



## **Be Your Own Life Coach**

*Fiona Harrold*

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## **Be Your Own Life Coach** Fiona Harrold

All of us have dreams about what we'd like to do, who we'd like to be and where we'd like to go in life. But most of us are never able to make these dreams a reality. Now, in this highly motivating new book, Fiona Harrold uses her experience as a life coach to show us that we can turn our own lives around.

With encouragement, humour and an emphasis on the practical, Fiona sets out the 10 steps to taking control of our lives. First we must set our goals, however crazy they may seem; then we must start on the path to achieving them. Along the way, Fiona uses case studies, affirmations and motivational techniques to keep us going, coaching her readers in the same way that she would her personal clients. Helping you in all areas - personal and professional - this book will be your most valuable guide to being the most that you can be.

## **Be Your Own Life Coach Details**

Date : Published December 6th 2001 by Hodder (first published 2000)

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Author : Fiona Harrold

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## **From Reader Review Be Your Own Life Coach for online ebook**

### **Patty says**

I tried really hard to get something from this book. I could only make it to page 92 before I avoided it for a month and then realized I really didn't want to read it. Might work well for those that like exercises that promise to get you somewhere but seem repetitive and pointless. I couldn't do it. Off to the "didn't finish" pile this goes.

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### **Laura says**

Motivating, brilliant!

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### **Dennis says**

In dit boek - met een hoog motiverend karakter - leert Fiona Harrold je hoe je jezelf kunt coachen om al je dromen te laten uitkomen, uw doelen te bereiken en de persoon te worden die je echt wil zijn. Dit alles met eenvoudige en effectieve technieken.

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### **Carrie says**

I'm not usually enthusiastic about self-help books and suchlike, but I am enthusiastic about this one. Unlike many others, it does not assume that its readers' lives are in ruins to begin with. It merely offers constructive advice.

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### **Jo Mayhead says**

A fantastic book for individuals who want to be inspired, lift their self esteem and take action to improve their lives with a no-nonsense approach. Fiona Harold tells it as it is whilst still supporting and encouraging the reader. Throughout the book it feels like you are receiving personal coaching from her and her style is upbeat and energising. This book has inspired me to take a lot of action in different areas of my life - the only downside is that I keep lending it out and don't get it back in a hurry! I am already on my second copy...

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### **Seth Rogers says**

It's definitely a must read book that'll help you take a look at what you're doing with your life and put you on the right track. Helps with your life, job, relationships etc.

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## **Rebecca Haslam says**

This book was recommended to me by my university well-being advisor after I began struggling with some issues while in my final year or so at university. Despite the recommendation, I found I've read much more helpful books and guides than this and although a few pages offered helpful advice and tips for dealing with certain issues, I found it to be a book that ultimately didn't feel suited to me.

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## **Denise LeCroy says**

Very inspiring, with easy to implement actions.

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## **Sue says**

The author begins by telling us that her father was a big believer in the self-help, positive psychology movement. She absorbed those beliefs from him and wants to pass them on to us in this book. Of course the two things are completely different. She spent years being encouraged and influenced by her father on a one to one basis, learning the techniques and language of self-development as they applied to her life. She then went on to study with other experts, absorbing their wisdom over time. But now she wants to teach all of this in one book which is supposed to apply to hundreds, perhaps thousands of people. This is nonsense. She uses huge generalisations, such as describing smoking as "a habit which is always associated with low self-esteem. Always? Really? I doubt that.

She also uses a large number of case studies. Unfortunately, case studies are often used as a way to fill up space in a poorly written book. Perhaps the author feels that the reader is too stupid to understand the theory unless it is explained by its application to one person's life. I would argue instead that, if the theory is explained clearly enough, the reader would understand it without these examples.

She also states things which might well be relevant for her professional one to one coaching but which make no sense in the context of a book. For example, in a section called 'What I Will Do For You' she says "I will believe in you totally and demonstrate my belief by taking you and your desires seriously". How? In the one-way transaction of the reader reading the book, this is clearly not possible!. Or how about "I'm not going to be soft on you. I want action, not excuses." Again, I imagine that could be a successful approach in conversation with her 'face to face' clients who see her on a regular basis, but this is laughable in a book format. And this is all just in Chapter One!

Chapter 2 could be summarised in the phrase 'Fake it until you make it'. Now this is something I personally do not believe in. I don't think it works and I think it can be extremely stressful to attempt it, with longer-term negative consequences. That's just my personal opinion. But whether I'm right or not, her example of Daniel Day-Lewis preparing for a role is inappropriate. Apparently, for a film about boxing he "trained to the standard of a professional lightweight champion" and for the role of a tortured prisoner he "went without food for days and had buckets of cold water thrown over him". I don't see how that's relevant. He was preparing to PRETEND to be a boxer, or a prisoner, not to actually BE those things. That might seem like splitting hairs, but to me this is one more example of how unrealistic this book is.

Chapter 3 is about self-worth. At one point she says “It is unhappy people with low self-worth who tend to be the most self-focused and who can be socially withdrawn, brooding and even antagonistic. Happy people, by contrast, are generally found to be more sociable, flexible and creative and are more able to tolerate life’s frustrations. They are also more loving and forgiving.” This seems to be another massive generalisation and, in my opinion, wrong anyway. People are much more complex than this, and there are many factors that go towards whether someone is creative, or loving, or anything else come to that! She also makes quite controversial statements about Western religion (yes, all of it!) versus Eastern religion.

