

Self-coaching for contentment

So, I think J.K. Rowling modelled the character of the young Hermione Granger after me. I used to be absolutely like her when I was young - Ms. know-it-all, full of answers even before questions were asked and frankly, extremely annoying. I look back on a cringeworthy moment in school when I corrected a classmate on his pronunciation of 'Chile' in front of the whole class. And then wondered why a lot of them never liked me. (We now get along fine by the way - and if he's reading this article, I wonder if he will remember this incident!)



It took me a long time in life to develop an EQ that helped me understand the quote attributed to Fritz Perls:

"Nobody can stand truth if it's told to them. Truth can be tolerated only if you discover it yourself because then, the pride of discovery makes the truth palatable!"

If you're living with an adolescent or talking to an aged parent, I bet you resonate with that - I certainly do.

When I started on my leadership journey, I discovered coaching. It took me a while to truly understand what coaching was all about and that it wasn't about just asking questions and subtly directing the coachee towards your way of thinking by nudging them along. I always knew it was important to listen. But it took me a while to understand the difference between listening to respond and listening to understand. And when I discovered the latter, the difference transformed my views on coaching. True to what Fritz Perls said, coaching is all about just holding up mirrors for the other person to see but leaving them to form their own conclusions on what they see, even if it were totally not what you would want to do.

I have been incredibly lucky to have some fantastic coaches in my life. But once you have understood the nuances of coaching, you have access to someone else who can coach you any time - yourself! I have started experimenting with self-coaching over the last few weeks and am finding it a brilliant tool to transform some deep-set challenges. There are times only you know what triggers you and you



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often can only truly open to yourself and no one else. If you are already a trained coach, I'd encourage you to try this out - using a tool that you think may help, coach yourself. I use my journal to ask and respond to my own questions and have found it helpful to overcome thinking traps and reorient yourself. I know many people try journaling but using coaching tools and techniques to explore your thinking takes this to a new level and while it doesn't guarantee success, it certainly helps with contentment and helps you manage your inner chimp.



If you are a trained coach reading this, go on, give it a try. If you're not a trained coach, I'd encourage you to find one - it's transformed my life and self-satisfaction.