

## **The History of Your Future**

I have found this process accomplishes the following:

1. Guides the client/Student fairly deep at a rapid pace
2. Remains client/Student centered
3. Can be done in a group as well as privately and still maintain full confidentiality
4. Goes immediately to the core of the purpose of the coaching/teaching relationship from the very beginning

I call this process, "The History of Your Future". Of course, as I also hold to the abundance mentality, if you chose to ever use this process, feel free to label it any way you see fit.

Remember, Learn it, Live it, and Lead it!

I systematize my entire business and this process is no different. So I offer here, the script I use with clients. Along the way, and in italics, I offer the rationale for each step in the process.

## **The History of Your Future**

You have indicated you would like to explore the concept of personal coaching to facilitate your

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*("goals... success.... effectiveness.... better life" - or whatever words they have used and repeated as indicating their own desires)*

So I would like to ask you just a couple of questions before we get started, OK? These questions are designed to do only one thing: To help you discover your "WHY".

Feel free to answer these questions in any way you see fit, and I want you to know I have no expectations from your answers other than your own personal discovery. Of course, there are no right or wrong answers, and I am not trying to lead you anywhere. Is this alright with you?

*(You will quickly see that I never actually ask them the "questions".*

*This is used to help open them to the notion of exploration and gives anticipation that they will be asked to produce something. I have found that many potential clients feel more prepared to explore when they have been asked if I can ask a question.)*

So, as we start, my I ask you to simply get comfortable. You can close your eyes if that helps. I have found that closing the eyes does not make one relax more, but merely helps them fill in some blanks on their own thinking.

Tell me about the vision for your future?

*(Regardless of the answer, affirm their place where they are and define vision)*

You know, the best definition of I have ever heard for the term "Vision" is this: Vision is a highly detailed mental picture of a preferable future. Can we work with that definition as we proceed?

Are you ready?

*(Agreeing on the definition is not really the point here. It merely gives them a reference point as you proceed through the process here. Again, asking if they are ready is strategic. It is the verbal cue that we are IN the process now. What's interesting is that your next words will still sound more like introduction to them. But in fact, you have their agreement that they are ready for the actual process - so the beginning of the process helps guide them into the suggestions of the process itself. You will see that I begin by explaining that what they may have expected is to be suspended and we will be taking a different route.)*

You may have heard people ask you something like, "What are your goals" or "where do you see yourself in ten years" or something like that, right? I used to ask people that all the time, and I began to find that I was not helping anyone really find their own answers. In fact, I think it became clear that I was placing road blocks in their way.

Can you imagine what the problem with asking those questions might be?

*(wait for answers....usually, this is the exact line of questioning they were anticipating – the “what are your goals” kind of thing.. Suggesting that this may not be the best way forward helps break them free from the expectations that you are like all the other pop-psychology they may have heard about or experienced. Affirm their answers...no matter what they may be. Remember, you are not trying to "correct" their misconceptions, but allow them to find their own answers in this initial time.)*

Have you ever tried to solve those maze puzzles we used to get in school? I used to take forever on those goofy things until someone told me to start from the end instead of the beginning.

*(At this point, the client may be way ahead of you. Most of us have known this truth for years,*

*but have never applied it to our own needed answers. This may sound elemental to your client - but remember, all the parts of this process are strategic, so resist the impulse to sidestep this part. It brings instant connection through a shared experience.)*

A friend of mine, who is a mapping software designer, told me that all mapping software works like this: You enter the origination place - say, New York City, and enter the destination - like Los Angeles, right? Did you know the software actually starts at the endpoint and draws the route backward to the beginning point. I asked him why it does that. I asked why with all the intricacies of software and all the millions of mathematical calculations a computer can do per second, why it doesn't just snap its electronic fingers and zap the solution.

I found his answer amazing. He said, "Well, it's kind of cool the way it works. If the mapping program tried to start at what you entered as the beginning point, it would continually get lost along all the highways and streets that lead to dead ends. Then it would start all over again until it found another dead end, and then the process would start all over again. We have a saying in Map Making: "You can't get there from here. You can only get here from there." You see, the destination is really the true beginning point."

*(Just let the silence birth the intention here. Your client will connect the dots...his/her light bulbs will begin to flash on.)*

So I am wondering what may be keeping any of us from accomplishing our goals, from rising to our full and wonderful potential... I have found that there are so many mistakes I have made I could have avoided if I had this one truth back then - that I can't get there from here, I can only get here from there.

Since a vision is a highly detailed mental picture of a preferable future, then I wonder if maybe seeing the full vision first is the starting point? I mean the highly detailed fully grown vision. Much like the entire apple tree is already a reality inside that one single little seed...all the leaves, the branches, the fruit, the blossoms... I wonder if maybe the answer to achieving anything of significance is being the fully grown tree even before we plant a seed?

So let's see if we can find the true beginning point, OK?

