



# **Beyond Stress, Struggle and Survival Mode:**

**Health & Happiness  
Strategies for  
Toxic Times**

**by Mitch Rustad, CLC**

Thank you for joining me in this **virtual coaching session**.  
I have a few questions before we get started:

- Who would you be without that nagging feeling of anger/anxiety/shame/guilt/worry that (consciously or unconsciously) hold you back in life? (Reality check alert - in today's often toxic, overwhelming times, we ALL have those pesky negative blocks to deal with. You're not alone).
- What if it was all gone, even for just one hour?
- What if, for a whole day, you just didn't believe any of that relentless negativity? Who would you be?



Would life seem to be — dare I say it? — easier and way more fun? Would success and fulfillment come easier as well?

**So many questions, right? Life coaching is about uncovering and challenging the beliefs that block you from the positive change, transformation, and greater happiness you desire.**

I lead you on an **inner excavation** of those blocks; **this work is literally about learning to get out of your own way**, challenge the **social hypnotism** we all have been exposed to on a daily basis, and come back to the truth. And you don't have to do that alone.

***“It is commonly accepted that when you are seeking to accomplish a change in your life that it is easier to do when you are working with someone else. This is why some people seek out a buddy, or a coach, or even a support group. You seek the energy of the other individuals to merge with yours so that the combined energy will be more powerful.”***



When I saw this online post recently, I knew I had found the answer to my own question, “Why do people need life coaches?” And the good news is, that work starts right now, and can greatly affect how your future turns out.

## **GETTING UNSTUCK IS A PROCESS**

Everyone gets stuck. Maybe you’re facing a new, unexpected chapter, or perhaps you’re mired in the same old negative stories. That ‘stuckness’ could result in procrastination, or be expressed as shyness, social anxiety, or agoraphobia — anything that blocks you from allowing and experiencing your good, and doing what you want in life; more of the good stuff, less of the not so good stuff. It all comes down to believing in a (usually unidentified) fear or limitation, and shutting down as a result.

But the first thing is to acknowledge this issue, and call a thing a thing. Take a deep breath, and ask yourself, “what *really* holds me back?” Quiet your mind, gently allow those obsessive, looping thoughts to slow down, and keep asking the

question. Here's a few common answers I've heard so often in coaching sessions: *"They won't like me."* *"I'll be found out."* *"It isn't safe."* These answers can result from something as simple as going to the grocery store, or on a first date, to something considerably more challenging, like a job interview or making a major life change. Ultimately, it doesn't matter, when you're stuck, you're stuck, and your mind is getting in the way of you taking healthy, empowering actions to move boldly, positively forward.



Want to start getting out of your own way, and living a more pleasing, successful life, right now? Follow these simple steps:

1. Slow down, get quiet and ask yourself, 'HOW exactly am I getting in my own way? **What (exactly) do I believe that holds me back right now?**'
2. Write down the answers. **Be truthful.** This is personal to you, and can't be wrong. You'll know the truth when you tap into it.
3. Call a thing a thing ("I'm afraid I'll be criticized" is likely code for "I don't think I'm equal or good enough") and **just acknowledge your belief, without judgment.** Mentally place it on an imaginary table in BRIGHT light, right in front of you. Look right at it. Let the light illuminate the thing, belief or idea that holds you back. It's NOT personal, it's just a temporary limitation you have gotten used to. Don't take it personally.

4. Start to **gently challenge this block**. Detach from it. Entertain the possibility that you CAN be different, you're more than you know. Your mind is more expansive than you realized. This alone can spur miracles. Ask yourself, *would my fear actually happen, for real? Would the outcome without question be as I fear? Or am I projecting ahead of time a result. Would you burst into flames if you actually took action? Would the earth stop spinning? What would be the worst outcome possible, and would I still be here an hour after it happened?* By challenging this mental construct, the construct often just dissolves on its own. Try it, play with this, gently but firmly challenge old beliefs, mistaken certainties and see how you feel, even if you just play out the results in your imagination. I've found this alone can create powerful freedom and allow exciting possibilities to emerge. "I had no idea I could do that!" or "That's really NOT like me!" to be afraid, or act out inferiority, or feelings of unworthiness. Suddenly, being free seems imminently possible.



