



How to manage your life more successfully?

**22 tested and tried
self-coaching tools**

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SPARKLE

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INTRODUCTION

The coaching conversation comprises of 2 persons. The coach – an external entity supports and helps his/her client – the coachee to achieve his/her goals. The coach does not solve the clients' problems, s/he is merely a catalyst in the clients' transformation process. The coach does this by powerful questioning and using plenty of coaching tools. Each one of us has an intelligent, creative and wise side and thereby discovers solutions to his/her problems by tapping into this wisdom. It is wonderful to have an external guide that motivates and helps the coachee mirror the challenges faced. The aim of this ebook is to provide the reader with tools that s/he can use to self-coach.

In this e-book we cover the first Hungarian coaching model SPARKLE from start till finish. This model was formulated by Laura Komócsin and Nikoletta Benedek, which divides a typical coaching process into seven stages.



In the Situation stage, the coach and the coachee assess the starting point, the challenges faced by the client. To properly evaluate the current situation, you can choose from among multiple methods and a vast number of tools. First of all, however, it is essential to win the client's confidence so that s/he knows that s/he is not being badgered with questions (questioning technique), "spied upon" (shadowing), "investigated" (360 degree assessment) out of sheer curiosity, but rather this is all done to help him/her. The diagnosis stage should include assessing the coachee's openness and secret zones that are best avoided (for example, in business coaching, the coachee may stipulate that no personal issues will be covered). If you are

aware of taboos, then you can employ opening methods and then perform detailed research based on this. Coaching tools coupled with some psychological background as well as different creative writing techniques may be utilized in this stage. With all means at his or her disposal, the coach will effectively use the tools of active listening and questioning techniques.

360 degree feedback

- Questions contain some standard leadership ones, but others specifically developed for the focus areas
- This could contain online elements and if required 20 minutes interviews with some key persons as well
- Getting feedback from peers, colleagues, supervisor/mentor or even key customers/clients/suppliers

Shadow coaching (the coach will visit a board or other meeting and provide one-to-one feedback)

In the Positioning phase: Based on the input defined above, the client will be able to specify the key focus(es) of the coaching process. The client, assisted by the coach, defines his desired vision, dictates the direction and the aim – Positions himself. Here, the coach basically helps the client decide upon a reasonable objective that can be achieved (a SMART goal). Tools used in this stage can be divided into two large groups depending on how visual the client is. For instance, resuming the previous stage, montage, wheel of life, old house – new house techniques or heraldry may be used.

In the Alternatives phase: We focus on identifying and drafting options and possibilities to be able to determine how the aim could be accomplished. The importance of this stage lies in taking into consideration the various possibilities. Instead of jumping to make a decision, the client should be able to consider several options and make a

well-informed decision in the next stage. The coach can inspire brainstorming using various tools such as reversals, magnification, encyclopedia, Ideal people, action plan, or the CREATE framework, although he might also achieve a satisfactory result using spontaneous questioning technique or considering best practice and their role models' solutions. For example if the focus is on finding the proper motivation person by person, then here we can use motivation tests.

In the Route phase: The coach will support the client in making a choice from among the available alternatives. The best way to help is to use a pros and cons analysis, but other options in the coach's toolkit should be also offered. You can deploy the Mercedes symbol or the CHOICE model if you have not used them in a previous stage, but it might be sufficient to project yourself as a challenging and confrontative coach. At the end of this phase the coachee will have an action plan describing what to do, when and how.

Key obstacles: the coach supports the client in going the distance on the selected route to ensure that s/he would accomplish his/her aim instead of retreating upon meeting the first Obstacle. Until this point, clients usually enjoy the coaching sessions. In general, neither the diagnosis (Situation), the goal-setting (Positioning), the working out of Alternatives, nor the Route definition are "painful" for them. No later than at this point, however, the client is required to leave his/her comfort zone. S/he may even start cancelling regular appointments. In this case, a coach should not take offense. It is a completely natural process, and it is advisable to make the coachee aware of it. To do so, a skilled coach has his or her tools, such as the Sailing-ship, Magic shop, rubber band, buckets/balloons provided they were not already deployed in the Positioning stage.

In Leverage phase coaches support their clients taming self-defeating behaviors. There are plenty of useful tricks and tools to utilize when clients start thinking about giving up but there is no excuse they have to go on if they want to

reach their desired outcome. Role plays and positive self talk may help a lot in moving forward such as the pause point technique.

Evaluation: A coaching engagement ideally comes to an end when the client has accomplished his or her goal. In this case, the coach celebrates the accomplishment together with the client, and this is the point where they both report to the client's manager on the joint efforts taken if its a corporate assignment. Simple summary patterns and conclusion lists work pretty well.

Every step in the SPARKLE model has several tools that can be used. These are all mentioned in Laura Komócsin's Toolful coach book that contains 150 tools for coaches. We have chosen only 22 of these tools which are useful to be applied for self-coaching. We have tried each one of them and will be sharing our personal experiences as we go along.

