

DYL Coach Certification

Frequently Asked Questions

NOTE: DYL Coach Certification Workshops are offered in both In-Person (live) and Virtual (remote) formats. Where the answers to questions differ depending on the type of workshop, different responses are provided. If only one response is provided, it applies to both workshop formats.

What are the pre-requisites for participating in the DYL Coach Certification Workshop?

There are three pre-requisites:

1. *Professional* in one of the following areas:
 - a. Life or career coach, with certification from a recognized coaching institute, training program, or school. *This certification requirement may be waived if clear evidence of substantial professional experience in providing coaching is credibly provided (eg: 12 years as a career counselor in a college career center). Depending on the nature of the application, additional support information may be requested.
 - b. Career counselor at a non-profit or University, or with your own practice
 - c. Mental health professional who wants to add some DYL tools to your existing toolkit
 - d. Human resources professional who wants to add some DYL tools to your existing toolkit
2. *Active Practice*: You must be engaged in an active practice with current clients at this time (case work on active clients is part of the Workshop), and provide a description of your practice and client population.
3. *DYL Trained*: You must already know the Designing Your Life material by having both (a) read both the “Designing Your Life” & “Designing Your Work Life” books and (b) completed one of the following DYL training workshops (prior to attending the Workshop):
 - a. DYL Intensive or DYL Weekend Retreat (with Bill and/or Dave)
 - b. [DYL for Women](#)
 - c. [DYL CreativeLive on-line class](#)

Why do you require coach certification?

We do not provide coach training, nor do we believe that DYL is a comprehensive coaching system per se. We support enhancing the capabilities of experienced coaches who wish to adopt and integrate DYL ideas and tools into their practice. The DYL Coach Certification Workshop is not training for new coaches; it's tool utilization training for experienced coaches.

It's crucial to understand that we are not training you how to coach. We expect you to know how to coach, based on both your prior training and professional experience, and to know DYL, from having read both books and taking a workshop. The DYL Coach Certification Workshop will not address either of these areas – it addresses specifically what the DYL tools are for and recommendations for how and how not to use them.

Why do you provide the Coach Certification Workshop?

Starting as soon as the book came out, we began to hear from coaches who wanted to receive certification and get further input on how to best use the ideas and tools of DYL in their practice. We did some virtual events focused on coaching, but continued to hear an unbroken request for in-person training. So, we developed the Coach Certification Workshop in response to the direct requests from the coaching community.

Do you believe in and support the practice of coaching?

We are huge believers in collaboration – a core mindset of human-centered design. We think it's incredibly difficult to do an effective job of designing your life by yourself, which is why the book recommends putting together a design team. Dave is so convinced of the necessity of collaboration that he refused to write the book for two years out of concern that a book alone would not be sufficiently effective (happily Bill won that argument and made sure we wrote the book).

Lots of people don't have access to good collaborative support. Further, regular accountability and engagement in generative dialogue have been proven to be highly effective in supporting positive outcomes in personal development. A coach is a very particular kind of collaborator who can bring valuable skills and intention that offer real help to the challenge of life design.

In our classes we talk about getting *counsel* (where someone helps you figure out what you think) versus *advice* (where someone tells you what they think). Most well-meaning friends and supporters tend naturally to advice. We think counsel is far more helpful and appropriate. Good coaching adopts a facilitative posture – helping rather than prescribing – in order to grow the client's own agency and capacity. Maintaining a facilitative approach isn't easy. It's something we strived for in writing the book, so we were particularly pleased by one book review that stated, "*Clearly the authors respect the autonomy of the reader.*" Effective coaches know how to resist a client's subtle or even unconscious attempt to over-delegate and simply outsource their own work to their coach. Good coaching, like good design, is a nuanced mix of art and science.

The strategic intent of the DYL framework is to "empower people in developing a conscious competency in life and vocational wayfinding." The greater goal of DYL isn't just to facilitate the transaction of coming up with your next life design or career move – it's to become an effective (and joyful) life designer because life is the one design project that is never done! In conclusion, we believe working with a good coach as a dependable collaborator is a great way to get the most out of the DYL process and leave it with a lifelong competency as well as a design for one's next season.

What's your coaching approach?

Since we do not position DYL as a comprehensive coaching system, we don't advocate a specific coaching approach. That being said, the DYL framework (and Bill and Dave's 80 years of combined experience) does have some implications in terms of style and philosophy. We characterize DYL as a "framework" not a system. That means it is a rationally structured set of tools and ideas, but it is not a step-wise systematic process that begins at "Step #1" and ends in "The Plan." Design empathy demands a user-centric approach. People's life design projects vary tremendously because people do.

There is not just one right approach any more than there is just one right "you." Some coaching is done very systematically with a pre-defined curriculum or method focused on specific objectives. When Bill and Dave engage in "office hours" (our primary format for coaching), we very rarely take that approach. We recognize some coaches work systematically quite successfully, but it's not our style. We take an *ad hoc* approach adopting whichever ideas or tools the individual seems most ready to engage and be helped by. As we describe in the book, we begin with where you are – not where a system starts.

