

Coaching for life

Lesley Sharon Rosenthal

THE words "if only" are banned Michelle Zelig's vocabulary. "I don't want to go through life saying 'if only ...' "I want to seize the opportunity."

Ms Zelig is determined that she have no regrets about what she could have achieved. This determination to live life to the fullest has seen her rise at dawn to run triathalons and marathons. Often her mother was in the habit of asking, "Why can't you be like any other Jewish girl?"

"In those days it was so un-Jewish to wake up at 6am on a Sunday to compete and get sweaty rather than spend the day focusing on what accessories to wear," she says.

She has applied the same courage, tenacity and self-discipline learnt in these endurance sports to her current career, life coaching. Ms Zelig's company, Personal Power International, is at the Australian forefront of this innovative field.



Michelle Zelig

"Life coaching is a form of personal mentorship for anyone wishing to work on healthy body, healthy mind, life changes, career moves, motivation, personal and communication issues," she explains.

Ms Zelig is making it her vocation to help others achieve their goals. She sets up personal development strategies which revolve around issues clients want to work on. Appointments are booked into a regular time slot and delivered on a one-to-one basis by telephone. Client confidentiality is respected at all times.

In the US, no self-respecting CEO will have entered the corporate arena without behind-the-scenes coaching to boost some aspect of their career focus. Ms Zelig is familiar with the high-powered world of the business executive. Some years ago she worked for a top brokerage firm on New York's Wall Street, so she can relate to the pressures and challenges life in the fast lane can deal. However, with good career prospects and salary package to match, she felt something was missing.

"I loved what I was doing, but felt this wasn't my long-term career path. That's when I started doing personal development courses on my free time," she says. "Initially it was to find my own path, but eventually it led me into helping others find theirs."

While in the US she completed several courses at Landmark International.

"Landmark's intensive courses look behind what triggers us as humans. There could be more than 150 people on a course and I felt an

amazing amount of positive energy in the room," she says.

She went on to do some personal coaching and coached Barbra Streisand's cousins for a year. At the same time Ms Zelig was working on her physical self. Rather than partying in the new year in gown and stilettos, she donned runners and joined 5,000 New Yorkers in the annual New Year's Eve fancy dress run in Central Park. It was a marathon with a difference; instead of receiving water at the end of the run, participants were given champagne.

Ms Zelig has had many interesting experiences as a single woman working and living in the Big Apple. She says her weirdest Yom Kippur involved attending a singles only seder night at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel.

"During his sermon the rabbi offered to give a discount on the wedding cost if you met your partner during the break. I made a quick getaway.

Back in Melbourne Ms Zelig received formal personal training qualifications from the Victorian Fitness Association. While working in information technology, she decided to change direction and find herself a coach with a view to setting up her own personal coaching business.

"Working in the corporate world has helped me gain an insider's understanding of the daily issues managers face. Now I can assist them to achieve balance and time management, build organisational skills and handle negative feedback," she says.

But personal life coaching is not only reserved for the business person. Ms Zelig can tailor a plan to anyone wishing to connect with their personal power. This could mean coping with career changes to losing weight, getting fit and even finding Ms or Mr Right.

"Only last week I gave one of my clients a whole lot of homework towards his goal of seeking out Ms Right and not Ms Right Now."

"In coaching I need to lead by example which means I have to be all the things I am coaching others to be," she says.

With a life coach supporting you, together you can achieve at a faster rate, successful goals within the spheres of career, business, projects, lifestyles, physical wellbeing and relationships.

"When a person wants to stop analysing why they've done what they've done and is now interested in moving on, it's time to hire a life coach who can guide them to follow their personal path for the future, regardless of past experience."

■ *Michelle Zelig's website is www.personalpowerinternational.com.*

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