SOME WORDS ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Laura Komócsin

After working at Accenture as management consultant, she has been engaged in coaching as a professional since 2003. She successfully supported executives and senior executives of several large companies. She was enrolled to the list of the 25 Most Important Hungarian Women in 2010.

In 2011, she was the most known Hungarian coach and the Business Coach Ltd. lead by her is the most known coaching company in Hungary. She believes in the power of coaching even in self-coaching if there is no other coach available, just ourselves.

Perna Sujan

Over 30 years of experience in the services industry. Wellness, legal recruiting and specialized on coaching senior lawyers working for reputed local, regional and international firms in the CEE region. Rich tapestry of life experiences. Bringing a unique blend of the east and the west. Ontological coaching is what she practices. Bringing balance and harmony in the language, emotions and body domains. Mirroring the client and shifting the client by way of powerful questioning. This helps the clients tap into their intuitive, wise self and they come up with solutions that are more likely to stick with them. Co-creating new ways of being for the client. Widely traveled, lived in Asia, Africa, America and Europe. Acquired a rich understanding of various cultures across the world.

SITUATION PHASE



This is an important phase, identifying the challenge faced and accepting this. We are very often so much involved in the problem that we cannot see the breakdown clearly. We cannot see the forest to the trees. The tools below can help us to see the situation as well as ourselves more clearly. It could be revealed that the solution lies in a totally different direction contrary to our beliefs and habits that we hold on to so dearly. This can be quite a shock.

Johari window

The Johari window is a technique created in 1955 by two American psychologists, Joseph Luft and Harrington Ingham used to help people better understand their relationship with self and others. It is used primarily in self-help groups and corporate settings as a heuristic exercise.

When performing the exercise, subjects are given a list of 55 adjectives and pick five or six that they feel describe their own personality. Peers of the subject are then given the same list, and each pick five or six adjectives that describe the subject. These adjectives are then mapped onto a grid.

Charles Handy calls this concept the Johari house with four rooms. Room 1 is the part of ourselves that we see and others see. Room 2 is the aspects that others see but we are not aware of. Room 4 is the most mysterious room in that the unconscious or subconscious part of us is seen by neither ourselves nor others. Room 3 is our private space, which we know but keep from others.

Open or Arena: Adjectives that are selected by both the participant and his or her peers are placed into the Open or Arena quadrant. This quadrant represents traits of the subjects that both they and their peers are aware of.

Hidden or Façade: Adjectives selected only by subjects, but not by any of their peers, are placed into the Hidden or Façade quadrant, representing information about them their peers are unaware of. It is then up to the subject to disclose this information or not.

Blind: Adjectives that are not selected by subjects but only by their peers are placed into the Blind Spot quadrant. These represent information that the subject is not aware of, but others are, and they can decide whether and how to inform the individual about these “blind spots”.

Unknown: Adjectives that were not selected by either subjects or their peers remain in the Unknown quadrant, repre-

senting the participant's behaviors or motives that were not recognized by anyone participating. This may be because they do not apply or because there is collective ignorance of the existence of these traits. One facet of interest in this area is our human potential. Our potential is unknown to us, and others.

	Known to self	Not known to self
Known to others	Open	Blind
Not known to others	Hidden	Unknown

The Johari Window

SWOT analysis

A SWOT analysis (alternatively SWOT matrix) is a structured planning method used to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats involved in a project or in a business venture. A SWOT analysis can be carried out for a product, place, industry or person. It involves specifying the objective of the business venture or project and identifying the internal and external factors that are favorable and unfavorable to achieve that objective. Some authors credit SWOT to Albert Humphrey, who led a convention at the Stanford Research Institute (now SRI International) in the

1960s and 1970s using data from Fortune 500 companies. However, Humphrey himself does not claim the creation of SWOT, and the origins remain obscure. The degree to which the internal environment of the firm matches with the external environment is expressed by the concept of strategic fit.

Strengths: characteristics of the individual that give it an advantage over others. Personality traits, virtues that help an individual reach his goals. Patience, motivation, knowledge and experience are some of the examples belonging to this category.

Weaknesses: characteristics that place an individual at a disadvantage relative to others. The inner fears, worries, anxieties, negative self talk, negative self beliefs that inhibit or limit our potential and talents. Lack of self esteem.

Opportunities: elements that a person could exploit to its advantage. Examples of these are availability of financial resources, training facilities and networking connections.

Threats: elements in the environment that could cause trouble for an individual. Bad intentions or lack of resources available.

Identification of SWOTs is important because they can inform later steps in planning to achieve the objective.

Prerna's experience: When I went through my coach training, it was revealed to me in a brutal fashion the assessment of unworthiness that I was living my life out of. Once uncovered, I took steps every day reminding myself the truths and success that I had achieved in my life. I reminded to take myself to a worthy place in my body, emotions as well as the language that I carried out in my head space. I brought to conscious attention the opportunities available to me. This slowly took me out of my “unworthy” space to a more worthy being. By constant practice, I have created new neural pathways in my brain.

