaching and makes it possible for the coach to follow the coachee—not the other way around.

While newer coaches see the coaching agreement as a once-and-done process, masterful coaches understand the ongoing nature of the coaching agreement and that there are three parts to the coaching agreement:

- The initial agreement
- The ongoing agreement
- The evaluation process

The initial coaching agreement includes:

- Defining the terms of the coaching relationship in writing; for example, fees, schedule, responsibilities and expectations of the coach and coachee.
- Articulating what coaching is and isn't.
- Discerning whether or not the coach and coachee are a good match.
- Clarifying the needs of the coachee and why they want to work with a coach. I like to ask, "What do you want to be able to say three months from now that you cannot say today?" This helps both the coach and coachee gain clarity about the desired outcome.

The ongoing coaching agreement includes:

1. Helping the coachee clarify what they want to focus on in each particular coaching session, as well as what they want to take away.
2. Further clarifying and exploring what the client is taking away from the coaching session.
3. Holding side-by-side the initial desired outcomes and goals that brought them to coaching and the current focus/take-away. Because coaching is focused on discovery and not outcomes, new insights and perspectives need to be continually integrated into the coaching agreement.

The third component of the coaching agreement is the evaluation process. This frequently includes course corrections, or may also involve a dramatic shift in the overall desired outcome. I frequently ask questions, such as:

- How are we doing?
- Based on our coaching to date, what's your ongoing, developing vision?
- On a scale of 1-10, rate the overall progress you've made. What is needed to take it up several levels?
- What more do I need to know about you, your learning preferences or background to accelerate your progress?
- Where is self-sabotage showing up? What additional supports are needed?
- What will you report back to me the next time we meet?

A frequent mistake that new coaches make is in moving through the coaching agreement quickly—in as little as two to five minutes. I've discovered that the clearer the coachee and coach are with the agreement, the better the outcome. It's not unusual for me to spend

the bulk of a coaching session on this area—15-20 minutes. Here are questions and statements that help my coachee and me fine-tune our coaching agreement and evaluate the coaching process:

- Tell me more. Because people are so busy, they rarely have time to think and talk. It's extremely beneficial to intentionally provide space for people to say more. Time and time again, I hear coachees extol the benefits of "getting things out."
- What is the one thing I need to hear in order to best coach you? This helps the coachee get laser-focused and selective about sharing only what's absolutely critical to their overall progress.
- Taking into account all that's on your plate right now, is this topic/issue the most important one (and if not, what is)? Similarly, this question helps the coachee hone in on the topics and issues that will contribute the most to their overall success and satisfaction.

This coaching scenario will help you further understand the coaching agreement:

Steve is the founder and Senior Pastor of a rapidly growing church. He currently has 22 full-time employees on his ministry team. He frequently describes his team as a family. It's not unusual for Steve to "go the extra mile" and bend the rules for individual members of his team, because he considers them to be his family. He finds it difficult to fire even the worst of the ministry staff, because he's really concerned about their welfare.

Steve's vision is to grow from a single site to a multi-site ministry. He believes that he can do this within the next three to five years. In addition to implementing this multi-site vision, he would also like to spend less time at church and enjoy life more. His big dream is to take the whole year off and let the ministry run without him.



Steve has created a strategic plan and action steps to move towards his goal. He's making moderate progress. He is becoming very aware that his current ministry team is slowing things down. He is also frustrated that his "ministry family" doesn't share his enthusiasm for his vision. Steve initially hired a coach to help him implement the multi-site ministry plan, with a special emphasis on how he can empower and equip the ministry team to lead the implementation plan.

During a recent coaching session, Steve expressed frustration about his vision and his "ministry family" and then made the following statement about himself, "Maybe I'm the one that's holding back this vision. It feels like all the pieces are there, but maybe there's something that needs to change about me."

In your words, describe the focus of this coaching relationship (as may have been determined in the initial coaching agreement).

What are Steve's new discoveries? What other new discoveries do you see ahead for Steve?

In what ways will these new discoveries impact the coaching agreement?

In what ways will the coaching agreement remain the same?

After hearing Steve state, "Maybe I'm the one that's holding us back," how would you coach Steve?

## **7. Creating New Awareness**

Brainstorming is an excellent way to explore new ways of doing things. Creating awareness takes it one step further and explores new ways of being, as well as doing. It's like working the plates

deep within the earth, resulting in major shifts and changes. Let me give you several examples:

- Consider this statement from one pastor I coached: “I’m an introvert and everyone knows that introverts aren’t good leaders.” No amount of doing would result in any lasting change. This pastor needed to go down deep and create a new awareness of his strengths.
- Consider the leadership team that fizzled out partway through a visioning process. The consultant tried everything to get them moving, and then finally inquired what was happening. After what seemed like an eternity of silence, one of the key leaders finally responded that they had gotten to this point on two previous occasions within the past five years and, in each instance, their pastor had moved on before the projects were completed. No sooner had the words been spoken when the leadership team had a major “a-ha.” They embraced their new awareness and began moving forward.
- Consider the awareness that launched my career as a full-time coach. As a part-time coach, my business growth was slowed by the belief that I was just a pastor and no one would hire a pastor as their coach. When my coach helped me verbalize this limiting belief, it created an awareness of the truth that my ideal clients will seek me out and hire me precisely because I am a pastor.

