

[BALTIMOREANS OF THE YEAR]

Baltimore

JANUARY 2006
WWW.BALTIMOREMAGAZINE.NET

Brave New You!

Strategies For
Jump Starting
Your Life

Building
The *Old-Girl*
Network

INTRODUCING OUR
YEARLONG SERIES
divercity
The Changing Face
of Baltimore

PLUS!
Ooh La La!
We Review
Brasserie Tatin
The Disaster Busters



ATTITUDE

As personal trainers rise in popularity, it seems only natural that life and business coaches—personal trainers for your psyche, you could say—would also be on the rise.

Life coaches differ from traditional therapists in many ways. For one, many of the sessions are done over the phone.

"It's more efficient," says Dr. Rachna D. Jain, a licensed psychologist and professional coach who works out of Ellicott City. "People are looking to improve their lives and do it very rapidly."

It's also more pro-active. "What a therapist does is focus more on the past and *why* it is that things are as they are," says Mary Ann Masur, owner of Synergy Consultants, a locally based personal and professional coaching service. "What a coach does is really look at where you are currently and then help you determine your goals."

Life coaching fits in well with today's personal improvement agendas. "People feel like they're doing something good for themselves," says Dr. Ken Morgen, the director of Chesapeake Psychological Services and Coaching-Center.com. "But there's none of the stigma that sometimes comes with a visit to a doctor's office."

The sessions, which usually take between a half-hour and an hour and cost anywhere from \$100 to \$600 a pop, are all about recognizing—and putting an end to—destructive patterns.

"People get caught in so many shoulds," says Masur. "I *should* be at X point in my career. I *should* be making X amount.' I try to get them to focus on what they really want."

The most common complaint? Lack of

fulfillment in jobs or relationships.

"I have a client who came in saying that her main goal was finding a life partner," says Dr. Jain. "She got uncomfortable when men showed interest. So we started breaking down her patterns. She talks too much. Gets nervous. Crosses her arms, closes off her body. We found practical ways for her to stop sending those mixed messages."

Says Dr. Morgen: "Clients use coaching as a way to encourage them to take risks and move on."

Masur calls her one of her strategies "changing your perspective": "The whole idea is, you have a choice. You *choose* to stand in a certain perspective. You can move from a stress perspective to a relaxed perspective. From a passive perspective to a power perspective."

The beauty is, most clients only need a few sessions with their coaches and then they can go it alone.

Says Dr. Morgen: "Coaching is not meant to overhaul the engine. It's more like a tune-up."

Adds Masur: "I'm like Starbucks. I'm not work and I'm not home. I'm a neutral place where somebody can go to relax, get energized, and get focused." —MW

★ 5 TO REVIVE

- 1. Fear of failure holds people back,** says Masur. Ask yourself: If I could do whatever I wanted, without fear of failure, what would it be?
- 2. Stay positive.** Try not to be your own harshest critic.
- 3. Seek out a role model or a mentor—** people who have what you want. "Find out how they did it," says Dr. Jain.
- 4. Start eliminating the things that are draining you:** Household clutter is a big stress maker!
- 5. Enlist the support of your friends and family.** "Say, 'I'm trying to make these positive changes,'" says Dr. Jain. "Be patient with me."

