



Manifesto Musing

From Awareness to Responsibility

The concept of the coach's raising of awareness, which in turn prompts the coachee to take responsibility for what they know, first came to our attention with the seminal work of the coaching pioneer, Sir John Whitmore, in Coaching for Performance.

In practice, in the **my manifesto** journey, from the initial coached Zoom session to the finished personal manifesto statements, we see this causal effect come into play. To take two recent examples of this occurring: the first, a seventy plus male, Geoff* who co-created what we would call a credo. His personal Declaration statement – who he is, as his authentic self – and his Wisdom statement – what he knows following a well-lived, long life – together provide his current awareness.

In the days following his receipt and approval of his final manifesto statements, he conveyed – through emails back and forth – the fact that he has been driven to reflect deeply upon his life choices. Having experienced and 'lived with' the finished outcome – his personal manifesto – he wondered what his thinking had been behind some of the choices he had made in the life he was living daily. He was now aware that they were not congruent with his 'best self' of the Declaration, nor sat easily alongside the values and belief structures embedded in his Wisdom statement. He has now turned his mind to how to recalibrate his life in the light of this awareness, which is the focus of his Check-In and Introduction to Living Your Manifesto session.

Example number two is a female, Anne*, who when considering her notes which had been sent to her by her coach to alter or accept before the manifesto draft statements were attempted, commented that she did not realise that she was so hard on herself. In fact, she recognised that she hardly made a statement without immediately retracting or qualifying it, or even 'shooting herself in the foot'. She made this comment, there was no need for the coach to make it, because she had become aware of her self-criticism when her words were mirrored to her. This awareness drove her to notice her 'self-sabotaging' throughout her day, and as a result the need to put into place strategies to 'flip' this tendency.



Both these examples, from our clients, demonstrate an underlying principle of our work at **my manifesto**. Our role as coaches, is to offer 'exquisite listening'^{**} to you our clients, to reflect to you what we hear so that you become aware of what you know. In this way we are coaching in the direct line from Sir John Whitmore, raising awareness, so that you take responsibility.

* Names have been changed

** Thank you, Chris Mackey from your presentation "An authentic life" at our launch on 31st March – a transcript of which appears on our [events](#) website .