To be fair, she does suggest volunteering and charity work as a way to feel better about yourself, and she also has some useful tips on how to stop beating yourself up for old mistakes, both of which I found myself agreeing with. Another good suggestion was to surround yourself with (and/or to read the biographies of) people who have made a positive difference in the world, or people who demonstrate the qualities you would like to develop. Similarly, to cut out of your life the people who belittle you, or who don’t exhibit the qualities for which you are yourself striving.

In Chapter 4 she covers self-reliance. To develop this you should be your own best friend. Can’t argue with that one. But then she advises that we should talk less because “Most people talk for talking’s sake. They exaggerate, invent things, talk without knowing or understanding what they’re talking about, or go over and over the same thing.” Most people? No. Not in my experience. Some people do, but not most of the people I know. This is another example of sloppy writing with no basis in facts. There are no references in the book, no research, just her personal beliefs. Another example? How about “Remember that you are far stronger than you think you are.” How can she say that? Does she know every single reader of this book and whether their evaluation of themselves is right? This is just a feel-better puff-piece of a sentence that actually means nothing. And that sums up for me what this book is all about. She’s saying what people want to hear. She’s promising people what they want to have - self-confidence and a perfect life. She went through a bad time herself - her father died, she lived in a squat with political activists, she got ill and depressed. Now she has turned her life around, or so she says, and she is full of advice for how other people can do the same. But it’s all just words, with no evidence of how or why it might work.

You want to be more attractive? Just believe that you are. You don’t want to be old? Just believe that you are young then. My favourite is “Life is too short to be afraid.” Sounds great. Means nothing.

At the end of the book she promotes her own courses. Perhaps her techniques would be more successful on a one to one basis, but they certainly don’t convince me in book form.

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### **Gary Lewis says**

The book that changed my life in 2005.

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### **Sunchana says**

I couldnt agree more, really enjoyed it!!

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## Tania Le says

This book changed my life! I went through coaching and then trained to be a life coach myself! Nearly 7 years of coaching later, this book still inspires me.

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## Teresa Clifford says

I really enjoyed reading this book. I loved the way the author created a contract with the reader and all the exercises that got me thinking about the belief systems I hold still about my life. Well worth a read to help you follow your dreams and to get you out of your comfort zone.

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## Emma Sea says

Hooo boy. Me and Harrold were getting on so well. I worked through the book methodically, doing all the exercises. I found them useful, and Harrold's words inspiring. I mean, I balked at some suggestions. Harrold asks, "Why not make an altar to yourself?" And the answer to that is, "Because it would make me a dickhead." But still, I was heading to a five star, baby.

And then at 60% I hit an interesting and unusual mix of hard core neoliberalism and the Power of Attraction.

First the neoliberalism.

*However well intentioned, the modern welfare state, with its vast array of social benefits, has spread the malaise of chronic dependency that has stunted the lives of vast numbers of able people. Too many people believe that it is acceptable and even their right to depend on the state to support them. And the disastrous consequence of this for each one of those people has been the weakening of self-reliance, the erosion of self-belief and self-worth and the growing belief that they're useless and unfit for anything. When we begin to depend on institutions and outside help to support us then we destroy our potential for success and fulfilment . . . Today things are changing, as successive governments in both Britain and the USA are recognising the massive deficiencies of the welfare state and are putting policies in place to force people back to relying on their own resources. Several states in the USA have adopted a 'sink or swim' policy, by withdrawing welfare payments after two years. Critics predicted a social disaster, with hundreds of families ending up on the streets, but this hasn't happened. Families have rallied round, jobs have been found, people have fallen back on their own resources and found solutions. (loc. 2132).*

I doubt there enough space in a review for me to list the **multitude** of reasons why this is bullshit, so just read this NY Times piece on The Myth of Welfare's Corrupting Influence on the Poor instead. And do some research on the fight for a living minimum wage and functional homelessness.

Then Harrold started on health.

*If you're ill, ask yourself why. Illness is always the body's way of giving us a message. What's yours telling you? Trust your own instinct . . . It may be that what you need is rest, a change of scene, a decision or a fresh start. If a job, a house or a relationship is making you ill, move away from it. Use the vast array of complementary health practitioners to support you in making and keeping yourself well. Try homoeopathy,*

*reflexology, Tibetan healing, shiatsu massage, cranial osteopathy, acupuncture, naturopathy, herbalism or kinesiology. Try one at a time, to see which one works best for you. Make it your business to find out about complementary healing. Talk to other people about it, find out what works for them and get recommendations. Never forget your body's remarkable ability to heal itself. Trust yourself to know what you need, find people you like and trust to help you heal and never accept that any condition is beyond help.* (loc 3138)

Illness is always the body's way of giving us a message? Well, sure, as long as that message is, "Don't drink the water containing *Enterobius vermicularis*," or "Don't accidentally lick rat urine," or even, "I'm so sorry you had shitty luck with your genes." You have not magically given yourself myalgic encephalomyelitis because your job isn't fulfilling you.

The statement "never accept that any condition is beyond help," is not useful. On the other hand, "Never forget your body's remarkable ability to heal itself" is downright reckless. Medical science, my friends. It can literally cure cancer. And sometimes it can't and people die and that is a thing that happens too and denying the reality of it will not give you a satisfactory end of life experience. Quite the opposite.

So anyway, here I am at the end of the book not knowing if I should average it at 3, give a 5 for all the useful stuff, or delete it from my Kindle forever. I guess the first option?

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