

Tools for Life

New breed of personal consultants teach skills to maximize personal and professional potential

LORI RADUN CALLS HERSELF THE “MOM COACH” — most of her clients are moms who simply need help balancing the “many hats a woman wears.” To that end, she assists her clients with personal development, parenting challenges and relationship issues while teaching techniques for living a balanced life.

“Coaching,” explains Radun, “is a relationship that provides support, energy and empowerment, which enables clients to connect with their true selves and achieve the goals needed to live the lives they desire.”

Radun is part of a growing career field called life coaching. The International Coach Federation (ICF) attributes the recent growth of the industry to several factors, including a need for companies to assist in the personal growth of their employees, a widening disparity between what managers were trained to do

and what their jobs now require them to do, and increased workplace pressures to perform at higher levels, among other reasons.

Anese Cavanaugh, founder of Dare to Engage, a life coach firm based in St. Charles, generates approximately 90 percent of her

work from organizations and corporate clients.

“They usually come to me for leadership development, or they’re up to something big, and they want to get there faster,” says Cavanaugh. “Some people will come to me because they want to be effective, and then we find out that there’s a lot of personal stuff going on in their lives that needs to be addressed first.”

Cavanaugh offers both group and individual coaching, helping clients improve what she refers to as “personal sustainability” — the energy, joy and stamina that a client needs to lead powerfully at work and then fully engage with his or her spouse and children at home.

“I help increase their personal awareness,” says Cavanaugh. “What’s important to them? What compels and motivates them? What’s their big vision? My true belief is my clients can get any result they want if they are clear about what they want, if they really want it, and if they are willing to stay focused and do the work.”

Sue Fangmann from Lisle, a client of Cavanaugh’s and a senior manager at McDonald’s Corporation in Oak Brook, says that working with a life coach has taught her how to “look life in

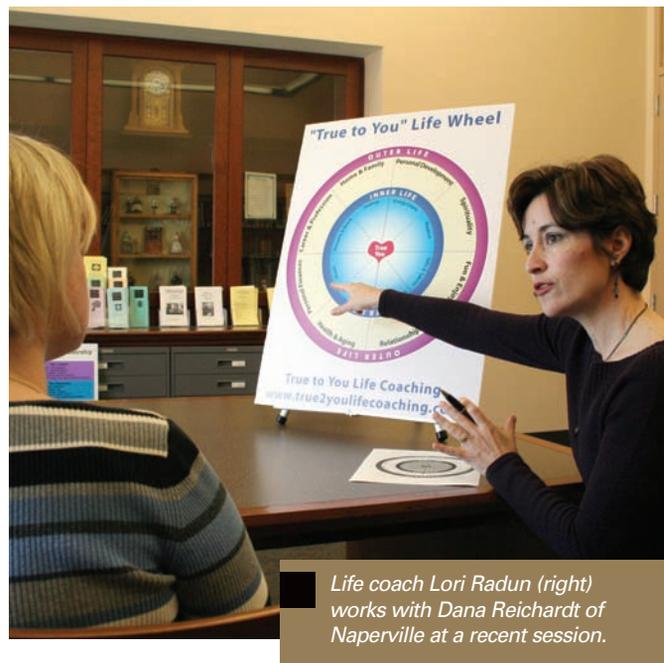


Photo by Ed Ahern

Life coach Lori Radun (right) works with Dana Reichardt of Naperville at a recent session.

the mirror.”

“If I respond to something very dramatically, then I need to stop and ask myself why. Chances are I’m reacting that way because of some type of deficit in myself. It becomes an exercise in self-development,” says Fangmann.

Dana Reichardt from Naperville, a communications manager for a consulting firm and mother of a 2-year-old, says since the birth of her daughter, her need for balance between her personal and professional life “has never been more important.” She has been working with Radun for nearly a year.

“My husband and I have faced some unexpected family challenges over the past year-and-a-half, and I realized that I was putting my life on hold as I dealt with those painful situations and waited for my life to get better,” says Reichardt. “Working with a life coach has helped me put my life into a new perspective, focus on what I can achieve today and take more control of my future.”

Both Radun and Cavanaugh warn that all life coaches are not created equal — it’s important to find a coach that has been properly trained and certified. The ICF maintains a list of accredited training programs and a free, searchable directory of certified members on its website, www.coachfederation.org.

The cost of coach services varies widely. Radun charges \$100 per 60 minute session, and Cavanaugh’s programs range from \$297 per month for a group program to more than \$1,700 per month for a “platinum” program consisting of private retreats and coaching. Her signature product, a seven-week intensive group program, costs \$697. Special rates are available for organizations with multiple participants.

“When I used to tell people I coach, they would ask, ‘Which sport do you coach?’” says Cavanaugh. “Now companies are really beginning to see the value of giving their employees the tools they need to raise the bar and gain an extra edge.” — *Laura Otto*

LIFE COACHING

A growing field dedicated to teaching people personal development skills. For more information, visit www.coachfederation.org.