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Is Life Coaching Getting a Bad Name? by [Tim Brownson](#)

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I have been a full time professional Life Coach for about 7 years. For most of that time I have been proud to call myself a Life Coach and definitely proud of the work I do. I don't make a lot of money, certainly nothing like as much as I made when I worked in sales, but the buzz I get from doing my job and helping people get more out of their lives more than makes up for that.

Just recently however, being a Life Coach hasn't felt quite so good. When I first became certified back in 2005 there weren't that many Life Coaches around. Where I live in South West Orlando you could have easily counted then on one hand and still had a finger or two left.

That has changed radically over the last year or two. Now I'm pretty sure incorporating your toes, limbs and probably teeth wouldn't be enough, because the market is flooded.

That in and of itself isn't a problem. More life Coaches means more people hearing about Life Coaching which can only be a good thing for a fledgling industry. The problems arise however, when a steadily increasing proportion of the people calling themselves Life Coaches have had no training.

Because life Coaching as an industry is unregulated, anybody can call themselves a Life Coach. Not only that, but from the outside looking in it would be easy to assume the overheads are low and the barrier to entry even lower. The last part is probably true, the barrier to entry is low, but the barrier to success is exceedingly high which is why so few Life Coaches are full or even close to being full.

Reading an article in the New York Times prompted this post as it was looking at the growth of young Life Coaches. I have no issue with anybody becoming a Life Coach if they gain the relevant skills through training and/or life, but some of the quotes in the article merely proved that people being featured didn't even understand the basics of Life Coaching.

One coach was working with a woman who was in denial about having diabetes and had just blown me away with her suggestions of taking Splenda. Seriously? Somebody with a serious medical condition and in denial about it is not a candidate for Life Coaching, they are a candidate for therapy and the coach had no right to accept her as a client.

5 years ago, to succeed as a Life Coach you had to know how to coach. Now it seems you don't, but you do need to know how to market yourself online and you do need to know how to oversell and make promises you cannot keep.

More Life Coaches in and of itself is not a bad thing. However, my concern is that when people hire a bad Life Coach, they will presume either they are uncoachable or that the entire industry sucks. Neither of those options is very palatable to me.

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