Creating new awareness is like raising the blinds and letting in the light of additional information, perspective and intention. New awareness is fostered when:

- Curiosity is encouraged.
- Clarifying questions are raised.

- Beliefs and assumptions are articulated and verified.
- You intentionally consider a different perspective.
- You are open to other ways of viewing and interpreting the same situation.

How does the coach facilitate new awareness?

- **Contextual listening.** The coach considers and explores the various contexts of the person being coached (e.g., the bigger picture, the total person, previous experiences, the values of the person). When David pulled out his slingshot to fight Goliath, he was drawing on earlier contexts of times when he had fought wild animals with his slingshot.
- **Missing pieces.** The coach helps individuals and groups see and say what they can't quite see or say. Because the coach is listening on multiple levels, the coach hears underlying values, motivation, greatness, frustration, etc. Simply being a mirror and holding up for the other what we're observing creates new awareness.
- **Drilling down.** Similar to the layers of an onion, the coaching process peels away the layers and gets to the core issues.
- **Listening for clues.** A coachee is always offering clues about themselves. R.D. Lang wrote, "The range of what we think and do is limited by what we fail to notice. And because we fail to notice that we fail to notice, there is little we can do to change; until we notice how failing to notice shapes our thoughts and deeds." Here are some powerful questions that will uncover important clues:
  - What kind of problems and crises do you keep attracting?
  - What do you keep doing that limits your success?
  - What thoughts are repeatedly playing in your head?

## Eliminating Limiting Beliefs and False Assumptions

One of the most powerful ways of creating awareness in a coaching relationship is to help the coachee identify and transform their limiting beliefs and false assumptions.

Use the following list to see if you recognize some of your own:

- I have to have all the answers.
- I have no choice. I have no power.
- I cannot lead.
- Change is always difficult.
- It isn't possible.
- What doesn't kill you makes you stronger.
- Peace is always better than honesty.

List three of your limiting beliefs:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

List three of your false assumptions:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Limiting beliefs and false assumptions can be very simple, yet very harmful. In her book *Time to Think*, Nancy Kline offers a simple yet profound method of dealing with limiting beliefs and false assumptions. One of her tips is to help your coachee to articulate

the “positive opposite” of their limiting belief or false assumption. This is often a difficult task for an individual or team to do, but press them to articulate the positive opposite of their bedrock assumption. Once articulated, ask them to write it down and say it several times.

## **8. Direct Communication**

If you spend time with a seasoned coach, you will notice the masterful way that they communicate. For example, you will almost never hear a masterful coach ramble. Most seasoned coaches are clear, concise and laser-like with their words, offering one question or statement at a time.

Another characteristic is their comfort with silence. There is no attempt to idly fill space; rather, an appropriate use of silence and pauses is demonstrated. And coaches tell the truth. They don't hold back on whatever needs to be said, even if that isn't always the nicest thing to hear or the most comfortable thing to say.

Seasoned coaches are direct in their communication, using language that will have the greatest positive impact on the person being coached. Four of the most important direct communication techniques are:

- Interrupting
- Advising
- Directing
- Messaging

### **Interrupting**

Most of us have experienced interruptions as distracting or annoying, but effective interrupting is truly an art. As a coaching

skill, masterful interrupting holds great benefit for the coachee, bringing them back on task, or helping them to “bottom-line” (get to the point).

Coaches interrupt within an environment of trust and intimacy, in which the coachee trusts the skill of the coach and knows that the coach has their best interest in mind. Interrupting can stem from deep listening, as a means of getting at something even deeper that needs to be said. Interrupting is a platform from which to catapult the coachee forward.

During my initial coaching sessions with new coachees, part of our initial agreement is for them to give me permission to interrupt them—when appropriate. Having this conversation on the front-end of the coaching experience helps the coachee to expect the interruptions and see it in a positive light.

When is it appropriate to interrupt someone you are coaching?

Here are several ways that I may interrupt someone while coaching:

- Say their name and ask for permission, e.g., “(Name), may I interrupt you?”
- Break in with, “Let’s push the pause button for a moment,” or “I’d like to step in for a moment.”
- Bottom-line it for them, e.g., “(Name), here’s what I’m hearing...”

