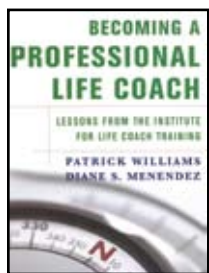




## ***Becoming a Professional Life Coach: Lessons From the Institute for Life Coach Training***

By Patrick Williams and Diane S.

Menendez, 2007, Norton, 388 pages, \$40 (hardcover), ISBN 978-0-393-70707-8



The word “coaching” is now a buzzword among helping professionals, yet many may not fully comprehend this trend. “Coaching is partnering with clients in a thought-

provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential,” according to the International Coach Federation, an organization that boasts more than 15,000 members worldwide.

Patrick Williams and Diane Menendez have written a seminal work on this subject with *Becoming a Professional Life Coach*. Williams, founder of the Institute for Life Coach training, is a Master Certified Coach as well as an author of the paradigm-shifting *Therapist as Life Coach*. Menendez works for two coaching organizations: Leadership Mastery Coaching and Convergys Global Talent Development. She, too, is a Master Certified Coach.

The question foremost on most readers’ minds is likely to be what, specifically, is the difference between therapy and coaching? One major difference is emphasis, the authors explain. While psychotherapy often focuses on the past, coaching directs clients to create and design their futures.

Critics and skeptics may relegate coaching to the realm of fads. These authors, however, argue that coaching is both a viable career and a bona fide profession in the 21st century. As they explain, “Coaches are now in schools, probation departments, churches, nonprofit corporations and other community agencies.”

Williams and Menendez structure the

book in three parts. Part I covers the fundamentals of coaching, which include effective listening as well as skillful use of language. Part II, “Beyond the Basics,” tackles advanced skills such as identifying and surmounting obstacles. Finally, Part III walks through the process of helping clients create fulfilling, values-based lives.

*Becoming a Professional Life Coach* is replete with useful tools: exercises, self-assessments, worksheets, charts and dialogues. The bibliography contains a list of books for further perusal; in addition, it features assessment resources (and their respective websites): Myers-Briggs, DISC, People Map and Values in Action Signature Strengths Assessment.

In brief, *Becoming a Professional Life Coach* may just become a modern-day classic. It is recommended for seasoned counseling professionals as well as rookies. Career counselors in particular will want to add the book to their personal libraries. Graduate counseling students will also want to read *Becoming a Professional Life Coach* because it provides a broader perspective on the helping professions and also opens the door to new career possibilities for future graduates.

*Reviewed by C. Brian Smith, a Licensed Professional Counselor from Lake in the Hills, Ill.*

## ***Girls’ and Women’s Wellness: Contemporary Counseling Issues and Interventions***

By Laura Hensley Choate, 2008, American Counseling Association, 300 pages, \$55.95 (ACA member price: \$39.95, Order #72876), ISBN 978-1-55620-270-4

Due to relatively recent socioeconomic changes, today’s women have more opportunities than prior generations could ever have imagined. In the workplace, women are achieving top positions, and the income gap between women and men is beginning to narrow. In professional schools such as medicine and law where



women once were a rarity, they now dominate. However, by and large, women are still considered primary caretakers of the family. In addition, women are expected to be

thin and beautiful. This tug-of-war in socialization causes women and girls significant pressure and confusion.

In *Girls’ and Women’s Wellness*, Laura Hensley Choate tackles the issues that women and adolescent girls are facing and provides specific counseling interventions to address these issues. She rightly gives credit to instantly recognizable intellectuals who paved the way in the field of women’s issues, such as Carol Gilligan and Jean Baker Miller, while incorporating fresh ideas from a host of contributors. Choate and her contributing authors include data, cultural views and insights for counseling African Americans, Asian Americans, Latinas and a group often overlooked in the literature, American Indians.

The book is truly contemporary in that Choate illustrates her points with up-to-the-minute examples, such as college women’s blog entries, the film *Mean Girls* and excerpts from the book *Queen Bees & Wannabees*. Topics covered range from relational aggression to finding life balance at work, from dangerous relationships in adulthood to aging.

What the reader will notice is that each chapter is not a cookie-cutter image of the last. The chapters are formatted appropriately for various topics. Some chapters offer self-exploration exercises as a first step for dealing with issues such as sexual assault and aging. In Chapter 2, “Counseling Adolescent Girls for Body Image Resilience,” Choate provides a detailed sample outline for counselors who wish to host a workshop titled “Beyond