



I have grown up reading the books of this amazing woman and nothing excited me more than when she agreed to be our Wonder woman. For many, Life coaching is still quite a new phenomenon, but for those in the know, self development has been an industry which has changed the lives of thousands if not hundreds of thousands of individuals around the world. Fiona Harrold is the leader in promoting positivity and we are delighted to share her in-spiration with you. Enjoy!

Fiona, you have shaped the lives of hundreds of thousands of individuals around the world with your numerous books, CD's and coaching. With all of your successes do you ever become overwhelmed with how much you have achieved?

(FH) I don't routinely sit around saying, oh gosh aren't I fabulous. I do sometimes become overwhelmed with my mission to get my message out to people, with the current circumstances in the world; it can be overwhelming to decide on how best to inspire people.

Out of all of the public speaking events and seminars you have carried out. Which one/s would you say has been the most memorable and why?

(FH) It was a public speaking event I gave a couple of years ago in St James Church in Piccadilly. It was my first large speaking event and I found it shocking. I was driven to Piccadilly in a Taxi when I saw a large line of people; it was the queue for St James. The taxi driver wanted to go the back way until I explained I was the speaker. That was quite uplifting! The venue was an amazing church and it was very inspiring, it was one of the best attended events at that church. It was extraordinary. I loved it! I will always remember that, people still talk to me about that event.

I have read many of your books including; ‘Be your own Life coach’ and ‘Indestructible self belief’ and I would say they have been instrumental in my own development as an advocate for positive thinking and helping people to reach their true potential. Is there anyone that stands out for you, whose life was dramatically changed by your insights and writings that you could share with us.



(FH) Sometimes, I am most taken aback when I receive an email from someone I haven't met who has nothing to gain from contacting me, doing it from their own free will after they have read one of my books. A lady living in New Zealand emailed to say she was now living her

dream life with her husband and children in New Zealand because of the book. Whenever I receive emails I always reply back congratulating them on what they have achieved. I let them know that they read something and that something ignited a spark within them and they took the action to create those changes. There will be others that will read my book that won't do anything so I always praise people for the actions they took.

With my own personal clients helping them write a book and getting them published is always inspiring. I worked with Caroline Goyder and her goal was always to write a bestselling book which she accomplished, her book 'The Star qualities' is a series of A List star interviews all about the presentation of ones self on the stage of life. The book was published and became a bestselling book.

Your first introduction to coaching came from your father when you were aged just eleven and growing up within your native Ireland. He shared with you, the works of some of the founding fathers of positivity such as; Napoleon Hill, Dale Carnegie and Norman Vincent Peale. From all that you were taught, how did this manifest in your becoming a life coach yourself?

(FH) I grew up in Northern Ireland, my Dad was a door to door salesman and he was self-made. He had this sense that he had to make his own way in the world. He grew up on a farm and there wasn't a lot of work in Ireland many of the Irish moved and worked in the states and England. I picked up the importance of attitude and mind-set, how you respond to things in your life could ultimately change the outcome. For instance, two people depending on their response to the same experience, one might feel defeated the other would rise above it. I got that from a young age. My dad and I would pick up hitchhikers and grill them on their lives and we would then define what their outcome was to be, a good path or a bad path.

Having moved to London as a young woman, you became embroiled quite heavily in politics and at one point was living in a squat! Your life could quite easily have taken another path. Apart from the major influence of your father, what other deciding factors would you say is behind your success and achievements to date?

(FH) The fact is living in a squat in South London was a conscious choice and I enjoyed it immensely. It was me taking responsibility for my life. We were living in homes that were in disrepair so we did them up as the council didn't have the money to do this and the buildings were left empty. You could say we were ahead of the Occupy movement of today. After a while I

did decide to change. I found myself getting dis-spirited with all the campaigns including the miner's strike and Greenham Common. I got exhausted and I had to resituate myself, I had to decide what I wanted to do with my career. I was working as a cocktail waitress and I went out and found my self esteem. I met a lady who became my mentor, she put me on the path I am on now.

All paths start with a decision I moved away physically and emotionally from all I knew. I was making a shift in my thinking and sometimes you have to move away from old surroundings or else you will find yourself in conflict.

Through experience, I have found many people get confused with the differences between counselling and life coaching. Can you share with In-spireLS readers as to what separates the two?

(FH) I think counselling is a great way for people to talk through their situation and feelings. With a great counsellor it's an opportunity to clarify your situation.

Coaching is more dynamic as it not only gets you clear on your feelings – it seeks to move you forward so you identify the actions you need to take to make changes in your life.

I work primarily with business owners and entrepreneurs, a lot of what I do is to inspire my clients on ways to increase or start their own business. On my initial first meeting with a client I will set an action plan and if they aren't willing to take action I can't help them. Sometimes clients that have had a lot of counselling and therapy get into the habit of talking. I have to shake them and tell them that's not what I do if they don't change their attitude or way of thinking they will not get their results.



How important would you say it is to surround yourself with positive people?

(FH) I think your environment is vital for you to progress in life. Some of the people you surround yourself with can be stifling you. I find that some people are either holding you back or pushing you forward. I find it's usually the people you have around you that prevent you from making changes. If you really want to grow in your life it's important that you are comfortable with whom you discuss your plans or goals with. You may make people uncomfortable if you're soaring ahead of them.

My Breakthrough Year Club is a virtual low cost coaching motivational programme where members receive two monthly calls from me. I do a questions and answers call and a tele-conference call. The club has just started and it's going well, members of the club have a facebook page which they use to cheer each other on and support each other. They all want to make big changes in their lives and it helps when others encourage you. Every Monday they put their goals out there and the others encourage them throughout the week some people have even

taken the time to meet with each other. It has surpassed my hopes. A lot of people do not have the money for life coaching and everyone needs people around them to encourage and motivate them, so that's why I started My Breakthrough Year Club. <http://www.fionaharrold.com/mby-2012>

You have already achieved so much but what other goals have you set for yourself to achieve?

