

# Experts who'll get your life together

Busy people are turning to a new breed of personal trainer to help them organise their increasingly muddled lives. **Freya Grant** spoke to three people who promise to help you reach new levels.

*DAVID Rock, 34, of Paddington, began his company, Results Life Coaching, five years ago. He has coached more than 100 people to greater direction and purpose in life. He says:*

“The basic premise of life coaching is that you can do more with a coach, that you achieve more by having someone else that you can use as a sounding board, someone else that can hold you accountable to what you say and someone else who can see the things that you can't see.

Most people come to life coaching because they are ready for more. Generally people who are successful take on a coach in the same way that top performers in sport take on coaches, because they want to go on to another level. They feel like something is missing and they don't have that drive or passion that they once had.

The coach is like an amplifier and we are there to ask the right questions and help clients get the right answer for themselves. It is not about giving advice, contrary to popular opinion, it is about providing feedback, clarity, support and a lot of encouragement.

The interesting thing I realised was that the average person spends ten minutes on themselves through their whole year — with a coach you are getting an hour a week of time focused on you.

One thing we do in coaching is concentrate on getting solutions. We look at what people want and then how they achieve that so as a coach we like to set clear, inspiring goals. Each goal depends on the individual, often it's career-based. We also have people who come to us for finance reasons — they can't save money or people who haven't done their tax in eight years. They have tried on their own but they can't get their act together. Lots of people want to get more balance in their life or become inspired again.



**Problem solver:** Professional life coach Judy Cole

The other areas people come to talk about are relationships, creativity, community and health.

Once we have set a goal with them we do a reality check — where they are at, and what are their strengths.

It's different to counselling. In counselling you look at what is not working and fix it. In coaching you look at what is working and try to fix it.

I think these days people don't have a lot of time to think about themselves — they get caught up in the rush and they don't have the support. In the past, partners, religion or even parents would give support but there is a gap now and people have turned to coaching commercially to help them.

It is an amazing range of people who use coaching, from ordinary blue collar workers to executives, plus people in the big law firms and IT companies.

It is critical to practise what you preach — you have to walk the talk. Clients will come to

you because there is something about your life that they like and respect.

If you are a personal trainer you have to be fit, so as a coach you have to have a lot of integrity, be fairly confident, be someone who is a good communicator and who is quite insightful. You need to be coachable yourself as well.

*JUDY Cole, 44, from Epping, is a mother of two and professional life coach who helps people organise their relationships. She says:*

“Life coaching is a partnership of people working together to achieve goals by combining different elements from different areas of their lives. People work together in a one-on-one environment to achieve personal goals.

It is usually a three-month program that we work on. Once we have established goals, we work on strategies to achieve those goals — it is



**Personal power:** Innica Lake (right) at a coaching session with Neil Kell at Dover Heights

Picture: Sandra Priestley

therefore highly motivating for that person.

For me, in relationships, there are two areas that people come with: people who want to improve their relationship with their partners or their children.

Then there are people who want to start a relationship — they come and they say: 'I just want to meet someone'.

In coaching, it's all about really challenging people into taking action.

In an existing relationship, the kind of problems people bring are things like, 'My marriage has lost its spark', 'We've grown apart', 'There is no passion', 'We work long hours' or 'The whole thing has got a bit monotonous'.

The first thing we do is look at what is happening and then we compare that to how they would like it to be.

One man said he paid more attention to his dog than his wife because at least he took his dog for a walk every day.

We then get them talking to one another. We get them to think about when they were hap-

py and what was happening then. Sometimes we make them rate their relationship on different categories such as fun, passion and closeness. All this can be very confronting.

My role as a coach is not to tell them what is wrong with their marriage, my role is to help them see for themselves. They can then see the solution as soon as they start looking.

For people who want a relationship they are usually doing nothing and waiting for Mr Right to turn up on their doorstep. They are really down about it. They have to be truthful and say, 'I haven't been on any dates and I haven't been putting any effort into meeting people'.

I think I am insightful and that is one of my strengths as a coach. There is no recipe book though, no template and each person is different. It is very important to figure out what is actually going on in your life and that is what we work on.

**INNICA Lake, 29, of Dover Heights, started life coaching two years ago. She helps women**

*create balance in their lives and achieve personal power. She says:*

“ I coach any woman that wants to get in touch with her personal power. I love doing it because I have been through the same experience and to be able to share that journey with women is amazing. It's not about separating yourself from men. It's about finding yourself.

A friend of mine brought me home an article on life coaching four years ago and after I read it I thought that I'd be great at it, but I didn't have the money at the time to do the course.

Then I met my fiancée, who was a life coach, and within three weeks I was in the course.

Usually people come and see me because they want more balance.

I really see a lot of women focusing on their careers and their families and their relationships but they don't have any focus on themselves, so it is a real luxury to have a coach for them.



**Third eye:** David Rock says coaches often see what their clients can't