I want you to place yourself 10 years in the future. What is your age right now? OK, so in your mind, I want you to see yourself as \_\_\_\_\_

*(whatever age 10 years from now would be. I don't ask how old they will be, for I want to avoid the idea that maybe they are too old to change. O, when working with teens, that in 10 years, they are "OLD")*

*Remember I said this is systematized? It's strategic to ask the exact age as it places a real number and age in their mind...it takes it from mere imagination to a concrete notion) (that age).*

Your whole world is 10 years different. Your family is ten years different. Your life situation is ten years different. Your wife/husband is 10 years older. Your children are 10 years older. (Yes, I use older here, because it is not as personal.)

*(This is the point that you help them actually BE 10 years older instead of imagining 10 years from now. Watch the subtle, yet very important language change)*

You know it was 10 years ago that you and I first started talking about a how you were going to live your life. Ten years ago, in 2012, you were (*whatever age they are now*) and you had challenges and desires, and goals. You wanted so many things for your life, ten years ago. But now you have achieved all the goals you had. You have become an incredibly effective and successful person. You are happy and fulfilled. You are a fully grown tree.

Can you name some of the accomplishments you have achieved?

*(This question is not meant to be the same as "where do you want to be in 10 years." This question helps them simply place a little bit of meat on their goals. In fact, many clients may not be able to offer highly detailed answers. That's OK, for this is only a strategic pause to give them a bit of an idea of their future...)*

So, since you are now (their future age) I have a couple of questions. Can you tell me about your history? I want to hear about the last ten years of your life. What did you do ten years ago that got you all this success?

Let's start at 10 years ago... What decision did you make 10 years ago that got you off on the right foot?

*Allow them to describe ten years ago. Keep focusing in that one single year for a while. Don't let them jump ahead years at a time. You can even ask what they did that month ten years ago. If you are working with teens, slowly start introducing these questions:*

As a (sophomore, Freshman, or whatever age...16 year old etc.) what decisions did you make that would change the direction of your life? Did you make the decision to take as many drugs as you could? Did you make the decision to fail as many classes as you could? How about relationships? Did you decide to hurt people, or add value to them? Did you plan on losing many jobs? Being lazy?, checking out on life?

Or just what did you do way back 10 years ago that changed things for you?

*I have found most people don't make it past the first year. It is just not clear to them how in the world they are going to achieve, change, grow, be different, die to self, release something to gain another, etc.*

I want to make this one point here. Words mean things. The "best" words convey the right meaning. The less than best words may convey the wrong thing or at least something unintended. For example, I avoid using the term "lose weight". This may seem picky, but think about it - what is the first thing you want to do when you lose something? Find it, right?

Now, I get that "losing weight" is generally a good thing. But a better term may be, "Release the weight." No, I am not trying to be New Agey, but is not the intent of this process of weight reduction a process of releasing that which we do not wish to continue to hold?

Imagine if our entire approach to life change was one of "Release and Reach, and Remain"

Release the things, actions, habits, intentions, and beliefs which bind us, and keep us from achieving,

Reach for the things, habits, intentions, relationships, and beliefs which are part of our change and growth.

Remain in full contact with them until we approach our goals. Then the process starts all over again.

So how does one release the weight? Well, we eat differently, we conduct physical activity differently, we think differently about nutrition, etc.

How does one remain weighing less than before? By remaining in the new beliefs about nutrition, physical activity and lifestyle.

So ten years ago, we didn't "give up" something to gain the better thing - we released the things that did not help us in our goals and are now reaching for the things which do.

So this is the point in the ten year history that I begin to bring to a close the initial time we are investing, and ask the person if there may be a desire to write their future history in a different way than their present trajectory.

I ask if they would like to engage in a changing relationship which would be designed to help them release, reach, and remain. Release that which they do not need and reach for those things they do need. And of course, I have no idea what the identity of either of those things might be....but they do - somewhere inside, they do.

*If you are working with teens, ask them to write down the years 2015 through 2025 on a piece of paper with the year 2025 at the top of the page. Ask them to write down what their life will look like in 10 years (2025) in as much detail as they can – remember the vision is a **HIGHLY** detailed mental picture of a preferable future. Then work their way backwards through the years with as much detail of life as they can until they reach today.*

*This is a very powerful tool when used to help people discover their **WHY**, plan their own lives and literally take charge of their future.*

*The actual detailing of the history of their own future should take more time than one session, so make sure to grant them permission to take as much time as they need....weeks if necessary.*

*As a person of faith, I believe God wants us to engage in this process for life. We never "arrive" but always pursue. I do not know your faith structure, so I assume nothing here, nor expect anything.*

*This much I know; I am not The God, a god, nor your God. I am a seeker of God, nothing more. So my intent is simply to offer you a portion of what I have encountered with God.*

*As I said before, I offer this to you under the topic of "If you like this, use it, and own it."*

*Blessings to you my friend!*