Episode 111 6 Ways to Use the ...heel of Life Coaching Activity

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**SPEAKERS**

Jo Wheatley, Zoe Hawkins

**Zoe Hawkins** 00:00

The c The Coaching Crowd podcast is for compassionate courageous leaders, HR professionals and high achievers, people who are passionate about helping others to find alignment in their lives through coaching, and do a thinking of training and developing as a coach.

**Jo Wheatley** 00:21

Welcome to the kitchen crab podcast with me, Jo Wheatley, and my friend and co host Zoe Hawkins.

**Zoe Hawkins** 00:26

Hi everybody, we're back this week with a podcast on six ways to use the wheel of life. And the reason we're bringing this to you is I had group supervision yesterday, and one of our learners was sharing how she absolutely hated the Wheel of Life herself, and refuse to use it with clients until one client presented themselves with an opportunity for her to use the wheel of life. And she used it and the client loved it. So she's now like open minded around using the wheel of life. And so we thought this wheel of life is sometimes an unloved tool. But there are so many different ways that you can use it. So we wanted to share with you six of those ways today, in case you too, aren't very much in love with the Wheel of Life tool and want to maybe think about some creative or different ways, you might be able to use the same concept. So we should probably start by explaining what the wheel of life is as number one, so that people listening that don't know anything about it, get an idea of what we're talking about.

**Jo Wheatley** 01:23

So the wheel of life is, is a tool that you can use often in, like the first session when you're getting to know your client, and you're trying to understand how they're experiencing their life at the moment. And you're wanting to understand and help them to understand what are the most important things in their life in their world. That's why it's called the wheel of life. So what you would typically do is ask the client to draw a circle. So it's a very visual tool. And that can really work well for people that are visual, and it can be a great anchor point for people. So let's say it's a pizza, bicycle wheel, a trivial pursuits, cheese thing, you know, however you see it, so a circle with different segments in it. And you would ask them, usually eight segments, and you would ask them to label each of those sections or segments, with the things that are most important to them. Sometimes a coach will give it to them pre populated, sometimes a coach will ask an open ended question like I did just there. Typically, they will pick things like family, friends, maybe spirituality, you know, financial well being or wealth, health, social time, you might have something like creativity or travel or adventure in those types of things. And sometimes you'll do like a hybrid. So some clients need an activity B to be brought to life. So you do as I've just said, well, some clients will have things like this, and then they can use that as a springboard. And then they're like I was really important to me. So that's why it's called the wheel of life. And it can be used in the early session. And it can also be used at the end of a coaching programme to be able to measure it. So once they have labelled it, you'll ask them to score each of the segments. So how satisfied or content are you with each area and give it a score out of 10. And so that measurement in the beginning can be compared to the measurement at the end of the coaching. The caveat is that sometimes as a result of the coaching and the insights that the client has gained through the coaching, they might have scored something, let's say it's a six career, let's say that's a segment and they'd scored it six out of 10, they might still score it six out of 10 at the end, even though they've made progress in it because now what they believe is possible in their career or the fulfilment they believe that they can have is greater than they thought at the beginning. That's a technicality. But it's important to mention I think so. So the first way out of six that you can use the wheel of life is as a progress checker evaluating the progress that the client has made. Yeah, and

**Zoe Hawkins** 04:11

I think what you've also described there, I'm going to take as number two is a way to support the client in their goal setting, you know, so that process of just being able to visually take stock of the whole life, you know, that the client has often the client might be over indexing on work, but actually not notice that they're neglecting perhaps their health and well being and that's actually having a bigger effect on their fulfilment and motivation than their work actually really is. So the Wheel of Life is a visual representation of the client's life and it can help the client to really focus in on how, how they want to be in life and therefore what are the goals that they want to set. So we've been wanting to so goal setting and also evaluation. So if you want to step away from life because that may be that doesn't To fit your style of coaching, particularly, you may choose to use this as a wheel of competencies. So let's imagine you're working in a corporate organisation, and you're supporting somebody with their development in their role. It may be that they have a set of competencies for their role. So you can put those competencies on that wheel. And ask your client to think about those competencies in respect to where they're at right now, and the role that they're doing. And that again, can help the client to really connect in with their development, where some of their strengths are emerging and where some of their gaps may be. And this could be a great way to enlighten leadership development, end of year conversations and performance reviews as a way to just bring a little bit more creativity. So when you're scoring a wheel, you're thinking about your performance in a different way as perhaps just listing something out or talking about something. So it's a way to bring some animation to a performance review conversation if you're a line manager. But also, as a coach, if you're supporting somebody with their development,