## **Advising**

One of the myths of coaching is that coaches never give advice. That’s a myth? Let me explain. First and foremost, the coach wants

to tap into the expertise of the one they are coaching. Got it! And, there are also times when the coach has expertise and experiences that can have a positive impact on the forward progress of the coachee. During a workshop at an International Coach Federation conference, the presenter stated that #7 on the top 10 list of what people want in a coach is advice. The qualifiers are that they want advice from their coach when appropriate and when asked for.

The problem with giving advice is that most people offer advice in ways that are disempowering of others. They need to unlearn how to give advice and then re-learn how to advise. I suggest that newer coaches completely refrain from offering advice, at least for a time. Once they have learned how to effectively coach without giving advice, they can begin incorporating advice-giving into their coaching when appropriate and when asked for.

Consider the following tips when offering advice:

- Listen deeply. Hear all that the person has to say.
- Don't offer advice until you have thought through how the advice may be misheard.
- Don't give advice until you have heard all the facts.
- Don't forget that it's **ONLY ADVICE**; it's not a cure for global warming.
- Phrasing examples:
  - Here's what I've seen work. Tell me if it sounds like it's worth experimenting with.
  - That's a tough one. Here's what I advised another person and this is what happened.

## Directing

Directing is a technique for re-focusing or steering the person or group back toward their goals. This is useful for the coachee who frequently goes off on tangents or easily loses sight of the big picture.

Examples of directing:

- Hold that thought and let's talk about...
- For the past several weeks we've been focusing on ABC, is it time to move on to XYZ?
- Congratulations. Let's move on.

## Messaging

Messaging is a "truth" that, if heard, will help the other person to understand and act more quickly. It is a "blending" of acknowledging and tapping into the person's greatness.

Examples of messaging include:

- Tell them who they are. "You are someone who is . . ."
- Endorse what they have accomplished. "Wow. Look what you've accomplished. Congratulations."
- Tell them what's next. "You probably need to start focusing on ABC, because you've moved past XYZ."
- Tell them what you want for them. "What I want for you is ..."





# Chapter Three

## A Five-Step Coaching Model

**N**ow that you have the building blocks of coaching skills and techniques, it's time to put them together. The following coaching model will provide a framework you can come back to over and over again, as your skills progress and you coach more diverse and interesting people and situations.

Solid coaching, like a solid house, has a:

- Foundation
  - Listen
  - Evoke
- Supportive Frame
  - Clarify
  - Brainstorm
- Strong Covering
  - Support



### Laying the Foundation

#### Step 1: Listen

The goal as a coach is to listen so closely to your client that the answers come out. The ideal ratio is that you are listening 80% of the time and responding 20% of the time. It is absolutely critical that the client feel fully understood. Listen deeply by using these suggestions:

- Listen not just with your ears, but with your eyes and your whole being (“gut-level” listening).
- Listen to the tone, inflection, rate and pitch.
- Listen not just to what’s said, but to what’s not said.
- Pay particular attention to the last thing that is said.
- Listen without judgment, criticism or agenda.
- Listen without thinking about what you will be saying next.

## **Step 2: Evoke**

Prompt the coachee to say more. Evoking is like opening the tap. You are attempting to get beyond the surface and move to the source of the issue.

Examples of evocative responses:

- Hmmmm.
- What else do you want to say about this?
- Tell me more.
- Is there anything else you want me to know?

## **Propping Up the Supports**

### **Step 3: Clarify**

Once the coachee has shared and has actively engaged with you, it’s important to respond and clarify what is being said. This offers the client an opportunity to hear what they have just verbalized from a slightly different perspective. It also ensures that you and the client are on the same page.

Examples of clarifying techniques:

- I heard you say... (mirroring)

- I sense that... (paraphrasing or reflecting back)
- Is this what you mean? (verifying)
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how committed are you to this? 1=not important, 10=important (rating)
- Number these things based on which is most important to you. 1=least important, 10=most important (ranking)

## **Step 4: Brainstorm**

Once there is clarity about the topic at hand, you and the coachee can now begin to go below the surface and further discuss the issue. Questions are central to the coaching process.

A few examples of questions include:

- What are the options/opportunities here? Let's list them all.
- What's the simplest solution? What's the craziest solution?
- What's the payoff of NOT dealing with this?
- What's stopping you?
- What do you want to be able to say about this situation three months from now that you can't say today?
- What do you really, REALLY want?

A more complete list of questions is found in the section about powerful questions, earlier in this book.

## **Providing a Cover**

### **Step 5: Support**

Action is central to the coaching experience. Supporting the coachee to design an action step helps move the coachee forward,

closing the gap between where they currently are and where they want to be.

A typical coaching conversation might end like this:

- Based on our conversation today, what action would you like to take? And when will it be completed?
- What do you want to report back to me at our next coaching session?
- What will bring you closer to your goal?
- What will you need to be able to focus on this next week?
- What will get in the way?
- Who can help you with this?