How is the DYL Coaching Coach Certification Workshop structured?

Approach – 3 Training Components

The Coach Certification Workshop provides 12 hours of interactive training in three blocks (over 1.5 days for In-Person, over 3 days Virtual). The training opens with an overview of the DYL approach and what we've been learning in using it since 2007. The balance of the Workshop is entirely organized around the various DYL Tools.

Each key tool (eg: Good Time Journal, Odyssey Plan, Impact Map, etc.) receives time and attention three ways:

- Tool Overview
 - What's the tool designed for.
 - Do's and Don'ts - recommendations based on our experience of what works, what doesn't, what traps to avoid, etc.
- Practice – practical engagement with the tool through role plays, case review (your cases brought to the Coach Certification Workshop, not ours), or application discussion. The primary format is role playing with other participants in the Coach Certification Workshop. Some of the simpler tools may not include a practice exercise (eg: the Failure Log).
- Q&A – ask Bill and Dave. Note that there may not be a dedicated Q&A period on each tool, but multiple Q&A periods are included to address questions on any topic.

During the Workshop, you will spend much of your time interacting with other coaches. This interaction occurs in discussion groups (typically 6 people), and in

triads and pairs for exercises and role plays. These groups are organized by tables in the In-Person workshop and in Zoom Breakout Rooms in the Virtual workshop.

Both the In-Person and Virtual workshop formats use this same 3-part structure. Both formats share the same objectives and certified graduates enjoy the same benefits. Both formats empower participants to use the DYL Tools effectively in their coaching practice.

How do the In-Person and Virtual versions differ?

Initially, we only offered in-person training. We value community formation and interactivity, so have preferred in-person workshops. Additionally, coaches frequently told us that getting to know and spend time with their peers was something they value and enjoyed doing in person, if possible.

However, In-Person training requires extensive advance planning, incurs expensive travel, and became infeasible during the Covid-19 pandemic. We developed the Virtual version primarily to continue offering Coach Certification during the 2020 pandemic, but it has lots of other positives as well. The Virtual version brings with it the significant advantages of easy global accessibility, no travel required, and reduced expenses. Both versions have their advantages and disadvantages and our intention is to offer both as feasibility permits.

There are four key differences between the two formats: [A] Live vs Video Tool Overviews, [B] Pre-work assignments, [C] Community experience, and [D] Schedule.

- A. The Tools Overview material is delivered by Bill and Dave live, in realtime, in the In-Person version and by video before the workshop in the Virtual version. The overview content is the same; only the format is changed.
- B. Virtual workshop participants are asked to do more Pre-Work assignments than the In-Person participants. This Pre-Work is necessary to make the Virtual teaching format effective and optimizes the time in the virtual workshop gatherings to focus on interactive exercises and Q&A.
- C. Both workshop formats are designed to maximize Community experience as the format permits and both provide experiences in plenary sessions, small discussion groups (6s), and triad and pair exercises. Of course, being together virtual and in-person are very different, each with its own advantages. Virtual discussions can be easier for introverts or people from non-confrontational cultures to engage. In person gatherings allow for easy socializing after the meetings and during breaks.
- D. Schedule: Both workshops have a total realtime runtime of approximately 12 hours. The In-Person workshop runs one long full Saturday for 8+ hours and

a half-day on Sunday. The Virtual workshop runs 4 hours a day for 3 weekdays in a row.

The Coach Certification Workshop runs 12+ hours – that’s a lot of time. Why?

Initially we wanted to keep the Coach Certification Workshop to one day, and ran the first prototype Workshop in one, fast-moving 9.5 hour day. The feedback was that it was very useful but too much for one day. We reformatted the same material for a 12 hour, multi-day design. This redesign allocated more time for interaction on the exercises and more time for Q&A with Bill and Dave. The workshop still moves quite quickly over 12 hours, but participants tell us the pace is good now.

Will I get personal coaching from Bill and Dave?

Unfortunately, no. Bill and/or Dave will teach and facilitate the full group. Coach Certification Workshops run from 30-75 participants and time will not permit us to give individual attention. We will have Q&A times where your specific questions can get addressed. During small group discussions, circumstances permitting, we will be able to drop in on table groups or Zoom breakout rooms. So, you’ll have lots of interaction with Bill and Dave, but not individualized instruction.

How do we integrate DYL into our practice?

That’s entirely up to you. You are the integrator. Only you know how you work and where you see DYL fitting into your practice. We might suggest that you do some prototyping on how you use the tools and iterate your way to an effective approach customized to your situation.