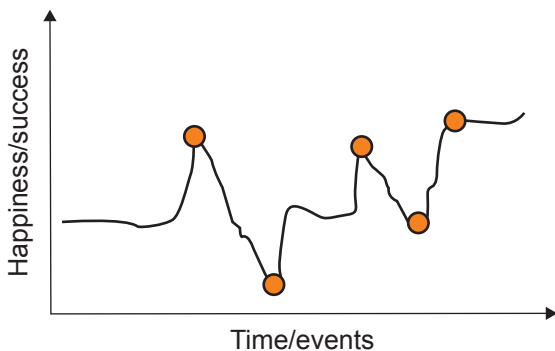
The decision makers should consider whether the objective is attainable, given the SWOTs. If the objective is not attainable a different objective must be selected and the process repeated.

Users of SWOT analysis need to ask and answer questions that generate meaningful information for each category (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) to make the analysis useful and find their competitive advantage.

	Helpful to achieving the objective	Harmful to achieving the objective
Internal origin (attribute of the organization)	Strengths	Weaknesses
External origin (attribute of the environment)	Opportunities	Threats

Happiness and success diagram

Are we noticing that life does not flow like a river, are we feeling that we do not experience happiness? Do we feel obstacles on our path? It is important to stop for a bit. We must consciously bring to our mind a period where we felt the happiest in our life. What was behind this feeling must be clearly examined. Let us now prepare a graph. The vertical axis on the diagram represents the level of happiness on a scale of 1 to 10. The horizontal axis are the experiences that brought us joy. On connecting the dots we shall arrive at a diagram. Now examine deeply what was behind every number on the graph. Why did one experience bring us to a happiness level of 3 and one to a level of 9? Once we have clarity, we will be able to determine what truly takes us to a place of joy. We could do this for specific areas of our life. Dilemma in career, disharmony in personal lives/ partnerships. Once we come to the point of understanding what brings us joy, we can pursue accordingly.



Activity-passion list

This is a commonly used tool by coaches. Are we facing the same problem again and again? It might be worth our while to monitor ourselves for a few hours, a few days or even a few weeks. The habits that do no serve us will come to light. Are we unable to say no? As a result we take on too much. Or are we procrastinating and unable to meet deadlines? When we note down on an hourly basis all our activities, we understand where we are spending time in not so profitable activities.

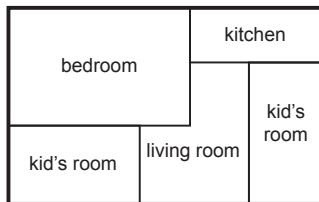
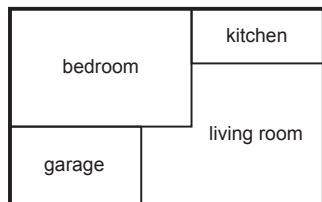
Another option that we could use is to prepare a table listing out the activities on an hourly basis. We could put down the passion it brought us on a scale of 1 to 10. This could bring to light the periods when we are most productive, motivated, the activities that we enjoy the most. We can also determine the periods and activities when we are in flow. This is a very helpful tool in deciding career or other change.

Time	Activity	Passion
9.00–9.30	Reply emails	2
9.30–10.00	Prepare for meeting	4
10.00–11.00	Successful meeting with an important client	10
11.00–12.00	Follow up and admin the meeting	4
12.00–13.00	Business lunch with colleagues	10
13.00–14.00	Performance feedback meeting with a high performer	10
14.00–15.00	Performance feedback meeting with a low performer	1
15.00–16.00	Administration	2

Old house – new house

This tool is useful for bringing about balance in personal or professional lives. There might be periods when we do not feel satisfied in the way our life is going forward. We wish to make a change.

Draw a diagram of your home. The different rooms in the house represent the areas of your life. For example, the living room represents your family and social life, the bedroom space represents life with your partner/spouse. The bathroom represents your personal space. Your study represents your work life. You can add on garage space, children's rooms, terrace as per your lifestyle demands currently. The total area must not exceed 100 sq meters.

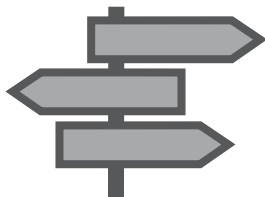


Now prepare another diagram making changes that you would like to see in your life 5 years in the future. Make the desirable changes as per your wishes. Enlarge or reduce the areas that you would like to expand or reduce in your life 5 years from now. You might want to reduce the study and have a children's room 5 years from now.

You could separate the private and professional life into 2 levels. If you wish spend more time with your partner or professionally with colleagues, you might want to reduce the office space and increase the meeting room/conference room facilities. In your personal life, you might want to spend more time with friends 5 years from now rather than focusing only on family which took away all your time and attention. You might decide to bring balance and make some changes to bring this in effect.

Prerna's experience: When my daughters left the nest, I noticed a huge vacuum and loss of purpose in my life. All the years spent raising my 2 beautiful daughters with one pointed focus had come to a successful close. Now what? I felt lost, confused and aimless. This is when I decided to start coach training program in the United States alongside working a more than full time job. Once I transitioned out of the legal recruiting career into the coaching profession, I set a clear intention of leading a healthy, happy abundant and meaningful life. I am constantly monitoring my agenda and strive to maintain a healthy balance between work, family conference calls with my daughters once a week via Skype, time with dear friends, my personal growth, spiritual practices on a daily basis, continuous learning in my professional domain as well as rest, recreation and exercise. Many times we get carried away when we're not monitoring closely. I notice that I feel out of sync when I don't pay attention. I immediately stop and reboot. I have learnt to serve myself first before I go out to serve the world proud to be a role model for them.

