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Every now and then when talking with a Life Coaching client I will get asked whether I coach my own wife. This question never fails to make me laugh and think to myself â€œIf only you knewâ€•

The answer of course is, no I would never try and Life Coach my wife. First and foremost she wouldnâ€™t let me. If I dare so much to bring any Life Coaching techniques to a discussion she is all over them like a shot and usually responds with â€œDonâ€™t go all coachy on meâ€•

Even though this frustrates me at the time, deep down I know she is right and I really should leave the Life Coaching in my office where it belongs.

I donâ€™t have a strong opinion on whether Life Coaches can coach family members although Iâ€™m tempted to say itâ€™s probably not totally ethical and I doubt it would be that effective.

The reason why Life Coaching is so successful is largely to do with the fact that the Coach has little or no knowledge of the client and as such can approach the process with a clean slate and no preconceptions.

Letâ€™s suppose you are a Life Coach and your partner has asked you to coach them through some difficulties they are under going. What do you think the first thing you are going to do is?

if you answered that you would clear your mind and approach them as you would any other client I suspect you are wrong. My hunch would be is the first thing you would do is go inside your own head and decide what you need to â€˜fixâ€™ in your partner.

The problem is you already have an agenda before you have even started. You are looking at your partner/client thinking you know what's best for them when as a Life Coach that is not something we are paid to do. Itâ€™s not our job to decide what is right for a client, it is our job to help the client come to an understanding of what is right for them. And that is a big difference.

I suppose that the further removed we are from a family the easier it is to be able to offer effective Life Coaching. I have some family members that I never see from one year to the next and coaching them would be infinitely easier than my wife.

However, Iâ€™m still dubious of the ethics of doing so. What if the Coaching doesnâ€™t go according to plan? What are the potential ramifications? Could it cause a split in the family? What do you do if you are told confidential and potentially damaging information about another family member? How do you arrange payment or would you be expected to work for free?

There are a lot of questions that lead me to believe avoiding working with family members and people we know fairly well is always the best option and one I have adopted for over 5 years and Iâ€™m still married!

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