**Jo Wheatley** 06:02

think the next way that we'll talk about how you can use the wheel of life activity is as a tool to help a client or the person that you're talking to, to break down a goal. So the client might start with, with a wheel of life. So as I mentioned, in the beginning, you might have career well, family, friends, travel, etc. On your on the wheel, whatever's the most important things in that client's life. Once they've scored it, they then might say, or actually, when we start looking at career, they're like, well, there's a number of things that are important to me when it comes to my career, you know, what do I do with that? Where do I put that. So you can imagine taking that segment and breaking it out into a new wheel. So they might have a new wheel for their career. And that wheel for their career might be around the competencies that Zoey just mentioned. Or it might be that their view around breaking down that goal are around confidence, assertiveness, visibility, influence, you know, whatever it is that the client or the person that you're supporting in that space, feels other things, the important things that make up that goal. So it can be that first next step towards breaking down what might feel to them, as you know, an area that they're stuck in that they haven't been making the progress that they want to. And that first step is like, well, let's acknowledge where we are now, which would be that wheel of life. And now let's do a deeper dive into what are the important elements that we're going to need to address and support you with in order to make the progress that you want to

**Zoe Hawkins** 07:41

and that can help the client to make choices as well. Because you know, as there's the things that you mentioned, it might also be like getting a promotion, getting a pay rise, building my network, you know, and each of those things in themselves might be goals. And if you wanted, if the client loved it, you could continue to break that down and into the granular you could take getting a promotion and create a wheel of getting a promotion. So lots of ways you can continue to use the same concept to break down a goal. So the next one would be perhaps to use it as a wheel of well being. And I believe we have a YouTube video on this. If you go and check out our YouTube channel, we have a demonstration of using the wheel of well being. And this was this came through is particularly important post COVID. I think we've mentioned that on a previous podcast, but we're wellbeing is really come into focus for people through their coaching. And well being is a big topic. Now lots of different elements that can affect your well being. So if you have a client arrive in coaching, and perhaps they're talking about wellbeing in the context of work life balance, you might choose to take a step back from work life balance, and why don't we just check in on your well being in general, and a wheel of well being is over to be invited to the client, but you may give some suggestions around sleep quality, downtime. Maybe it's about nutrition, or exercise, like what are the things about that client's well being that are important to them. And again, creating a wheel and what that can help the client to do is rather than thinking about, I'm so stressed as a as a general, it helps to break it down into achievable chunks, like maybe they are so stressed because all of those areas of wellbeing are neglected or there's one that is really really important that is being neglected and the client can put some focus and attention or it may be celebrating where the client is really taking care of themselves. So maybe a will a well being or we love self care. Whatever may seem relevant to you and your client and what you're working on together.

**Jo Wheatley** 09:50

Different to the emotions feel that we have a version of in our book and and the emotions, you know that you can Google around You know, the whole range of emotions that you can have access to, but on that point, you could have a we'll have emotions in this context, and looking at your relationship to your emotions, you know, scoring it thing, because a lot of people have sets of emotions that they feel, Oh, don't want to go, don't want to go there. But actually, when, and our emotions capture practitioner training, when we take principles, like emotions are neither good nor bad, it can be really useful to explore them in that way. So that's a little side bear. You could use the wheel of life and adapt it into a wheel of values. So as coaches, we often do work around values with our clients, because values are the things that motivate us, they're how we decide between right or wrong, they are the things that are most important to us in life that we need to have in order to feel fulfilled. So when when your client is starting to explore that, rather than having a random list of words, actually putting them into a visual, and again, being able to score like how, you know, in your work at the moment, or your life, to what degree are each of these values being met. And what we're doing with with the wheel values with a competencies wheel of well being is it's also helping the client to identify where are the gaps, not only where are the gaps, but also, which of these things are interrelated. So if we take we'll have values that that I'm mentioning now, often what people find is that when they start to make progress, and keep an eye on this wheel, and checking in on the scores, they realised that, that when, let's say somebody had a value around, achievement, if they had a value around achievement, and the score goes up in that area, they might find that a value they have around peace also goes up, because through getting, you know, through achieving something, they get a sense of inner peace. And so that wheel and being able to look at it, and the fact that they are all sat next to each other, kind of unconsciously says that these things are interconnected.