Great work, now before we go any further, here are some additional tools you can start using immediately:

## **4 THINGS TO START TRANSFORMING YOUR EXPERIENCE**

**1. YOUR POWER is RIGHT NOW.** Learn and train yourself into being here and now. You will be astonished how much happier, clearer and powerful you feel. Breathe IN and say "I

am fully IN the power of NOW, this moment is packed with potential to create and allow my good.” This work creates amazing results when you reside fully in the now - not yesterday, last year or next year, so take a moment to be here right now, then you can begin. How many days have you wasted believing you’re not there yet, thus wanting the day to just be over with? This is a signal it’s time to return to the now.



**2. Practice APPRECIATION AND GRATITUDE, especially around difficult people (spouse, boss, relative, etc.)** you can’t always avoid in your life. Find ONE thing, offer an authentic compliment, and that changes the vibe immediately, and you can save yourself from experiencing any further toxicity.

**3. KNOW what you want, and focus on that.** Have you ever gotten clear about what you really want? Have you asked for it, made it clear, and believe you can in fact, have that life? Or is complaining, blaming, judging harshly and worrying your actual life strategy? Be honest, now. I can’t tell you the number of people (me included) who spend unbelievably large amounts of time focused on what they DON’T want!

**4. ACCEPTANCE and ACKNOWLEDGMENT AS POWER:** If you can’t stand your life as it is, you’ll never be able to truly enjoy life or being here; until right now is enough. Until you are enough, today. No matter what. Try it, say to yourself, “I AM enough, right now.” This frees you up to allow positive change.

**5. Break the “Not Me” Spell:** Who am I to be happy? I can’t do that! It’s not realistic to live your dreams, only famous people get to do that. Who, me? This back of the bus mentality is taught, and so easily accepted as ‘truth’- don’t settle for it! The time is now, and you ARE the one you’ve been waiting for.

**6. I Want Revenge!** Are you consumed with resentment, that life or other people have done you wrong? Do you spend hours and hours complaining, re-telling those stories, and thus re-living them all over again?



Whatever negative payoffs you might feel you’re getting from holding on to resentments, there IS a much better way.

You know the best revenge of all? It’s NEVER thinking badly of yourself again. Now THAT is what I call getting the last laugh. Do you still have an old bully, an old tormentor, who seems embedded in your body and life, a constant companion from hell? The best and most effective ‘revenge’ is to be the opposite of what that tormentor believed about you. Be big, bold, and stand up! Laugh and love yourself in the face of their negative labels, and watch them drift away.

## **THE MYTH OF ‘THINKING POSITIVE’**

Now let me share something very non-life coachey with you, which I think turns off a lot of people to the whole idea of getting a coach:

Too many so-called self-help, spiritual enlightenment, and New Age leaders sell the idea that **positive thinking is some kind of guarantee, or easy manipulation, over your life events**. In truth, no one can guarantee that if you ‘think positive’ you’re then going to skip down the street, and instantly have everything you want, and life will be all sunshine and rainbows. (That said, no one is saying that you won’t, either! You actually might!)



**Reality check time:** Life coaching work isn’t just about learning to ‘think positive’ until all your troubles immediately melt away; it IS about **putting OLD habit/beliefs on a shelf**, and deliberately tapping into new, uncharted possibilities, and creating more desirable realities – based on YOUR desires, heartfelt goals or personal Utopia. To be sure, that old negative thinking won’t get you there. It requires conscious FOCUS on what you want, while letting go of what you don’t want. It takes some practice, and patience. But without a doubt, you CAN create a more enjoyable, peaceful and prosperous life experience.

