



how to love your life

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Revamp your life in just 90 days Sure, your life is pretty fabulous, but with a little help it could be sensational, says Juliet Rieden.

So, life is good. You've got work, friends and a loving family, not to mention a closet full of designer clothes. But could it be better? Honestly, are you completely happy with every aspect of who you are? In this ridiculous world of frenzied activity and no time to think, it's easy to fall into the trap of settling for less.

Striving to get the best out of life - to fulfil the dreams you've let fall by the wayside - is not only natural, it's achievable. The hard part is finding the motivation to overcome your stalling. Everyone's dreams are different, but whether you want to shed a few more kilos, land a better job, pay off a mounting credit card debt or even find love, you'd be amazed how far you can get with a practical plan and some help.

More and more people are turning to life coaches to achieve their goals.

By devising a strict 12-week step-by-step program - customised to suit your individual needs - they encourage you to think about the areas you'd like to improve on (or change completely) and the feelings you want to banish. To help you get there, they monitor your progress weekly.

Life coach David Rock, 36, set up Results Coaching Systems in 1998. He now has coaches and operations throughout Australia and in Europe, North America and New Zealand. During the past decade or so, Rock has personally coached more than 100 people and claims that within 12 weeks his clients achieve 85 per cent of their goals. "Life coaching is all about changing bad habits," he says. "People think it's all new age but it's one of the most real and pragmatic things you can do. The people who come to me for help are usually quite successful but are interested in doing better in some way."

Life coach and single mum Malti Bhojwani, 32, established her Sydney-based Multi Coaching International business in the middle of past year. She coaches people through their problems via telephone.

She says that most of her clients are "either stuck in a rut or don't have time to think, but they're all looking for something". Like Rock, Bhojwani works on a 12-week program.

"Ninety days is the minimum amount of time needed to instill a habit," she says. "Those first 12 weeks are the hardest part."

Whether life coaching is for you or not, the underlying principle of setting positive goals within a fixed time scale has been proven to unleash impressive results. There's no hidden secret to the process, but says Bhojwani "you have to be willing to make a shift".

relationship boost

Forging better relationships, be they with lovers, family or friends is the one goal most people dream

about. "Everyone wants a great relationship, but the biggest thing is getting people to face scary things like asking someone out," says Rock.

The great news is that improved relationships are often a by-product of fixing other areas of your life. Legal secretary Julie Lewin discovered this after signing on with Results Coaching Systems life coach Sandra Diethelm, to help her find a new life direction. Having survived cancer, the 44-year-old Queensland mum of two wanted to get more out of life. "I needed to do something different to change from being a "gonna do it person" to an "I'm doing it person".

"An avid creator of collages and montages, Lewin set a goal to put on an exhibition. The show went ahead and she sold four original works and three copies. Having been ill for so long, the satisfaction of achieving her goal changed Lewin's life immeasurably and even improved her marriage.

"We'd been married for 21 years but until I did the life coaching my husband wasn't at all interested in personal development and growing," she says. "But afterwards he could see how much happier I had become."

show me the money

Not only is earning great money imminently achievable, but so is hanging onto it and digging your way out of a quagmire of debts. Emma Hohnen, 30, was a Strategic Marketing Manager for Zurich Financial Services when she enlisted with life coach Susan Denington (from Results Coaching Systems) to help her pursue her passion for natural healing and train as a naturopath.

Despite her high income, Hohnen's finances were on rocky ground when she quit her job, so she was apprehensive about student life.

"But Susan taught me to stay in the moment, within each week," she says. This meant following a strict budget (only \$100 spending money a week), giving up her gym membership and forgoing meals out and shopping trips. The results were beyond her wildest dreams. "I discovered that all that stuff I was doing like eating out and shopping I was actually doing to fill me up, but it didn't work. Before, I focused on making money and being successful. Now I realise that those are things that will happen in time, you just have to trust yourself," she says.

let's get physical

Unless you're a natural athlete or gym junkie, finding the time and motivation to stick to a regular physical regime isn't easy. But, as with other areas, achieving your goal is all about creating a great plan.

"Instead of saying I want to lose some weight, go for a positive goal like fitting into that red dress," says Rock. He recommends finding a partner to exercise with or, if money's no object, hiring a personal trainer. There are also ways of exercising for free. Emma Hohnen quit her gym and started running outdoors and swimming in the sea. Alternatively you could power walk or simply take the stairs instead of the lift at work.

a new you

"I just want a job I love. I want to be excited about getting up for work each morning." Sound familiar? A 2002 study by the Australia Institute revealed that nearly a quarter of Australians have actively chosen to downshift, swapping high stress and high incomes for less money and less stress.

Helping you find a new path is what life coaches excel at. Sydney based architect John Burgess, 40, wanted to build up his business and make time for creative pursuits. So, he teamed up with Rock who helped him align the two areas. Burgess wanted to put on an exhibition of his own light fitting designs, so he developed an entirely new concept for his business, putting out new products and setting up licensing deals.

Emma Hohnen's sea change, swapping a finance job for training to be a naturopath, also left her in raptures. She's still studying but has set up a part-time massage business. "I'm more relaxed and healthy, my skin glows and people even tell me how young I look," she says. "Plus, I no longer have that anxiety every morning in the pit of my stomach."

There's a light at the end of the tunnel. If you want help finding yours call life coach company Kichi on (02) 9339 0266.

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• **contacts**

Call Results Coaching Systems on 1300 662 144 and Multi-Coaching International on 0419 119 900.

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