



## **Manifesto Musing**

### Some Helpful and Inspiring Questions from the Coach's Toolkit

Even though with your copy of our book, *My Manifesto: a compassionate guide to reveal your best life*, you are self-coaching, I propose asking yourself these additional questions along the way. A word of caution though: do not ask them of yourself when you are feeling low-spirited. It is important as a coach, with a coachee, that these questions are asked when the coach feels they have established a rapport which will buffer what could be hard-hitting questions. To logically extend this caution to self-coaching, be compassionate to yourself.

Are you ready?

#### **1. Add 'really' to the question.**

If the question was, 'Who am I?' add 'really?' Adding 'really' to this question has the effect of asking yourself to look and think again. Was your first response genuine? Were you masking and trotting out an often-repeated response? In our book, the AWE question can work like this too. Having answered the question, asking of yourself "And what else?" keeps you returning to the question until you really believe you have mined the seam.

#### **2. If you weren't holding anything back, what would you be doing?**

This question aims to cut through the self-limiting beliefs that stop us from doing what we would like to do before we even attempt it! This is a sure-fire way of staying safe...and not growing! It can be part of our survival kit – left over from the caves – to not take risks, to stop ourselves from trying anything new. Ryan Holiday in his daily Stoic newsletter, recently, described this as a velvet rut.' Think about that. Soft, cosy...but stuck!

#### **3. If you had 50% more confidence in yourself, what would you be doing?**

This is a corollary of the last question; it is another way we limit ourselves. We talk ourselves down, the 'critic on our shoulder' tells us we are 'not good enough,' we are an 'imposter' or whatever your version is that keeps you 'small.' Tell yourself, "It is ok to take up space!"

#### **4. What are you not saying?**

It may sound odd to be asking this of yourself, but we are pass masters at hiding and masking – even from ourselves! It is time for honesty now but only you need to be party to the answer you come up with.

#### **5. What are you making that mean?**

This question is one of my favourites because it really calls us out. There is no objective truth in any of the answers that these questions will draw forth. They are all deeply subjective. However, fooling ourselves is clearly ultimately self-sabotaging. Your meaning is yours to make. Use your agency to make your answers serve you – the best version of you.



### **6. *What are you willing to let go of?***

From my lived experience, I believe that when we add something to our lives, we usually need to let something go. (I am not talking about tangible things, necessarily). Whatever you are contemplating adding, try to take a moment to mentally roll it out. If I have that, will 'something else' not be possible now? Am I willing to let that 'something else' go? Or is that 'something else' I want to hold on to? Knowing that, how much do I want the 'something else' now?

### **7. *What control do you have?***

Within our lives there are some things we have control over. These are the things we are directly responsible for. Looking at this concept even more closely, it doesn't take long to realise that you only really have control of...YOU! Everything else has aspects that are beyond your control, but impact upon you. You CAN work on managing the impacts. Making plans which depend on other people (even life partners and children) and life choices that rely upon events happening or someone else to do their part, is an exercise in futility and frustration. Better to concentrate on what you need to do to make what you want to happen. However, it is wise to work out what parts, and in what ways, you need to negotiate permissions from others as well. In saying that, aim to be an effective communicator, not a puppeteer!

Try to be playful with these questions!

Warm wishes,  
Sue