

Life's Little Lessons



Laser Coach Training
Mentoring, Life Coaching

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Life Coach, Marion Franklin, is dedicated to helping people improve their lives - one step at a time by sharing knowledge, thoughts, and ideas. Whether you are a coach working with clients, a coaching client, or simply interested in improving your life, "Life's Little Lessons" is written and recorded for anyone and everyone who wants to gain new perspectives, understand human behavior, and personally grow. To that end, this is a sample compilation of 5 true-to-life and practical lessons from the 4 categories of over 100 lessons:

- Pearls of Wisdom
- Creating Connections
- Personal Empowerment
- Eliminating Obstacles

I PROMISE you, the themes are short and to the point ('pithy').

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Table of Contents

SAMPLES from categories:

“Pearls of Wisdom”

“Creating Connections”

“Personal Empowerment”

“Eliminating Obstacles”

Limiting Beliefs	1
Reason, Season, Lifetime	2
Triangles	3
Don't Take it Personally	4
Decisions, Decisions	5

One day not too long ago the employees of a large company returned from their lunch break and were greeted with a sign on the front door. The sign said: "Yesterday the person who has been hindering your growth in this company passed away. We invite you to join the funeral in the room that has been prepared in the gym."

At first everyone was sad to hear that one of their colleagues had died, but after a while they started getting curious about who this person might be. The excitement grew as the employees arrived at the gym to pay their last respects. Everyone wondered: "Who is this person who was hindering my progress? Well, at least he's no longer here!"

One by one the employees got closer to the coffin and when they looked inside, they suddenly became speechless. They stood over the coffin, shocked and in silence, as if someone had touched the deepest part of their soul.

There was a mirror inside the coffin: everyone who looked inside it could see himself. There was also a sign next to the mirror that said: "There is only one person who is capable to set limits to your growth: it is YOU." YOU are the only person who can revolutionize your life. You are the only person who can influence your happiness, your realization, and your success. You are the only person who can help yourself.

Your life does not change when your boss changes, when your friends change, when your parents change, when your partner changes, when your company changes. Your life changes when YOU change, when you go beyond your limiting beliefs, when you realize that you are the only one responsible for your life.

The most important relationship you can have is the one you have with yourself. Author Unknown

Whenever someone is conflicted, stymied, or stuck, there is a limiting belief creating the problem. A 'limiting belief' is defined as an invented idea that we believe is true. Inevitably, if we really examine the idea, we can see that it is not the truth but rather what we have tightly held onto as the truth.

I was working with a client who was regretful that he has been working in the same company for almost twenty years and has never been promoted despite continuing education and great effort. With some questioning, he realized that each time there was a job posting, he delayed submitting his resume or missed the deadline. Wondering more about that, he realized that his fear was that if he got a promotion, they would discover his weaknesses. I pointed out that they already know everything about him and his work. While it sounds so simple, it was a revelation. Far too often, **we create fictional ideas out of our fears that then hold us back. Usually, we want to blame someone or something external instead of accepting that we are limiting ourselves.**

Some of the most common examples of limiting beliefs (that we actually believe are true):

I'm too old to change.

I don't have the right experience.

I'm not smart enough.

If I do this, then.... some consequence will occur.

I don't deserve... (I'm not good enough....)

I couldn't possibly (write a book, sing in front of people, play the lead role, lead a group, etc.)

When reading these few examples, we can see that they are not facts. They are ideas that we have created that hold us back.

When we believe they are the truth, it keeps us from trying, from growing, from experiencing, etc.

INVITATION TO EXPERIMENT

The quote by Robert Schuller comes to mind "*What would you attempt if you knew you couldn't fail?*"

If you think about it, there is no truthful answer because we can't possibly know how something will turn out until we actually go ahead. The point is that it allows us to wonder, to imagine, and take what we think is a risk because it's something that we truly want and have been too afraid to consider.

What will it take for you to 'go for it' - to reach beyond what you believe you can do?

If you feel inclined, please let me know if you decide to go ahead and try this experiment. I look forward to hearing about your experiences.

Reason, Season, Lifetime

11/2009

People come and go throughout our lives. Some, become a distant memory; others remain with us in our thoughts and some in our hearts.

When relationships or friendships end, or when someone passes away, emotions arise. At times, we may feel peace and contentment, but more often, we are surprised, saddened, disappointed, or hurt.

Even though many of you have already read or heard this poem before, if you use it as a framework for the relationships throughout your life - present or past, it can be helpful and sometimes comforting to know why people were with you only for a while.

According to this poem, there are three basic explanations as to why people enter and exit our lives.