In subsequent coaching sessions, you'll follow up by asking questions such as:

- What did you accomplish?
- What didn't you accomplish what you said you would?
- What got in the way?
- What's next?

# Chapter Four

## Coaching Scenarios

Here are several coaching scenarios that you can use to practice applying your coaching techniques and skills, within the framework of this coaching model.

Answer each question in writing.

### **Case #1: Dave**

Dave has been the Senior Pastor at his current church for the past four years. This is his first experience as a Senior Pastor. Prior to this assignment he spent 10 years on the staff of a large church and thoroughly loved it. Dave is very pro-church and has a lot of energy about his role as a pastor. The church he is currently leading has been on a steady decline in membership and revenue for the past 15 years.

Dave's supervisor has stated on numerous occasions that developing and implementing a vision for this church is to be Dave's top priority. Dave regularly invests his time and energy in areas other than vision development. Dave has also said on several occasions, "I am not a gifted leader." He supports this statement with numerous assessment tools he has recently taken. One example is that his Myers-Briggs Type Indicator revealed that he is an introvert. Dave has stated repeatedly that introverts aren't good leaders. This supports Dave's belief that he's not a gifted leader. Dave's supervisor has requested that he hire a coach to help him develop a clear vision for his church.

What are the key issues that Dave is addressing? What requests would you make of him?

How would you coach him?

What, if any, tools or resources would you use?

## **Case #2: John**

John is in his second year as the Senior Pastor at a 300-year-old church, where little has changed in the church or local community. Ten years ago, this rural farming community entered a period of rapid growth. Overnight, people from all over moved into their local community and built large expensive homes. New schools, roads, recreation centers and stores were constructed to address the rapid growth. The church also experienced rapid growth, requiring them to add new construction to their existing facility. The cost of the new construction was several million dollars. For the first time in this church's history, this congregation owed money. They had been proud of the fact that they had never needed a mortgage. The long-time members voted against borrowing money. They were out-voted by the new members, most of whom also had personal loans on their private homes.

John became the Senior Pastor of this church during the third year of this church's 15-year mortgage. Things were going along nicely for John during his first two years. Three years later, the long-time members wanted the focus of John's ministry to be on retiring the debt, while the newer members were pressing John to begin a

new capital campaign to address the growing need for additional space. John felt torn between both groups and saw the validity in each of their arguments. Several of John's colleagues had worked with a coach and had recommended coaching. John hired a coach because he was at a complete loss as to how to lead this church. John's first words to his coach were: "Seminary didn't prepare me for anything like this. Help. What do I do?"

What are the key issues that John is addressing? What requests would you make of him?

How would you coach him?

What, if any, tools or resources would you use?

### **Case #3: Kim**

Kim entered ministry in her mid-thirties. She was very successful in two earlier careers, both in sales. Kim also has a PhD in Philosophy. Kim had been extremely active in her local church her entire life. Her call to ministry, in her late twenties, felt like a natural next step for her. Kim regularly receives positive reviews from her church leaders. Their hope is that she will remain their pastor for a long time. Kim attributed much of her success in her earlier sales career to her work with a coach. She decided that a coach would also benefit her as a pastor.

During a recent coaching session, Kim stated: "I frequently feel overwhelmed. Being a pastor is really hard." A few minutes later she stated: "It's not supposed to be this hard, being a pastor. If God



called me to do ministry, shouldn't it be easier? Shouldn't it come naturally to me? I felt so much closer to God as a lay person in my home church. Now I rarely have time for God, let alone my family. Did I make a mistake in becoming a pastor?"

What are the key issues that Kim is addressing? What requests would you make of her?

How would you coach her?

What, if any, tools or resources would you use?

# Chapter Five

## Your Next Step

### *Congratulations! You Are Dangerous.*

I'd like to conclude this book by offering you four simple words. The first word is, Congratulations! Reading this book is a solid first step in your development as a coach, as well as a coach approach to ministry. This first step is something to be proud of and is a milestone to be acknowledged. I want to encourage you to put into daily practice the coaching skills and techniques you've just learned.

The three additional words that I want to caution you with are, You Are Dangerous! Yes, you read that correctly. The danger is that pastors and church leaders will stop after reading this book or after taking the introductory two-day training.

Incorporating coaching into ministry is a **RADICAL, REAL AND NECESSARY** paradigm shift in ministry. It's moving from a pastor-centered (denominational-centered) approach to a person-centered approach that empowers the people in the pews of your congregations.

Coaching is not something I have just licensed you to dabble in, such as:

- Learning “just enough” of the coaching language to sprinkle through your consulting. The consulting is the same; the language is different.
- Picking and choosing a few things to try and then quickly abandoning them because “they” didn't work.

