

The Right Kind of Listening

Sometimes it may be hard to talk to family and friends about your feelings and you may not want to worry them or to be seen as not coping. Life coaching provides a safe place to vent your feelings and talk about how hard it is, while empowering you to change what you can.

Decision Making

There is a wealth of information on how lifestyle changes, alternative health and medical treatment can alleviate symptoms of endometriosis. You may feel overwhelmed and confused about what are the right options for you.

Life coaching can:

1. Provide a listening space to explore your options.
2. Clarify your values, and use them as a basis for making decisions.
3. Tap into your innate wisdom to find the answers that are right for you.
4. Plan the logistics around having surgery or alternative treatments.

Communication

When you don't have any visible symptoms, it can be hard for people to know what you are going through. You may want to communicate more effectively with medical people, bosses, colleagues and friends so they can understand and support you.

You can use life coaching to:

1. Identify the key points you want to communicate, and learn how to speak in a natural way about your endometriosis.
2. Develop your advocacy and assertiveness skills.
3. Clarify how much information you will share and with whom.

Healthy Lifestyle Changes

You may want to change your diet and exercise in order to help your endometriosis, but are finding sticking to the changes hard. It can also take time to find the right type and level of exercise for your body's changing pain levels.

The support of a life coach could be invaluable to help you:

1. Make changes gradually, in sustainable and achievable steps.
2. Keep motivated and positive by reminding you of the benefits and outcomes you wanted.
3. Get you back on track when you hit those inevitable obstacles.
4. Continually assess and adjust what's working and what's not.
5. Challenge your excuses and find ways to overcome them.

Changing our Attitude

A lot of our dissatisfaction comes from wanting things to be different from what they are. It can be helpful to accept yourself and your situation as it is. This has two benefits:

1. When we stop feeling that now is not good enough, we are free to notice and appreciate what we do have.
2. When we no longer feel resistance to our situation, we gain the clarity and energy to start making changes.

Self Confidence

The restrictions endometriosis puts on your social life, exercise routines and hobbies can knock your confidence and leave you feeling frustrated.

Life Coaching can be a very positive experience where your coach can:

1. Focus on what is possible rather than limitations.
2. Remind you of your strengths and how you have managed in the past.
3. Encourage you to keep trying when you are discouraged by the lack of progress, & frustrated by all the interruptions caused by endometriosis.
4. Harness your inner wisdom and resourcefulness, to find your own solutions to obstacles.
5. Replace negative unhelpful beliefs with positive helpful beliefs.

Empowering

The unpredictability of endometriosis can make it hard to plan for or commit to events in the future, and can lead to pre-period anxiety as you worry “is this going to be a bad month?” Because you don’t have much control of your body, it is empowering to take charge of what you can.

With Life coaching you can:

1. Identify what you do have control over and brainstorm alternative ways to reach your goals.
2. Learn to listen and trust your body so you know when to push yourself and when to ease up.
3. Develop coping strategies for pre period anxiety and pain.

Whole Life

Without minimising the impact of endometriosis, it is helpful to remember you are more than your endometriosis.

Life coaching's holistic approach is perfect for:

1. Diluting your feelings of pity by discussing how to have a good life despite endometriosis.
2. Improving the challenging and stressful areas of your life that can exacerbate endometriosis.
3. Identifying what you really value, the things that feed your heart and soul and puts a smile on your face and discovering ways to include these things into your life.
4. Bringing more balance, pleasure and fulfilment into your life.

The more you are able to meet your needs in the areas that matter to you, the more ways you can recharge your batteries and the better you will cope with your endometriosis.

Is Life coaching for me?

Life coaching's holistic approach means that everyone can benefit from the extraordinary level of support and encouragement that coaching can bring. However the timing needs to be right.

If you feel you are:

1. At the acceptance stage of the grief cycle, and are ready to make the best of your new reality.
2. Wanting support and encouragement to make changes in your life.

Then life coaching could be a beneficial addition to your coping tools and support network.

Adapted from information supplied by Annemarie Coulson Life Coaching

Annemarie works from her home in Hamilton but is available to coach anyone in New Zealand using the phone or Skype. You can contact Annemarie by E-mail at a.coulson@xtra.co.nz or by phone on 0210765450.

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