POSITIONING



This phase deals with nailing down the goals precisely. It is important to write these down, it is very easy to lose sight of our goals. We could dream of a bigger house, an ideal relationship, a better workplace but they shall remain as dreams until we do not take the right action. This is an important step in self-coaching whereby we set up an action plan to realize the dreams that we aspire to achieve.

SMART goals

Once you have planned your project, turn your attention to developing several goals that will enable you to be successful. Goals should be SMART - specific, measurable, attractive, realistic and time-based.

The acronym SMART has a number of slightly different variations, which can be used to provide a more comprehensive definition for goal setting:

S – specific: your goals need to be specific. ‘I want to be happy’ is a general term. It does not take you forward. ‘I wish to get to the next level in my workplace’ is an example of a specific goal.

M – measurable: your goals must have a concrete number. How many kilos lighter do I wish to be? How many new clients do I wish to have by the end of a specific period? How much money must I have in the bank? How much should my monthly income be? We must put a number to our desired goals however difficult it might be to make an estimate in some cases. It adds an element of motivation and it will give you a concrete reference point to go back to. As an example, if you would like to work on improving your relationship, you might want to set a target for yourself. How much time will you spend with your partner per week as a couple?

A – attractive: It must hold a challenge for you and you must have a feeling of enthusiasm towards your goal. Additionally it must be attractive enough for you.

R – realistic: you must pick a goal that is realistic. It does not mean that you need to be reckless, it is okay to dream big but make sure that it is in alignment with the issue that you’re trying to solve. You will not become an Olympic champion if you have never practiced sport in your life but you certainly will get to the next level in your professional life with the determination and a healthy mindset.

T – time frame: this is one of the most effective motivating factors. Setting an appropriate time frame for yourself. Keep in mind that this should not be unrealistically calculated. This will only lead to further stress and panic. An added boost that might help you would be to imagine the time of the year when you will reach your goals and actually visualize this. If you will successfully reach your goal during the summer time, you might want to imagine the sunshine during the summer months when you will be celebrating with great joy.

Specific	Is it about me?
Measurable	How can I measure it?
Attractive	Is it attractive enough for me to invest my efforts?
Realistic	Is my goal realistic?
Time frame	By when?

Prerna's experience: I brought up my girls in Budapest Hungary. From a very young age, I instilled in them a desire to study in North America. I was not given that privilege coming from a traditional, conservative Indian background. I was living my dream and vision through my girls. My divorce brought me to Hungary from Africa where I was forced to raise my girls single handedly. There was focus, determination and perseverance throughout the 16 years. I am proud to declare that today both my girls have good jobs in North America, are shining in their careers and I feel accomplished. Once we decide what we wish to achieve, the Universe conspires to make it happen. We often do not realize how much power lies within each one of us. Once we uncover this, there is absolutely nothing that we cannot manifest. This has been my personal experience having lived an extremely challenging life as a foreigner with absolutely no family support except that of my 2 wonderful daughters for which I feel hugely blessed.

Positive visualization

Our brains do not have the capacity to distinguish between situations that have actually taken place and situations that we imagine. We experience the same joy actually visiting a beach over the summer or if we imagine in our minds being on a beach watching the waves rise and fall, feeling the warmth of the sun on our skin and the fragrance in the air. The process of imagination and visualization release the very same hormones of well being and joy as if we were actually on the beach during our summer vacation. It is precisely due to this that this is one of the most effective self-coaching tools. Let us use our senses and imagination! What do we see, what do we hear, what do we feel in our skin, what do we smell, how do we feel having reached our goals.

The more detailed our imagination, the more effective the result. If we have realized our goals in our imagination and know the feelings that this will release it will be much easier to achieve these in reality.

V – Visual	I imagine the deep blue water of the ocean, the waves rising and falling
A – Auditory	I hear the waves lashing the shore
K – Kinesthetic	I feel the warmth of the sun on my skin, the stones on the beach touching my back
O – Olfactory	I smell the algae from the sea
G – Gustatory	I taste the salted water from the sea

The wheel of life

Finding balance in our lives could be one of the most challenging tasks. To give every aspect of our life the same energy and attention. To bring balance in our work, personal, family lives. To have enough time to pursue our hobbies. It might be an unrealistic state of being to experience but once we realize which area of our lives need more priority and attention, this could become an achievable goal. The wheel of life tool is useful to receive some enlightenment about this.