Reason, Season, or Lifetime

*People come into your life for a reason, a season or a lifetime.
When you figure out which one it is,
you will know what to do for each person.*

*When someone is in your life for a **REASON**,
it is usually to meet a need you have expressed.
They have come to assist you through a difficulty;
to provide you with guidance and support;
to aid you physically, emotionally or spiritually.
They may seem like a godsend, and they are.
They are there for the reason you need them to be.
Then, without any wrongdoing on your part or at an inconvenient time,
this person will say or do something to bring the relationship to an end.
Sometimes they die. Sometimes they walk away.
Sometimes they act up and force you to take a stand.
What we must realize is that our need has been met, our desire fulfilled;
their work is done.
The prayer you sent up has been answered and now it is time to move on.*

*Some people come into your life for a **SEASON**,
because your turn has come to share, grow or learn.
They bring you an experience of peace or make you laugh.
They may teach you something you have never done.
They usually give you an unbelievable amount of joy.
Believe it. It is real. But only for a season.*

***LIFETIME** relationships teach you lifetime lessons;
things you must build upon in order to have a solid emotional foundation.
Your job is to accept the lesson, love the person,
and put what you have learned to use in all other relationships
and areas of your life.
It is said that love is blind but friendship is clairvoyant.*

When people leave, whether or not by choice, IF we can believe and accept that the person was in our life for a 'reason' or a 'season' (or both), we can let them go gracefully and with gratitude. It may not be as long as we'd like, but **we can take comfort in knowing that we had their presence for the 'right' amount of time to get exactly what we needed from the relationship.**

One of my friends who passed away was clearly in my life for a 'reason.' She introduced me to many new friends, new concepts, new ideas, a different way of living. Because of her, my views broadened (eyes were open wider), and it allowed me to see things from a new perspective.

Another friend, with whom I was romantically involved, was in my life for 19 years, and suddenly vanished. It seemed inconceivable. Somehow, I found it comforting to see the relationship from the perspective that he was there for a "season" - albeit, a long one. The relationship taught me so much about myself, and about relationships in general. It helped shape who I am today. I got what I needed - it ran its course. Without that experience, I would not have been open and primed for my current relationship.

We never have a guarantee as to who will be with us 'forever.' Unexpectedly, some may turn out to be **temporary relationships.** No matter what, each person has changed us in some way - harmed us, helped us, given us a new perspective, taught us something new, etc. (If we were harmed, the lesson might include learning about forgiveness and healing.)

'Lifetimers' are the ones we know until we die--the guides, anchors, companions, and beloveds who remain with us until one or the other dies.

INVITATION TO EXPERIMENT

Reflect upon people who have left you - for any reason. If it was a painful experience, think of the reason/season/lifetime framework, and see if you can realize why it was the appropriate amount of time for that relationship.

Reference: <http://blog.beliefnet.com/freshliving/2009> - Valerie Reiss

Triangles

11/2006

When I was in High School, one of my favorite but mostly unknown songs was Triangle and the only line that I remember now is: "Which one will have the broken heart?"

In many situations where a triangle exists, someone inevitably loses or gets left out.

Even though we may know this intellectually, we tend to triangulate (create a triangular relationship) without recognizing the consequences. **Often we want to place blame or interfere in a situation where it is inappropriate to do so.**

Many years ago, I had a coaching client who took a workshop from another coach. That coach, based on the little bit of information she received from my client, recommended that my client look for a new job. (At least that was my client's interpretation.) This, in my opinion, was not appropriate at that moment in time based on all of the information that I knew.

My first reaction was to contact this coach and let her know how irresponsible and inappropriate her advice had been. **Aside from feeling better after venting, in the end, not much would have been accomplished.** I realized how irrelevant and unhelpful that would be. It would not have helped my client in any way. It was much more important for me to discuss with my client how she wanted to proceed. There was no need or purpose to create a triangle.

I heard on the news that a woman learned that her boyfriend had impregnated another woman. She sought out the pregnant woman and shot her. With whom should she have been angry? Clearly, if she had to be angry with someone, it should have been her boyfriend. She is still in relationship with him and needs to resolve her feelings and her anger. **By shooting the pregnant woman, she didn't impact her current relationship with her boyfriend in terms of getting what she really wants – his love, attention, etc.**

My friend sold her house and had many unpleasant conversations with the new buyers. She was angry with her attorney for not handling things more efficiently and yet blamed the buyers for all of the bad feelings she experienced. Her attorney did not do a good job of representing and protecting her and that is where the conversation needed to occur.

So often, we triangulate relationships unnecessarily. It does not help our situation at all. If we go directly to the person with whom we can have the most impact or get what we want, then **it makes sense to avoid dragging a third person into the picture.**

INVITATION TO EXPERIMENT

Think of a situation where you got upset or angry with someone.

- Was that the person who triggered the anger?
- Were you blaming someone who couldn't have any impact on your feelings or affect your results?