- Listening deeply and using powerful questioning for a time, then falling back into old patterns of fixing things and people.
- Settling for things getting a bit better, instead of striving to be the best minister, coach and leader that you can be.
- Seeing coaching as a set of skills, rather than as a radical and necessary change in your approach and perspective to ministry.

I challenge you not to dabble this way, but to embrace this paradigm shift and embrace it as the DEATH of the pastor-centered (denominational-centered) approach to ministry and the RESURRECTION of the next great awakening in Christianity—the empowerment of all of God’s people.

Please go ahead right now and take the next step to book a free session with a Coaching4Clergy coach. I guarantee that this live experience of coaching will inspire and excite you even further about the possibilities that have opened up to you by reading this book.

To bring us back full circle to my introduction of this book, it is my vision that every spiritual leader have coach training in their professional toolkit. Thank you for reading this book and helping make my vision a reality!

Enjoy coaching!

# Appendices



# Appendix A

## Additional Coaching Techniques and Strategies

We've included in this section a number of exercises and techniques that you can use in your coaching.

### Focus Exercise

This exercise helps the individual gain clarity about their primary roles and responsibilities. Begin by writing your responses to each of these four questions:

1. What are the things that only you can do?
2. What are the things that you and others can do?
3. What are the things that you can do, but choose not to do?
4. What are the things that you cannot do and never want to do?

Look over your answers and deepen your learning with these additional questions:

- How does what you have written compare with how you actually spend your time and energy?
- What would it take to spend the majority of your time doing what only you can do?
- Who do you need to be in order to make this a reality?

Identify the changes and adjustments necessary and take action now. Today.

## **Leadership Timetable**

In order to respond to the challenges of leadership, leaders must make time for these priorities:

- **Rest.** Every good leader understands the importance of taking care of their physical body. (Also see Power Sabbath, next.)
- **Results.** Make time for your main goals.
- **Response.** Make sure there is adequate time for follow-up and follow-through.
- **Refocus.** Schedule time for course corrections and fine-tuning.

Ask your coachees which of the four “R’s” they frequently forget. The final “R” is often the most overlooked. Then ask, “Which of these ‘R’s’ would be of the greatest benefit to you and your leadership?”

## **Take a Power Sabbath**

A Power Sabbath includes four areas of rest. They include:

1. **Physical rest.** Make sure your body is getting adequate rest.
2. **Mind rest.** Enjoy some silence. Turn off the TV. Take a break from reading the depressing news in the paper. Just let your mind rest.
3. **Heart rest.** Caring for others and their needs can become exhausting. Take a short break and let others care for you. You'll be better able to care for others when you return.
4. **Soul rest.** Take time to experience the divine. Rest in the knowledge that the world revolves around God, not you or me!

When traveling by airplane, we're reminded that in an emergency, those traveling with children are to put their own oxygen mask on first and then care for their children. A strong personal foundation is like putting on your oxygen mask first. You are then better able to care for and lead those around you.



## **A “Dear John” Letter**

This humorous yet powerful letter can be presented to a client to demonstrate the impact of not changing.

Dear John,

You probably already know what this letter is about. You’ve seen it coming; I know you have. It’s about us, John. It’s over. I’m leaving you!

I’ve hung on as long as I could. You’ve got to give me credit for that. I mean, the way you swept me off my feet and talked lovingly about the future we would have together. I have waited so long for your embrace, your attention, and your love.

Why have you neglected me? Why have you made so many excuses? Your inaction and addiction to procrastination is tearing me apart. I simply must move on!

For years, I would get so excited every time you talked about getting started. My heart would pitter-patter every time you talked about me to other people, only to be let down once again because you were afraid. John, what are you afraid of? It’s only me! I am your hopes, dreams, and goals. I wanted you as much as you wanted me, but you have left me no choice. I simply must move on!

Please do not attempt to talk your way out of this. The years of indecision and lack of discipline tell me everything I need to know. If you really—and I mean REALLY—wanted me, you would have found a way for us to be together.

I am tired of having my hopes soar so high just to see them dashed. I simply must move on! Time is marching by without us, and my greatest fear is suddenly becoming visible on the horizon. I am so afraid that we could come to the end of our lifetime and never have

the chance to really know one another. It breaks my heart to even entertain this thought, but I simply must move on!

All I wanted, needed and asked for was your attention, your devotion, and your willingness to work hard for me. If that was too much to ask for, then I'm sorry. I simply must move on! All things of value must be earned, and I've grown tired of your excuses and lack of patience. On numerous occasions, I was within your grasp, but you quit too soon. Why did you leave me when you were so close?

I've grown tired of hearing that the timing is not right, that you're tired, or that someday you'll get around to it. It's now time that I get around to it myself and find someone who is committed, focused, and proactive. I simply must move on!