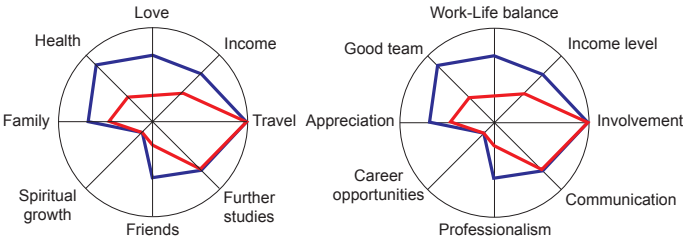
Experiment

Draw a circle and divide into 8 sections. Let us choose 8 areas of our life that are important for us. For example, family, health, friends, spiritual growth, love, further studies, hobbies, physical exercise, travel, income levels etc. whatever holds importance in our lives at the current moment. These areas are marked on the outside of this circle. We mark on this circle the exact point where we are in the level of satisfaction. 0 is closest to the center and 10 is at the outer end of the circle. We now take a different color pen and draw the level of satisfaction that we would like to achieve. This will bring out a spider web kind of graph which will indicate clearly the area of our personal life that requires improvement. We could do this both in personal and professional lives.

In our professional lives the areas could be divided as work-life balance, communication, career opportunities, appreciation, involvement, income levels, good team, professionalism, trainings. The graph revealed will indicate which area requires growth and improvement.

It is useful to know for ourselves what is important in our eyes. Once we know this we can receive clarity and an understanding what areas we would like to change. There might be one or 2 areas that require an enhanced level of satisfaction in which case we could make the neces-

sary changes and shifts. Then, it might be revealed to us that we are completely dissatisfied in which case we might want to think of a career or job change. In any case, this useful exercise brings about clarity and an understanding about ourselves and our expectations.



Creative writing: ideal day

This is a tool that could be used for many purposes. It could be used for a problem, challenge or if we feel stuck. All we have to do is to sit down in a quiet space and write for 15 minutes continuously about the issue. If nothing comes to our mind, we could write just this. This exercise of writing physically activates the right brain function. It brings about solutions that we could have never imagined. It brings to the surface thoughts that are in our subconscious mind which are beyond our conscious understanding.

Another variation of this could be to write down our version of an ideal day. This is an useful experiment when we would like to have more time and are struggling with absence of time constantly. It would be good to use if we wish to change our workplace or career. Write down in utmost detail every aspect of your ideal day from waking up till going to bed at night. What would we like to experience starting from waking up, in what mood we wake up, what clothes we put on, the smells that we experience, the colors that we see, the people around us, our activities, our surroundings, our workspace etc.

My personal experience has been extremely positive. Every time I wrote my wish for an ideal day on paper, it filled me up with positive energy. When I read this a few weeks later, it brought pleasant feelings and an increased level of enthusiasm.

ALTERNATIVES



Now that the goals have been set, we can explore the alternatives available to us to reach our goals. It can broaden our experience. Getting from point A to B could include several possibilities. It could be a good idea to get creative in this phase. We could allow our imagination to run wild and fantasize about options. Make sure to write these down. They might just help us understand further and we can use part of these findings in reaching our goals.

Lexicon stroke

Let us pick a book from our bookshelf. It need not be an encyclopedia. Swim in this book and find a word that speaks to you at the time regarding the crisis that you're experiencing. What insights reveal themselves to you? What thoughts arise about the problem, the challenge, the dilemma that you're facing? Many times, a unique solution appears at times like this that gives us a direction that we would like to take. This might arise from nowhere and quite fascinating to experience.

This tool is useful since it allows us to break away from the issue. We begin to think about the situation with a bit of detachment. Once we distance ourselves from the issue, we might receive some unexpected solutions and possibilities.

Laura's experience: When I realized that I would like to distribute the self-coaching e-book, I started working on writing down the tools. I wished for the e-book to get translated in several languages and started to make the connections an explore possibilities.

I used the definition of coaching from Wikipedia as a lexicon in this context.

As per Wikipedia: "Coaching is training or development in which a person called a "coach" supports a learner in achieving a specific personal or professional goal. The learner is sometimes called a "coachee". Occasionally, "coaching" may mean an *informal relationship* between two people, of whom one has more experience and expertise than the other and offers advice and guidance as the latter learns; but coaching differs from mentoring in focusing on competence specifics, as opposed to general overall development.

Some coaches use a style in which they ask questions and offer opportunities to challenge the learner to find his or her own answers. This helps the learner find answers and *new ways* of being based on their own values, preferences and perspectives. The facilitative approach to

coaching in sport was pioneered by Timothy Gallwey before this, sports coaching was (and often remains) solely a skills-based learning *experience* from a master in the sport. Other contexts for coaching include business/executive coaching and life coaching.”

I selected blindly some of these words marked above and I received a few insights that I list below. I received inspiration from this.

1. *(in)formal relationship*: Let’s call these supporters ambassador, which is enough formal, but improves motivation. Informal relationship is important, so I found out that the first few ambassadors must be ex-students of our coach trainings.
2. *advice*: I scheduled Skype calls with my friends who I trusted to get their advice.
3. *experience*: I started seeking ambassadors for every country. The first 2 were unsuccessful but this did not deter me. I continued my search and looked for the 3rd one.
4. *new ways*: Being a visual person, I drew a world map and started coloring countries where I have friends, past students which gave me a clearer picture

The idea of having an ambassador for SPARKLE self-coaching CSR for every country made me so inspired, that I started the project tasks immediately.