*“Habit is habit, and not to be flung out of the window by any man, but coaxed downstairs a step at a time.”* Mark Twain/  
Wayne Dyer (“Your Erroneous Zones”)

The fact is this: Life coaching is one of the best ways to expose and **get un-addicted to core negative patterns, loops and old stories that play out in our lives as ‘reality’**; until we CHANGE ourselves, *life simply can NOT give us anything*

*different (not for long, anyway) than what our core patterns and beliefs allow us. It's that simple.*

In summary, coaching is a friendly, fun inquiry, **to find out HOW you might be getting in your own way**, when it comes to a goal, or general wellness, living your utopia in the 'real' world – what old beliefs, projections, judgments and ANTs (automatic negative thoughts) play a role, and deliberately changing them. Sound good? This is “now” centered, and looks forward. If we find there's excessive grieving or deeper issues, I know some great therapists who can work through that emotional work with you.



***“As of this day, at this very moment, you already have all that is required to move beyond the past into the newness of now.” – Iyanla van Zant***

So much of this work is slowing down long enough to get in touch with your truth, gently confronting it by taking a closer look at it, and then acknowledging its role in your larger life. *Have I felt inferior all this time, for a lie, for someone else's benefit? Did I accept someone else's definition of me as fact, when in truth, I long ago outgrew that label?* The list of possibilities here is endless, and yet highly personal to you. Get to the deepest, most personal core for you, and challenge whatever negative belief you discover.

This work can be great fun, in part because the truth is, there are NO guarantees for ANYONE in ANY chapter of life. Things can be marvelous, and then they're not so marvelous.

Or things can be terrible, and suddenly something amazing shows up. Life is ultimately a mystery, and what goes on ‘out there’ isn't in our control. So here's your invitation to STOP worrying, projecting, resenting and fretting, OK?! Take a second, right now, and decide to appreciate, revel in and enjoy every second of today, exactly AS you are — this is what coaching can help you achieve — and the best possible outcomes can start to flow, often in unexpected ways.



**More good news:** You don't have to be religious, or spiritual, to somehow KNOW that letting go of ‘how’ your good shows up is a profound experience, part of the delicious mystery of life. YOU are your only job. What's going on inside of you right now? That is your only concern, and that question will keep you enamored for a lifetime. In the meantime, amazing changes can be made, literally right now. Are you ready?

The last question I have is, ‘are you ready to challenge your own self-imposed limitations, the box you put yourself in, the old patterns and automatic negative thoughts that limit your own natural peace, self worth, and personal power?’

To work successfully with a coach, you have to be WILLING to answer some questions, which you already have the answers to. Easy, right? **Because I don't ever ‘fix’ anybody** – let me repeat what I wrote earlier, it's the core of this work: **I lead an inner excavation of your own blocks; this work is literally about getting OUT of your own way, challenging the social**

**hypnotism we ALL have been exposed to on a daily basis, and coming back to the truth.**

This is a freewill planet, and we're all making inner choices, consciously or unconsciously, ALL the time, that affect our 'reality' – two people can see the exact same thing, and have totally different reactions and experiences. This proves that 'reality' is our own inside job. Do you like what you're getting? Do you like how you feel? **Do you think you have to 'fix' or 'change' those toxic people out there before you can feel good?** Good luck with that!



This is what this work is all about. Creating opportunities to shift your thinking and perceptions and actions into NEW ways, so your actual experience of 'reality' starts to change. This will affect every part of your life, every person, every experience. It's the best thing you will ever do for yourself. But it won't work if you're not WILLING to go there, shine some light on yourself and what you've been up to. I promise you 'aha' moments are inevitable when you're asked the right questions. With this work, positive change is inevitable. Does that sound good to you?

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**Mitch Rustad** is a certified Life Coach, writer and creative consultant. For more information, go to [MitchRustad.com](http://MitchRustad.com), or sign up for a complimentary **30-minute** "What Do You Really Want?" coaching session (first-time clients only).