When a situation arises where you are feeling angry or hurt, notice who you want to blame. Is it the person who triggered the problem or is it a third person?

Example: We call customer service and get irate because the product does not work. The customer service rep is NOT the person to be angry with – it is the person who can help us get to the right person or adjust the situation, but he/she is not the reason there is a problem.

The next time you are angry or annoyed, take a moment to figure out if your feelings and thoughts are directed at the responsible party. Then, **rather than involving a third person, resolve those feelings in a conversation with the responsible party.**

If you feel inclined, please let me know if you decide to go ahead and try this experiment. I would love to hear about your experiences.

Don't Take it Personally

2/2006

Someone can intentionally send emotional poison, and if you don't take it personally, you will not eat it. When you don't take the emotional poison, it becomes even worse in the sender, but not in you. Don Miguel Ruiz, *The Four Agreements*

From the familiar "I guess I wasn't qualified for the job" to the "What have I done wrong?" we consistently wonder how could we have done things differently. Why is it that someone didn't choose us? How come after I told someone a better way, they chose to ignore my great advice? I could probably come up with zillions of examples of the same principle. It's almost inevitable that whatever happens (good or bad), human beings want to believe that whatever is going on is all about us. **In truth, it's NEVER about us.** While it FEELS as though it's ABOUT us – it is actually NEVER about us. We may be the trigger or the object but in truth, **it's ALWAYS about the person who holds the feeling.**

If it's not about us, then who is it about?

To further explain, here's a detailed example of how we get trapped into thinking it's about us. One of my single clients was telling me about a guy she met at a party. She was all excited because they had some really great discussions and she was feeling as though they had really connected. At the end of the evening, she asked him if he would like to meet again. He answered that he wasn't interested. Somewhat surprised and dismayed, she left the party feeling dejected, rejected, and wondering... **Was it something I said? Perhaps he wasn't attracted to me? What could have gone wrong?** Several days later when talking with another friend, she found out that the guy is gay and therefore would not have been interested in pursuing a romantic relationship.

Another typical example is when someone doesn't get a specific job they want. The first thought is "I'm not qualified" or "I messed up on the interview", etc. In actuality, the company may have been looking to hire a mature, assertive female who could deal with the difficult manager of the department. As a young male going for that position, while it would never be stated, there was no chance for that particular spot no matter how great the resume and interview. Of course, in some cases, we aren't the best person for a particular job – but **it's not because there is something 'wrong' with us; it could be as simple as we didn't meet the need that was sought.**

What does this tell us? Whatever happens (good or bad) is not about us. By taking things personally and going straight to "What did I do?" or "My advice was so helpful" or taking on an emotion such as guilt, it only serves to create distress on our part. **In every instance, no matter what we have or haven't done, the other person has specific needs (i.e. to be on time, to avoid interruptions, to look smart), and so in reality, it's about that person and their need.**

What others say and do is a projection of their own reality, their own dream. When we really see people as they are without taking it personally, we can never be hurt by what they say or do.

Don Miguel Ruiz, *The Four Agreements*

INVITATION TO EXPERIMENT:

Think of a time when someone got angry with you. The angry person expressed his/her anger and it FELT as though it was about you. In actuality, you were the object of the anger (possibly the trigger for their feeling) but this is actually about the person who holds the anger expressing himself or herself. **When you can OBSERVE a situation that feels as though it's about you or directed at you, and not take on the feelings, only then can you get a different and open perspective. Instead of feeling wounded, guilty, rejected, etc. you will most likely feel a tremendous sense of freedom and liberation.** The next time your mind jumps to "What have I done wrong?" STOP – examine the source and observe the person or situation and notice how it's really about what is going on for them. (This doesn't mean that you would want to do it the same way next time.)

Keep in mind:

- **It's about not being responsible for someone else's feelings.**
- **It's about not taking it personally and not letting their emotion affect you.**

If you feel inclined, please let me know if you decide to go ahead and try this experiment. I would love to hear about your experiences.

Q: Five frogs are sitting on a log. Four decide to jump off. How many are left?

A: Five..... Why? Because there is a difference between deciding and doing. Mark L. Feldman & Michael F. Spratt

Should I move to another state away from my friends and family where I have a fabulous job offer OR should I stay here near my friends and family and keep looking for a new job?

Seems like a common decision that people have to make. So, how do you decide? The conventional way is to begin by listing pros and cons. Perhaps it even includes giving emphasis to the aspects that have greater value. Yet, in the end, does this really help you make a sound decision?

Usually, we either feel relief or regret after making a decision. There may be a way to:

- **avoid or minimize regret**
- **prevent making the decision based on 'running away' from what we currently have.**

Ultimately, **our decisions have both emotional and intellectual input even if we don't realize it.** The intellectual way of reasoning can only go so far.