Role model

When we are faced with a problem or challenge, it might be useful to not use our own heads to think of a solution. We might want to bring to our attention what a role model that we hold in high esteem would do if s/he was in a similar situation. What advice would we receive from him/her? The moment we move out of our habitual thinking patterns we shall begin to notice that our approach to the issue might be a bit different than our normal behavior patterns.

Role model	for the sake of what
My Mother	the love that she brought up her kids
My Aunt	she lived her life in harmony. A successful architect, a supportive mother, a wonderful friend and an attractive woman
Marshall Goldsmith	a management guru and a selfless teacher who shares his knowledge..

Laura's experience: My long term vision. When my kids are grown up, I do not wish to be hanging by their side. I wish to travel with my husband. My parents are my role models in this domain. My dad's work takes him to various destinations where he presents and speaks at several universities as well as conferences. My mum travels with him. I called them up one Sunday morning and asked them which pieces of advice they would give me. The first one was to learn in more than one language. They equipped me with language skills as a child. The second would be to take on leadership of the international coaching federation. I headed the Hungarian chapter of the International Coach Federation. The 3rd would be to write books in more than one language. I have written 3 in Hungarian and one in English and I have a vision that this ebook will be translated in many languages.

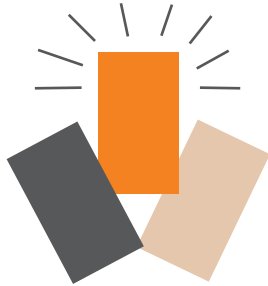
Consultation

It is much easier to give advice to others. It becomes harder when we must give ourselves this advice. We do not have the capacity to see the situation from outside. Why don't we apply this strategy in self-coaching? We could go over what advice we would give to our friend, colleague, partner if s/he were in a similar situation. By doing this we've created some distance from the problem and could give a fresh perspective. We could combine this with creative writing whereby we write a letter to this person.

Prerna's experience: I witnessed magic this week when I was coaching. A client came to me very nervous and anxious. His energy came across. I felt a contraction in my stomach and tightness in my chest. I asked the client to breathe in a rhythmic systematic pattern. As soon as he did this, his head cleared up and he realized that he would not be effective if he would be in this space. I realized by stepping into his shoes that I must be full of love rather than holding even a tiny bit of resentment as I was preparing myself for a difficult conversation after the coaching session. I remind myself of this all the time. It was a valuable lesson.

I always ask myself this question when faced with a dilemma. What advice would I give to my friend if she had the same dilemma? Once I honestly extract myself from the situation and become objective, I then direct this advice to myself however hard and challenging it might sound.

ROUTE

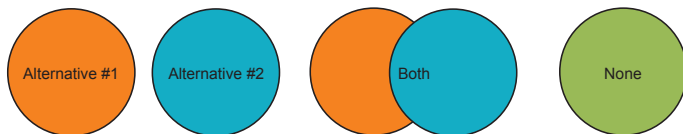


During this phase we decide the route that we would like to take to achieve our goals. We can then bring together an action plan to move forward.

Tetra Lemma

When we must make a decision, we often think it must be yes or no. Dilemma or confusion is the word when we oscillate back and forth between 2 options. The Tetra Lemma model offers 4 options. One or the other, both or something completely different. As an example, if we are dissatisfied at work we are in a dilemma. Should we leave or should we stay? Should we stay and look alternative positions elsewhere. We could physically stay in our current job but we are checked out already. We are looking actively for a job elsewhere and have great hopes of finding the best place where we would be satisfied in our professional life. It could also be possible that we stay undecided between both options. We may reach a stage where we accept the current workplace as it is. Instead we focus our energies towards our hobbies, family and friends. Having explored all the 4 possibilities, we can now make informed decision what our next step should be after 6 months or a year towards making the desired change.

Laura's experience: I worked at a large international consulting company when I was expecting my first child. This job involved a lot of travel. I was in Malaysia one week, in Norway the following week and in Holland the third week. I was in a dilemma as to which route to take. Using the Tetra Lemma model, one option would be that my child went to a different nursery every week which did not seem to be acceptable. The second option would be for me to become a stay at home which did not seem attractive. It would be a pity to throw away all my valuable experience. I found the third option of a corporate lifestyle consultant. I could thus use my previous experiences and yet be with my kids when they needed me.



Musts and Nice to haves

This tool is based on the Kepner-Tregoe decision-making matrix, which can help us achieve the ideal solution (decision). 'Musts' are those requirements that have to be fulfilled under all circumstances during the implementation of a solution. The existence of a 'Must' is necessary, without it the decision will not be acceptable. For example, if we illustrate it in a chart, as in the following one, we can even remove those solutions, in which not every 'Must' is fulfilled, and cease evaluating them. 'Nice to haves' are such requirements that are advantageous if they exist. However, the decision is also acceptable even if they are not met. For instance, it may be a 'Nice to have' to have a house with own garden, but if we do not have enough money for it, a shared garden is also OK. We evaluate these solutions according to the 'Nice to have' and assign to them a score from 1 to 3 depending on the complexity of the decision. The one that obtains the most scores seems to be the best solution. From the situation below: 2nd and 3rd solution is not appropriate, because not all of the 'Musts' are fulfilled and from the 1st and the 4th option, the 1st one is better from 'Nice to have' scores.