Sincerely,

Your hopes and dreams and goals for the past year

## **Split Time Versus Solid Time**

A common challenge among coaching clients is getting things done, especially those items that only they can do. The To Do list keeps growing. Feelings of guilt and inadequacy take root. The latest technological gismos are of no assistance. No matter what, there still aren't enough hours in the week to do all you want and need to do.

If you look more closely at your tasks and what they require, you can get past this bottleneck in no time. You see, some tasks require a solid block of time to be completed. These items often require a creative flow of thought or have a sequence/strategic process to them. Every time you stop and restart a solid block project, you lose valuable time and momentum.

Split-time tasks, on the other hand, can be stopped and restarted with little to no loss of time or momentum. These kinds of tasks can be worked on when you discover a few extra minutes or when you're on auto-pilot.

Give this a try: Begin by identifying what you need to do in any given week. Then, for each task, decide if you need a "solid" block of time OR a "split" block of time.

You will be amazed at how this simple distinction will allow you to use your time so much more efficiently, and how much more quickly you will complete the tasks on your list.

# Appendix B

## Recommended Reading

*Ask and You Will Succeed: 1001 Extraordinary Questions to Create Life-Changing Results*, by Ken Foster

*Becoming a Conflict Competent Leader: How You and Your Organization Can Manage Conflict Effectively*, by Craig E. Runde and Tim A. Flanagan

*Book Yourself Solid: The Fastest, Easiest, and Most Reliable System for Getting More Clients Than You Can Handle Even if You Hate Marketing and Selling*, by Michael Port and Tim Sanders

*Christ-Centered Coaching: 7 Benefits for Ministry Leaders*, by Jane Creswell

*Fresh Bread: And Other Gifts of Spiritual Nourishment*, by Joyce Rupp

*Full Steam Ahead! Unleash the Power of Vision in Your Work and Your Life*, by Ken Blanchard and Jesse Stoner

*Get Clients Now™: A 28-Day Marketing Program for Professionals, Consultants, and Coaches*, by C.J. Hayden

*Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap...and Others Don't*, by Jim Collins

*Inviting God In: Scriptural Reflections and Prayers Throughout the Year*, by Joyce Rupp

*Jesus, Life Coach: Learn from the Best*, by Laurie Beth Jones

*Leading With Questions: How Leaders Find the Right Solutions by Knowing What to Ask*, by Michael Marquardt

*Living Your Strengths: Discover Your God-Given Talents and Inspire Your Community*, by Albert Winesman, Donald Clifton, and Curt Liesveld

*Managing Transitions: Making the Most of Change*, by William Bridges

*May I Have This Dance?: An Invitation to Faithful Prayer Throughout the Year*, by Joyce Rupp

*Now, Discover Your Strengths*, by Marcus Buckingham and Donald Clifton

*QBQ! The Question Behind the Question: Practicing Personal Accountability at Work and in Life*, by John Miller

*StrengthsFinder 2.0*, by Tom Rath

*The 4-Hour Workweek: Escape 9-5, Live Anywhere, and Join the New Rich*, by Timothy Ferriss

*The Art of Possibility: Transforming Professional and Personal Life*, by Rosamund Stone Zander and Benjamin Zander

*The Back of the Napkin: Solving Problems and Selling Ideas with Pictures*, by Dan Roam

*The Business and Practice of Coaching: Finding Your Niche, Making Money, and Attracting Ideal Clients*, by Lynn Grodzki and Wendy Allen

*The CoachU Personal and Corporate Training Handbook*, by Coach U Inc.

The International Coach Federation, [www.coachfederation.org](http://www.coachfederation.org)

*The Path: Creating Your Mission Statement for Work and for Life*, by Laurie Beth Jones

*The Portable Coach: 28 Sure Fire Strategies For Business And Personal Success*, by Thomas Leonard and Byron Larson

*The Power of Full Engagement: Managing Energy, Not Time, Is the Key to High Performance and Personal Renewal*, by Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz

*The Present Future: Six Tough Questions for the Church*, by Reggie McNeal

*Three Simple Rules: A Wesleyan Way of Living*, by Reuben P. Job

*Time to Think; Listening to Ignite the Human Mind*, by Nancy Kline



# Appendix C

## Powerful Questions

### Top 10 Year-End Questions for You or Your Team

1. What have you accomplished this year? Be specific. Write it down. Schedule some time to celebrate this!
2. What have you learned this year? What skills did you pick up? What lessons?
3. What got in your way? Where will your work be next year? Be honest if it was you that got in the way.
4. Who contributed to your success? What can you do to recognize these members of your personal or professional team?
5. What mistakes did you make, and what did you learn from them? Writing these down is a good refresher for what not to do next year.
6. How was your work consistent with your values?
7. Where did you not take responsibility? Sometimes this is easier to see with a little distance from the actual event.
8. How did your performance rate? Give yourself a letter grade or a 1-10 score.
9. What do you need to let go of? Doing so can help you move much more lightly into the New Year.
10. What was missing for you this year? How can you incorporate it into next year?