What I've discovered is a method that often helps to make a decision based on a realistic outcome.

Example: A client had to make a decision as to which school to attend. Each had pros and cons. So I painted two pictures with details of each option as follows:

Suppose you have just chosen School A.

- You are close to home so you can visit your family and friends often.
- Your clothes work just fine because the climate is similar to what your current one.
- The school doesn't offer the exact major or some of the classes you really wanted, and they are rather large and impersonal.
- It's hard to get an appointment with your professors.
- Your dormitory is far from the classrooms because it's such a huge campus so you are constantly referring to your campus map to get around.

Now, let's suppose you have just chosen School B.

- You are far away from your friends and family so visiting them other than standard vacation time won't be easy.
- You had to buy a lot of new clothes because of the different climate.
- You love your classes - they are small with lots of attention and the professors seem to take a personal interest in each student.
- You learned how to get around quickly because it's not a very large campus and it's easy to make new friends.
- Often, you miss your friends and family.

How does this come across to you?

Inevitably, when painting a detailed picture that includes all of the pros and cons, sometimes with exaggeration, **AS THOUGH IT HAS ALREADY OCCURRED**, we get a visceral reaction without realizing it. This even works for those that normally don't have easy access to their emotions. **The key is to describe the situation as though it is already a reality rather than something that will occur in the future.** It allows you to truly picture yourself in the situation and know what it is you really want.

"Running Away" Decision

Suppose you have a grueling job that requires constant overtime and occasional weekends. Your boss is demanding and micromanaging. You make a terrific salary, have great benefits, and wonderful co-workers. You may choose your next position for the wrong reasons. Although, there is less time required, a kind boss, etc., you make a lot less money and can't stand your co-workers. What happened?

The decision was a reaction based upon your current situation vs. coming from a neutral place and really imagining yourself already in that position. Had that been the case, you may have realized that the money, benefits and great co-workers are more valuable to you.

INVITATION TO EXPERIMENT

The next time you have to make a decision (major or minor), **paint a full picture with all of the pros and cons using language that implies that the decision has already been made and the results are being realized.**

Example: "I just sat around the pool, read a book, and sipped daiquiris." vs. "I just got off the bus, my feet are sore, and I just saw a beautiful mountain range with breathtaking views." Include details to paint your picture.

Also, consider if your decision may be a 'reaction' to your current situation rather than coming from a neutral place that truly supports your values and what works best for you.

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About Marion



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As a Master Certified Coach (MCC)** since 2006, and a Professional Certified Life Coach (PCC) since 1998, Marion is a former faculty adjunct teacher at Coachville/The School of Coaching currently teaching her own unique program that offers ICF CCEU's (Coaching Continuing Education Units towards certification or renewal of) Laser Coach Your Way to Sustainable Success - Intensive--a 12-week intensive course emphasizing masterful coaching skills (formerly known as Learn How to Coach). She facilitates an ongoing Mentor Practicum, one of the few supervision groups for coaches.

Marion is a co-author of **7 Simple Secrets to Successful Workshops** and provides consulting services for the design and delivery of workshop presentations on a global basis. For 12 years she attended the School of Practical Philosophy that emphasizes putting philosophical principles into practical terms.. She is a member of ICF - New York City Chapter and has a Master's Degree in Business and in Education, co-founded a healthcare publishing company, and taught High School Business Education.

Aside from coach training and mentoring, Marion finds it critical to maintain individual coaching clients. It's through her clients, that she is richly rewarded as they move closer to their vision. She has worked with clients in large corporations dealing with the stresses of the workplace as well as clients who want to get into (or out of) a relationship. She loves working with clients who are experiencing a conflict or struggle in any of their relationships: boss, employee, co-worker, significant other, family dynamics, etc.

Marion has been interviewed on television for her coaching expertise. She has been a featured guest speaker and presenter at meetings and retreats throughout the northeast, is a recurring lecturer for an ongoing Women's Series, and has been cited in The Journal News and The Wall Street Journal.

Currently, Marion is serving as an examiner and supervisor for students in the Executive Coaching program at the University of Texas, Dallas. Formerly, she served as an examiner for the Columbia University Coaching Certification program. She presented four of the Coaching Core Competencies at the Annual ICF Conference. Executives from the following corporations have sought Marion's coaching expertise: Abbott Laboratories, Reader's Digest, Exxon-Mobil, Toys "R" Us, Pepsico, AT&T, Prudential, JP Morgan Chase, Kraft Foods, Maryknoll Brothers and Sisters, and the US Tennis Association. She coaches executives as well as entrepreneurs to hone their leadership qualities, enhance communication skills, and strengthen interpersonal relations and is in demand for her laser approach and direct style of coaching.

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