	MUSTS			NICE TO HAVES			Summary
	A	B	C	A	B	C	
1st possible solution	Yes	Yes	Yes	2	2	3	7
2nd possible solution	No	No	Yes				
3rd possible solution	Yes	No	No				
4th possible solution	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	3	2	6

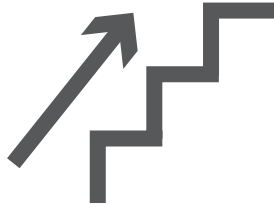
There are cases where the number of potential solutions and the number of 'Musts' and 'Nice to haves' is small. Although in such circumstances, we can do this mentally, charts have, according to our former experiences, been of tremendous assistance where more complex decisions are concerned.

Action plan

Once we have the options all charted out, we have but no other alternative left. We must put down in writing concrete steps that must be taken and the time frame when this will be completed.

Steps	Detailed description	Deadline
1.		
2.		
3.		

KEY OBSTACLES



During this phase we have taken all the necessary steps to achieve our goals as per our action plan. This is not an easy tool for self-coaching. Failures experienced can reveal challenges and hurdles in our paths. These might be inner or outer obstacles. We have learnt by now that every breakdown has a solution. The learning acquired in self-coaching can help us to use the appropriate tools that would help us to solve the problem that we might be experiencing at any given time.

Win/Lose

Our lives become easier if we assess what we win and lose once we achieve our goals. What do we lose? For example our time, money or above all our comfort level. If the desired goal is a lifestyle change, we must give up trips to the cake shop, beer pubs or any activity that did not serve us achieve a healthy lifestyle. It could be possible that we lose more than we win. In this case, we might want to reconsider the goal and make necessary modifications. Or, if we will see how much we will win if we reach our goal, we will get more energy to go for it.

What do I win when I make a change: (career change)	I take on a known activity professionally. In the long run I shall have more time to spend with family.
What do I lose when I make a change:	For the time being in the interim period I will have less time with family. I shall invite jealousy from some.

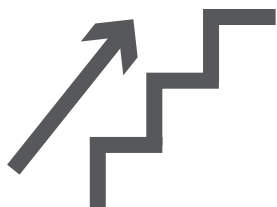
Prerna's experience: I took on a new position as corporate sales and marketing director at a luxury day spa in downtown Budapest after running an independent facility in the Buda hills. I knew that I would have less time in the initial period with my children but in the long term, this change was a stepping stone to many other positive changes in my life.

Winning list

Let us bring to our mind a situation and period in our life where we struggled a lot. Let us examine the personality traits that helped us, the behavior patterns that served us in order to succeed. These might give us a lot of strength and motivation to face current challenges. Let us bring these to our consciousness deliberately in order to overcome our current crisis.

My victory	My strengths and behavior patterns that serve me
My admission to university	patience and logical thinking
I had a good job	I did not sign my first offer immediately, I gave myself time to receive full information and requested help from a known colleague working at the company.
I learnt how to dance	I fell on my butt a few times, it did not upset me if I was laughed at

LEVERAGE



Inner dialogue list

Very often we hold ourselves back to achieve our goals. We are full of fears, worries, insecurities and lack in self confidence. When we are unable to contain our negative feelings, this can be dangerous. It inhibits us to achieve our full potential. Therefore it might be a good exercise to write down the positive and negative monologue with respect to reaching our goal that goes on in our mind. This would be helpful to understand what truly holds us back. There maybe an inside voice saying to us “you cannot succeed anyway” notice this and change it to something more constructive like “I dare to make a mistake and try again”. Start serving yourself more and more.

Assessments	The language that we use
Wrong assumptions	I must be working overtime or else I shall be fired. I shall receive a promotion only if I never leave the office before my boss
Absolute	I cannot trust anybody. There's nothing like free lunch. Life sucks.
Unrealistic expectations towards ourselves.	I wish to be the best in everything.
Limiting beliefs and possibilities.	I just see 2 possibilities, the third option does not even occur to me.
Positive feedback ignored	I do not pay attention to praise, I believe that it's good luck or there might be a hidden agenda or that the other wishes to get rid of me.

Prerna's experience: It was uncovered very brutally during an Amygdala pattern exercise on a golf course in North Carolina with a world renowned coach, Gita Bellin. The assessment that I was holding very unconsciously was that “I am not good enough”, or “I am not worthy”. I never felt satisfied or complete. There was always something more that I wanted to achieve. This kept me blind to the fact of how much I had achieved. It always kept me dissatisfied. Once uncovered, I started to practice contentment, grati-

tude and being worthy very consciously. I continue to practice these on a daily basis. New neural pathways are beginning to form. Every time the default patterns shows up, (let me warn you that they do creep up with a vengeance) I recognize immediately and practice worthiness towards self. I practice loving kindness towards me, take care of me first before setting out to help the world. This way I build dignity and worthiness in my way of being.