## **Top 10 Questions for Leaders**

1. What do you want to be able to say three years from now that you can't say today (about yourself or your organization)?
2. What are the possible next steps?
3. Who can help you with this?
4. What's the truth about now?
5. How do you handle failure?
6. Who do you model?
7. How much of a people pleaser are you?
8. What do you need to say goodbye to in order to move forward?
9. On a scale of 1 to 10, how committed are you to taking action?  
(1=no commitment, 10=high commitment)
10. What's the payoff of not taking action?

## **Val's Favorite Questions**

1. What's next?
2. What do you want?
3. What are you afraid of?
4. What is this costing you?
5. What are you attached to?
6. What is the dream?
7. What is the essence of the dream?
8. What is beyond this problem?
9. What is ahead?
10. What are you building towards?
11. What has to happen for you to feel successful?
12. What gift are you not being responsible for?
13. What are your healthy sources of energy?
14. What stops you?
15. What makes your heart sing?
16. What's in your way?
17. What would make the biggest difference here?
18. What are you going to do?
19. What do you like to do?
20. What can you do to be happy right now?
21. What do you hope to accomplish by having that conversation?
22. What do you hope to accomplish by doing that?
23. What's the first step?
24. What would it be like to have excitement and fear at the same time?

25. What's important about that?
26. What would it take for you to treat yourself like your best client?
27. What benefit/payoff is there in the present situation?
28. What do you expect to have happen?
29. What rules do you have that keep getting in the way?
30. What's the ideal outcome?
31. What would it look like?
32. What's the truth about this situation?
33. What's the right action?
34. What REALLY empowers you?
35. What's working for you?
36. How well do you deal with uncertainty?
37. What decision would you make from a place of abundance?
38. What other choices do you have?
39. What do you really, really want?
40. What if there were no limits?
41. What aren't you telling me that's keeping me from coaching/helping you?
42. What haven't I asked that I should ask?
43. What needs to be said that has not been said?
44. What's on the back burner that needs to be placed on the front burner?
45. What's on the front burner that needs to be placed on the back burner?
46. What else do you have to say about that?
47. What is left to do to have this be complete?

48. What do you have invested in continuing to do it this way?
49. What is that?
50. What comes first?
51. What consequence are you avoiding?
52. What is the value you received from this meeting/conversation?
53. What is motivating you?
54. What has you hooked?
55. What is missing here?
56. What does that remind you of?
57. What do you suggest?
58. What is underneath that?
59. What part of what I said was useful? How so?
60. What is this person contributing to the quality of your life?
61. What is it that you are denying yourself right now?
62. Who or what gives you courage to go on?
63. What is the simplest solution here?
64. What would help you know I support this/you completely?
65. What happened?
66. What are you avoiding?
67. What are you committed to?
68. What is your vision for yourself and the people around you?
69. What don't you want?
70. What if you knew?
71. What's your heart telling you? What are you willing to give up?
72. What steps can you take so that your words and actions match?
73. What are you not facing?

74. What does this feeling remind you of?
75. What would you do differently if this problem were solved?
76. What does your soul say?
77. How can your biggest fans support you?
78. What's the payoff for you of not dealing with this issue?
79. Are things as bad as you say they are or are they worse?
80. At what point when you say "yes" are you really feeling "no"?
81. What is the decision you are avoiding?
82. What are you pretending not to know?
83. What are ten things I absolutely need to know about you?
84. What do you want to be able to say about yourself (your church) three months from now? One year from now? Three years from now?
85. What is holding you back? What keeps getting in the way?
86. What is one simple thing you could do today to get you closer to your goal? (Right now! Today!)
87. What is your biggest, wildest dream?
88. What keeps you up at night? What do you find yourself continually thinking about when you're in the shower?
89. What has motivated you in the past to reach/achieve difficult goals, make important decisions, or do challenging things? Can we use this as a motivator now?
90. What needs your immediate and full attention right now?
91. What are you tolerating?
92. What has served you in the past? Is it still in effect now?
93. What would you do if you knew you couldn't fail?
94. What part of this goal is yours? What belongs to someone else? What if the goal was all yours?

95. How can I best support you? What do you need most from me?
96. What are you grateful for?
97. What habit do you never, ever, under any circumstance, want to pass on to others?
98. What's missing?
99. What do you have to do differently to make this happen?
100. What do you need to put in place to make this happen?
101. When you attain your goal, what will it look like?
102. Who do you know that is already doing this well?
103. What will be the signs that it's time to begin?
104. How will you know that you have succeeded?
105. How will you know when you arrive?
106. What about yourself - do you need to change?
107. What is one thing you need to focus on to get where you want to go?
108. Could you be mistaken? How could you check this out?
109. Does this align with your vision and goals?
110. What is one thing you feel really good about over this past week?
111. What one thing would make the biggest difference right now?
112. What's your belief about this situation?
113. What would you like more of? Less of?
114. What is true about this situation?
115. What are the affects of this on you?
116. What steps would move this forward?

