

Westside Notes



A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step

Weekend with My Coach

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It's been fourteen years since I've collaborated face-to-face with my coach, and I've just returned from Asheville, North Carolina after a very productive and revitalizing two-day intensive with Sandra "Sam" Foster, PhD. Sam is on the faculty of the College of Executive Coaching where I became a certified coach in 2002. I've been seeking her wisdom and thought-partnering on and off since then, and once again, it felt like an opportune moment to spend some high-quality time together as we explored the next leg of my professional journey. Read more.

The outcome of my coaching experience with Sam is always similar—I return inspired, refreshed and grounded. Coaching is partially about goal-setting, values clarification and accountability, but it's also an existential and sometimes spiritual collaboration, as I explore the true purpose within my practice and the deeper meaning of my upcoming book project.

Through powerful questions and honest conversations, I distinguished between my *Wanna do's* and my *Supposed to's*. It became evident to me that they blend at times, but my supposed to's often feel heavy and obligatory while my wanna do's create ease and lightness. Because I have a lot of interests both professionally and personally, I can sometimes stretch myself too thin. And this leaves me with less focus and attention available for my highest priorities such as travel and my loved ones.

I also went into the weekend with the hope of mapping out a vision for the next decade of my professional life. Although ten years turned out to be too much of a stretch, I did map out the next five years leaving me relieved and hopeful as I now feel grounded in my true priorities and how I can create balance along the way.

As I anticipate the unfolding of my book project in 2019, I felt compelled to examine my heart's desire. As a result, it reminded me to keep self-care in the forefront no matter what. Coaching has always provided me with a focus on what matters most to me, and this recent experience with Sam steered me in that direction seamlessly.

As a result of my soul-searching, I now feel more freedom and clarity to say *Yes, No, or Maybe* to the limitless menu of options in front of me. *Not that anything has to happen, but simply what could happen*—a reminder Sam has shared with me since we first met 17 years ago.

It also became clear that all of my future choices and decisions have to originate from a place of love and ease. As a result of Sam's reflections and brainstorming, I'm now clear that love and ease will be a litmus test from now on. I left my time in North Carolina with a full heart and the determination to stay revitalized and always grateful.