Buckets and balloons

This coaching tool is known by a multitude of names. The “bucket and balloons” label is borrowed from Mick Cope’s book*. This tool can be applied to identify those factors that resist change and result in durability. We apply this tool in the following manner: We ask ourselves to develop a comprehensive list of our buckets (what are against our goals, what hold us back) and define to each bucket one balloon that will lighten the weight.

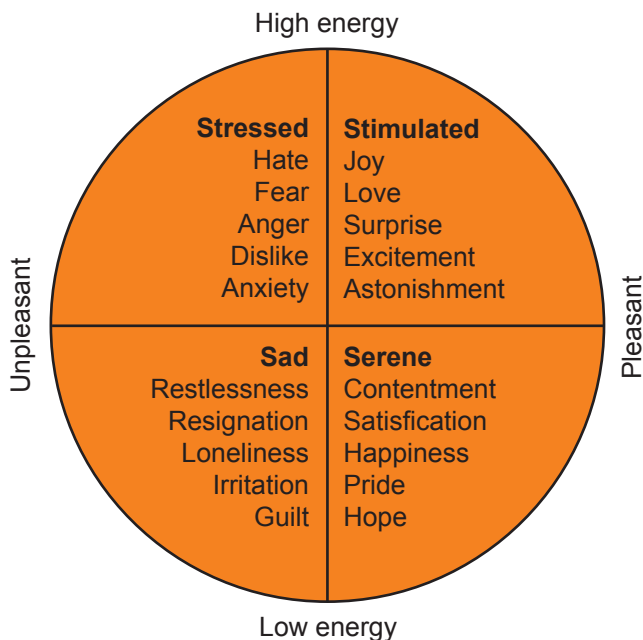
Example

- I would like to have a Work-Life Balance, that is why I go for a time management training and I want to start to use the new ideas from next day. But I am assigned an urgent task by my boss (bucket).
- I know that it can happen, so in advance I prepare a balloon. I write an email to my boss explaining him my goal and asking his patience. (balloon 1).
- Ask my supporters to note my boss that this goal is really important. (balloon 2).

* Cope, Mick: The Seven Cs of Coaching, Pearson, 2004

eMAP

Very often our emotions present obstacles to achieve our goals. These fluctuations can move us out of our stable and balanced way of being. The map of emotions is a good resource to use and apply. A good exercise recommended would be for us to notice these emotions carefully. Note down the emotions along with their intensity every 30 minutes. By doing so you shall notice what external conditions affect you and how. What is it that takes you to the floor feeling sad and depressed and what is it that truly elevates your spirit? Once you understand your emotional patterns, you shall be better situated to work these through you.



10 days. As I was meditating one day I noticed that the fear was being replaced by trust, love and faith. I understood at a cellular level that the emotion of fear was not real. It was me going into the future that I had no clue about and beginning to worry about it. It became crystal clear that it was a futile exercise. Every time I sense this fear coming on, I take myself to witnessing the Grace that I experienced. It always calms me down and brings me to a place of balance. I notice that I dance with life in a spirit of lightness, curiosity, awe and wonder since then.

EVALUATION



During the coaching process, we choose a specific goal that we would like to reach or make a choice in our lives that solves a current breakdown that we might be experiencing. But please note that this is not the end. We very often tend to revert back to our default way of being – our habits, beliefs, practices that clearly do not serve us. We must be committed to putting our learning into practice with rigor and determination. The desired changes must be built into our daily way of being by taking small baby steps. Celebration, recognition of a new habit, self praise is an important part of the process. These give us the strength to move forward in the direction that we have embarked upon. It is therefore necessary to include the celebration, completion and closing of self-coaching.

Lessons learnt

Let us learn from both our failures as well as successes. Let us now take a close look at the entire self-coaching process and answer with honesty the following questions.

- What was the desired goal?
- What was the result?
- What took us forward, what set us back?
- What is the learning? What might we like to do differently next time round?

Celebration

Might we notice some resistance to celebrating our successes? Is there some negative language like “Do I wish to celebrate myself?” stopping us from giving ourselves the credit that we deserve. Do we believe that we are overly selfish and self-absorbed? Celebrating our successes only helps us to reinforce a goal achieved and create a new way of being for ourselves. If we simply tick the boxes without taking some time to pause and celebrate, we shall forget in a very short time important milestones that we have reached. We shall not value enough our strengths that helped us achieve our goals. Therefore it is a very important part of the process to pause and celebrate. We might pick up a piece of jewelry, a watch or something symbolic, a gift to ourselves that shall remind us of our success story.

WANT MORE?

Please visit our website: www.businesscoach.hu/en or feel free to send us an email to info@businesscoach.hu and we shall be happy to send you further information on self-coaching tools that shall support you to manage your life with ease and success. Our intention is to bring wellbeing into your lives.

We offer the SPARKLE coaching model. If you wish to receive our coaching services we look forward to being of service to you on the following email: info@businesscoach.hu

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