117. How attached are you to the outcome?
118. What is the “should” in this situation?
119. Is this the time to begin?
120. What is the truth about this situation?
121. What is the path of least resistance?
122. Is there another way? Let’s brainstorm 5 to 10 other possibilities.
123. What will dramatically increase your experience of God?
124. Can you see what is beyond this problem?
125. Can you see what’s ahead?
126. Are you open to a completely different way of looking at this?
127. What are your actions saying about this situation?
128. What will happen if you keep doing this for the next 10 years?
129. Underneath all of this, what are you really committed to?
130. What is the legacy that you want to leave behind?
131. May I push you on this?
132. So, what’s possible here?
133. What opportunities are you not taking advantage of?
134. Who’s really in charge here?
135. What are five changes or actions that you can take in the next 30 days that will move you forward?
136. What are you willing to do to make this work?
137. What consumes your time, to the point that it distracts you from attaining your goals?
138. How is being stuck serving you?

139. What are you afraid of about this situation?
140. What is the worst that could happen? And if that happened, what's the worst that could happen after that?
141. What is the best that could happen?
142. What are you NOT saying? What are you holding back?
143. Are you pursuing a goal that no longer makes sense?
144. What internal rules and unspoken standards are having a negative impact on this situation?





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# About J. Val Hastings



Dr. J. Val Hastings, MCC, is the Founder and President of Coaching4Today’sLeaders, Coaching4Clergy, Coaching4Groups, and Coaching4BusinessLeaders. Val hired his first coach while he was pastoring at a local United Methodist church. His progress was noticeable by all, and he began to wonder, “What if I adopted a coaching approach to leadership?” In that moment, a vision began to emerge—a global vision of Every Leader a Coach.

Dr. Hastings is the author of numerous books and has developed four coach training programs which are accredited and approved to the highest level by the International Coach Federation. These trainings are offered globally and are offered in many languages, including English, Spanish, Portuguese and Korean. Graduates of these programs have received all three coaching credentials: ACC, PCC and MCC.

Val currently holds the designation of Master Certified Coach through the International Coach Federation, its highest coaching designation. He also holds the designation of Professional Mentor-Coach. In addition to teaching at his own programs, Val holds faculty status at Coach University and Faith Evangelical Seminary. In 2006 Val was a presenter at the global gathering of the International Coach Federation and, in 2007, he served as the President of the Philadelphia ICF Chapter.



*"I thought the book was extremely well-written and provided an excellent introduction to the subject of coaching. The personal and biblical illustrations served to relate well to a Christian leader and the scenarios certainly were ones that he/she could identify with. I learned a great deal from the illustrations and background information you provided, and I believe that this book will make me a better coach and trainer of coaches. Thank you Val, for this incredible work. Your book represents a wise blend of pure coaching technique, insightful practical application and solid biblical reflections that move discovery-based coaching into the center stage of Christian Leadership. Spiritual leaders, regardless of denominational distinctions, will be blessed as they learn and practice coaching. What a powerful tool for the Emergent Leader."*

— **G.C. Patterson, M.Div., Th.M., D.D.**

Texas Baptist Coaching Network Texas Baptist Convention

*"Val's book is a great reminder for all coaches on how to be a 'masterful' coach! This book shows how coaching can be used to empower today's church leaders to work effectively with volunteers, staff, congregational members and church leaders. Coaching is about moving individuals forward and Val's book shows how we can effectively implement this model. Val has crafted exercises and scenarios from real-life church situations, with Biblical references and examples of how coaching can work in a church setting. This book is an excellent resource to any church leader wanting to move their church forward in a way that supports and builds relationships and empowers others!"*

— **Trigena H. Halley**

Peak Performance CCT, LLC

*"Even though I'm an experienced coach, reading this book served as a reminder of the gift of coaching to the church's work of empowering leaders to best live their full life of faith and effectiveness as well as provide ways for them to call forth others. The exercises and scenarios, which are included throughout, assist the reader in applying the approaches to real life church situations, while the Biblical references and examples of coaching will be indispensable in helping the church world appreciate this new "hot" mode of working with people. The Next Great Awakening inspired me that the training of leaders in coaching skills is flowing along in a powerful way. I'm excited about working with Val to create new training and coaching opportunities for leaders and churches."*

— **Dr. Larry Ousley, CPCC, ACC, ORSCC**

Executive Director of the Intentional Growth Center, Lake Junaluska, North Carolina



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