(FH) I think my big goal is to reach more people with the means of social media, and with the internet this is becoming easier to do. I took a break for two years, I just wanted to step back and I came back feeling refreshed. I have personal goals, which includes bringing a bit more balance into my own life spending more time enjoying life. I tend to be a workaholic so I sometimes forget about myself and my needs.

So my goals are to be more effective in my life. Reach more people. Be clever in how I get my message out there, touch, motivate, inspire, and help far more people.

What has been the best advice you have been given?

(FH) Well truthfully it wasn't advice, it was what I absorbed when I was 11 years old. One's attitude defines how one lives life. It doesn't get better than that. It's taking a hundred percent responsibility for your life so you're not waiting for someone to change things. No waiting, hoping or praying. If I want change, I have to change it. If you're not going to change things then who is? I think women have to watch out for their 'Cinderella' complex where we are waiting to be rescued and whisked off our feet. We have to be careful it doesn't make us observers of life or passive, whilst waiting for a dashing hero to make it better when we can go out there and make things happen.

I think men today do not want a woman who needs them in that traditional way. They like independent females who are fiery. My mother has always been an inspiration in my life. She was very independent and fiery, in her 60's she retrained in reflexology moved to London from Ireland and opened her own reflexology practice. She ended up earning more money doing this than she had in her entire lifetime. She always had a can-do attitude.



What positive quotes do you apply to your life?

(FH) I love George Elliot's quote "It's never too late to be the person you're meant to be."

Who or what in-spires you the most within your life?

(FH) Grand public stage people like Nelson Mandela, the Dalai Lama who remains expansive in his spirit despite everything that is happening around him and the Burmese leader of the National League for democracy Aung San Suu Kui. I find these people maintain their dignity, optimism and their spirit in the face of difficult circumstances. People like that are who we should all look up to. These people are handling gracefully bigger things than we could imagine, it puts into context our own complaints which are minor compared to others.

On a smaller scale my own mentors and role models who I think are doing amazing things in their life. I admire my older brother Brian who made a decent amount of money in his life, he retired young and set up an amazing charity called PING in Gambia <http://www.pingcharity.co.uk/> instead of relaxing by the pool in Spain, which he could easily have done. The charity started while he was on holiday and he saw smoke coming from the

distance, he made his reluctant tour guide take him to the source and he ended up in the village where he found incredible poverty. He asked the people how he could help them and they requested medicines for the sick. He asked to see their water and found it dirty, so he provided them with fresh water and within weeks he transformed the whole village. The people from the village were wary of Brian at first as other people had promised to come and aid them and failed to do so, but now he has his own house in the village and the people love him.

Brian has transformed four villages one after another. Using his own funds he provides them with clean water and teaches them business skills so they can set up their own businesses, which includes selling flowers to top five star hotels and setting up local market stalls. He continues to motivate them so it's more than just a charity! He is a total inspiration. I find these things help to put your own circumstances and complaints in to perspective.

Whatever challenges we are facing we are all living a dream life, a dream many in third world countries would love to have. It's a reality check I learned from Anthony Robbins and it struck a chord. I now use it when I give talks. We don't want to get so absorbed in our own situations that we take for granted amenities we consider to be basic, such as hot and cold clean water from a tap. We don't have to walk a mile to get dirty water. It makes you feel better when you see you how good life really is. We are all trying to be the best that we can be so sometimes we have to pat ourselves on the back for the things we have achieved.

What advice can you offer someone who wants to make positive changes within their lives but do not know how or where to start?

(FH) Identify what they don't want any longer. What's not working for them? Make a list of each thing one at a time then identify three things that drains your energy the most. Then treble it and find the one thing that is really draining your life the most and if you changed it, what major impact on your life would it have?

A person often makes the mistake that having confidence alone is what will make changes happen. Confidence comes from doing the very thing you are scared of doing, replace it with courage. Courage is taking action despite of fear. A Courageous person is one that will knock on doors, they don't wait for confidence or self belief when they do this it brings both. Some people make the mistake of relying on self-help books to find their confidence to make changes, they wait until they have read the books to have a go.

In the face of adversity what would Fiona do?

(FH) I would identify the problem head on. I would grasp it. I would put it on the table in-front of me and I would look at it instead of running away from it. I would find a strategy and I would take massive amount of actions. I run towards a problem, not from it. I address the problem instead of watching the problem grow. **ALWAYS TAKE MORE ACTION. LIFE REWARDS ACTION. GOOD THINGS HAPPEN WHEN YOU TAKE ACTION.** I follow my own advice, always.

When I had my son I wanted to ensure he had everything he needed in life. My son was dyslexic so he went to a special private school to help him. I took vast amounts of action to ensure he could attend the school, which is one of the most expensive in the UK. I never missed a payment or asked for a discounted rate. I just took actions to ensure that it was possible. I love a challenge. You make a decision that something is going to happen. You bite off more than you can chew and you chew fast! Otherwise you will run scared of life. With life's challenges, I meet them, I greet them, I grasp them.

Thank you Fiona for answering our questions, please round them off by completing these sentences...

Dreams are.....**to be discovered and created.**

With faith I can..... **do anything.**

Three words that best describe me are..... **Determined, Dynamic and Decisive.**

I am at my happiest when..... **I am being of service to others.**

I am at my best when..... **I'm happy.**

I am a 'Wonderwoman' because.... **I never give up.**

<http://www.fionaharrold.com>

W| Interview conducted by Katie Ryan, Questions by Sasha
Shantel I| Courtesy of Fiona Harrold-All