

# Get a Life

by Sophie McNeil Wolf

**Life coach Deirdre Danahar explores the questions of living a fulfilled life.**

Deirdre Danahar is a people person. From a very young age, she knew she wanted make people's lives better. After earning a bachelor's degree in psychology in her home state of Massachusetts, Danahar headed south to New Orleans to attend graduate school at Tulane. Earning a clinical social work license, Danahar found herself at a CEU program on coaching skills for clinicians in 2002. "Suddenly, it was as if everything I had done clicked. Here was this type of work grounded in psychology and science making use of what we know about human development focused on using that as a fundamental building block. Ta-da! This is what I'm supposed to be doing," she said, laughing aloud. "I went from there."

The 45 year-old Fondrenite now helps creative professionals on the same path to finding life's flow and purpose. Whether it's juggling family and work priorities, finding the keys to continued success or digging out of a career rut, Danahar works with clients to find what's most meaningful and how to find the resources to plan for the future.

## **What is the difference between life coaching and other professions, like counseling?**

Professional coaching is a transformative process that focuses on setting goals, taking appropriate risks, creating outcomes and managing personal change. Counseling or therapy addresses healing pain, dysfunction and conflict within an person or in relationships. Sometimes people even wonder what's the difference between coaching and consulting. Coaching, again, is about developing the human being and what actions they need to take and how do you develop that person's potential. It's forward focused. The person – the client – is absolutely viewed as an expert in themselves. Sometimes as a coach, your job is to help bring that to the surface. As a consultant, you are hired as the expert and to diagnose an issue.

## **How do you know which one to choose? Who is best suited for coaching?**

People who are best suited for coaching have a couple of denominators at large. They are fundamentally mentally healthy and whole. There's not depression or anxiety. They may have nerves or stress, but it hasn't gone too far to the edge. These people are not looking for someone to fix their problems for them. If you're trying to identify strengths and can't wrap your brain around them, coaching is a great avenue for that. If there's a gap between where you are professionally and where you'd like to go, coaching can be a wonderful match for that. The lens that I work through is signature strengths. How does your character as an individual match up with the skills and competencies you've learned over time and what kind of environment can you use them in?

## **For those that feel out of balance between work and home life, how do you help people find "balance?"**

What happens for folks when we end up in that place where they don't have time for everything is that they've made time for everything. It often stems from a sense of obligation. Obligation isn't a bad thing, but it can get in our way if we're only doing something out of obligation or misinterpreting that we're the only person that can do something and not being appropriately assertive. You can think, "If I'm saying yes to this, what am I saying 'no' to? Am I the best fit for this? What am I sacrificing if I choose to do this?" We have to have the long, hard talk with ourselves.

*To learn more about Danahar and her work, visit [inmotioncc.com](http://inmotioncc.com).*