**Zoe Hawkins** 12:11

So that's ultimately the the six different ways you can use the tool. And I think what we're starting to get into here is, it doesn't really matter how you use the tool is the quality of the conversation that comes with the concepts that you introduce. So the tool in itself can be helpful, how you know, whichever version you choose to use can be really helpful for the clients to be able to visually take in what is occurring in their world where the gaps are, as Joe described, where perhaps some things are working, because that can be useful to take him. But the quality of the conversation that you facilitate off the back of these tools is really where the value lies. So it's being able to ask your clients questions like, What do you notice? You know, what do you what are you drawn to here? You know, how is the overall shape of that wheel, impacting your well being, if it's the wheel of well being or impacting your fulfilment, if it's a wheel of career, so you may find that the client has a very smooth wheel, perhaps they've scored like fives and sixes. So that can be very smooth. But what does that say? Does that say that they just feel a bit beige, you know, or a bit average? You know? And so what are the emotions that come from this average experience? You know, what would it be like if they were able to sit here and score their we'll eights, nines, 10s? Like, what would the what would be the difference in their energy? Or in their experience? Or perhaps the wheels really bumpy? They might have scored nines and 10s. For some, and ones and twos for others, like, what does that represent for them, you know, they may feel that parts of their life are going really well, but they can't fully enjoy it, because there's other parts that aren't going so well. And they and they, they may even say life just feels really rocky or really bumpy, you know. So that analogy of the shape can be really useful. Or perhaps everything is scored like ones, twos or threes. And if you imagine it is a wheel, you'd have to pedal really, really hard to get anywhere in life, you know, when you've got a small wheel. So they may find, they may say things like, I just feel like I'm on the hamster wheel, like I'm trying really hard, but not making any progress. So you can use these concepts to facilitate powerful conversations. And that's really where the value comes from these tools.

**Jo Wheatley** 14:30

I think it also is around you know how you introduce a tool to a client can set them up for how much or how little they're going to get out of it. And remember, coaching is that CO created space. So we don't say right, we're going to do this next. But if a client in conversation is is saying, Oh, I don't know there's just so many things that are important to me. It's really hard to choose what I want to focus on. That might be an indication that offering a wheel of life which gives that semi structure can help help the client then to just kind of get the stuff out of the head, be able to look at it, let it settle. And then through the conversation as you were describing, you know, with these questions, what are you noticing? Where are the gaps? Where are they? What are the connections? What's emerging for you, as you know, as you're sharing this with me, or as you're plotting this into here, what he, you know, what are you noticing in terms of the sensations that you're experiencing? Where do you want to go next with this? What is this telling you? I mean, there's all sorts of creative creative questions, you know, that you can bring to it. You don't want to overdo it. But often through answering those questions. The client will share with you some indicators of what their beliefs are their positive and empowering beliefs, and maybe some beliefs that they've got that might be limiting or holding them back, not through our view, but in accordance with what they want to achieve. And again, you can you can explore them. And that's where you can start to kind of check and see Oh, is that? Is that belief you just shared there? And the client might be like, I don't know, just talking, you know? And then you do just pausing be like, What did I say? And you can reflect back to them. So when you're talking about that, you share that? I don't know, for example, let's say a client says, Well, I wouldn't score anything 10 out of 10. So they're not even open square out of 10. Well, what impact does that have on them achieving their goal or achieving the goal in the way that they want to? So again, you know, you got to you align with the client on the areas and the time that you invest on it. And of course, silence is a very powerful tool, by allowing the clients just be in notice. And so you need to think about, are you going to be jotting this down and writing it? Are you going to be putting it in a visual that you're going to be using a shared screen? If you're doing it virtually, if you're together, you're going to be using, you know, a flip chart or doing it on paper? Is the client doing it? Well, they have a copy to take away from that session. So there are some practicalities around the way that you're going to work together when it comes to this as well.

**Zoe Hawkins** 17:01

And you don't actually need to see the clients wheel. You know, I think that's a misconception in coaching, when you do these sorts of activities that you need to be able to see what the client is doing. You don't need that information, it doesn't actually matter. The client has the information, you need to coach, you know, so when you're asking, What do you notice, you don't need to be seeing it, the client could tell you what they notice, you know, so whilst those things can be really useful, it doesn't need to be an obstacle for you to be able to get creative. And I think the thing with any coaching tools and concepts that you come across, is think about how would you like to use them? So we've given you six versions today, you probably get a given you 20. You know, what are the ways that you might want to adapt this tool, you know, so if you are particularly interested in the wheel of life and you haven't come across it before, come and visit our website, it company.co.uk forward slash wheel where you can get a free download of the resource and you can start to play with it with people that you're having conversations with and start to think about the creative ways that you might like to adapt it for your use as well. Thank you for listening to the coaching crowd podcast with Zoe Hawkins and Jo Wheatley. We'd love for you to join our inclusive community to learn and grow in

**Jo Wheatley** 18:19

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