What we do recommend is *coherent* coaching. Be sure that the pieces of your practice fit together in a way that makes sense to clients and works organically for you. Whenever we teach, we know that everyone will weigh which ideas to keep and which tools to actually use. No one implements everything. You will be most effective (and happy) when you use what really fits for you.

Will we get support after the Coach Certification Workshop?

You will be invited to participate in the coaches’ community where a lively conversation continues with other DYL certified coaches, discussing ways to be more effective. Bill and/or Dave will host virtual coaching events a number of times a year – usually done in an “open office hours” format and sometimes focused on specific topics of interest, or a new tool.

Will the DYL Group help me market my coaching services? Can I expect Coach Certification to increase my sales and income?

The DYL Group (the business arm of “Bill and Dave” - legally the Evans-Burnett LLC) does not provide marketing or sales services. Coach Certification provides a number of benefits that you may be able to leverage into a larger, more successful, more effective, and/or more profitable coaching business - but those outcomes are accomplished by you. We have heard from Certified Coaches a number of different ways that Certification can indirectly contribute to success.

Certification training can improve your skills, resulting in better references and referrals from your clients. Visibility as a Certified Coach on our website and through your use of the Certified DYL Coach logo may result in leads and/or assist you in closing new business.

However, we do not proactively market your services. We do not solicit coaching clients. The Certified Coach registry on our site is a passive resource that prospective clients may find or you may refer to, but we do not advertise or actively sell for you.

Some people seeking coaching assistance have found and hired a coach by searching out our site, but they came to the site on their own not through our efforts. Coaches are listed regionally to assist people looking for a local coach, but much coaching is done virtual so regionality is not always a selection criteria for prospective clients.

How do I know if the Coaching Coach Certification Workshop really is for me?

The Coach Certification Workshop is really quite straightforward. We dive into the individual DYL tools and go after specifics on how to use them well. That's really it. If that sounds like what you're after, then join us! Alternately, many talented coaches may decide they don't need DYL Coach Certification and can be thoroughly effective translating DYL into their practice right out of the book. You're the expert in making that decision.

Some coaches really enjoy the chance to speak with colleagues, do some role playing and get some feedback. Some come primarily to obtain the visible certification and be listed on our website. There are lots of valid reasons to come, and it should be clear to you if it's a good fit. If you're on the fence or just not quite able to decide if it's worth it – maybe let it pass. It's a big commitment of time, energy and money and you want to feel good about the value you'll receive, so choose well. We don't claim to offer any particular magic nor do we reveal any special insider secrets at the Workshop. It's a work session where we roll up our sleeves together. At least half the time in the Coach Certification Workshop is spent doing exercises and interacting with the other participants. The rhythm and feel of the Workshop is very similar to our DYL in-person and Creative Live workshops. You've seen us in action before – the Coach Certification Workshop operates similarly.

We would love to see you at a Coach Certification Workshop if it's the right thing for you. If you're better off just taking the book or the CreativeLive virtual modules and running with those tools on your own, we wish you the very best. Whatever you do – thanks for your commitment to helping others build well-lived and joyful lives. If DYL has been or can be of any help to you in accomplishing that mission, we're very grateful to be a part of your work.

I'd like to teach DYL workshops – is that part of Coaching Certification?

To get a full run-down on the different types of DYL trainings offered, please check out our [DYL Training Explanation Chart](#).

This DYL Coaching Certification is for personal coaching only, working with clients one-on-one or in small “design teams” of not more than ten (10) people. Certified Coaches use DYL ideas and/or tools to pursue specific life, career, or personal goals and objectives together with their client(s). Coach Certification does not license you to teach commercial workshops or deliver training events. Certified Coaching doesn’t compete with The DYL Group's Designing Your Life Workshops, Certified DYL Facilitators workshops, or institutional educational workshops by Stanford University’s Life Design Lab (aka, d.life Lab). We do offer a separate certification for [DYL Facilitators](#), who are Designing Your Life practitioners and instructors licensed to deliver public and corporate DYL workshops. The DYL Facilitator program is much smaller than the DYL Coaching program and is not for everyone. If you think it may be for you, check out the details [here](#).

Sessions conducted for more than 10 persons at one time, whether co-located or virtual, are considered a training event – not coaching. We know that working with larger groups like this, standing up in front of a room (or virtual) presenting generalized DYL materials or training others use DYL tools on their own demands a different set of facilitation and teaching skills than Coaching does.

Coaching involves hands-on implementation of the DYL tools with a person or small group whom the Coach knows well – it’s a highly personalized service engagement. We consider teaching to be a different competency that requires different skills and a different level of preparation and comprehension of the material. We’ve come to this conclusion based on our empirical experience in training Stanford instructors in the DYL curriculum

Can I teach DYL in academic settings?

Any duly appointed educator can use the DYL book as a text and teach it at their school, college, or university – while properly handling the DYL copyrighted material (just as in any course). If you are an educator at an accredited college or university, we encourage you to explore attending a [Life Design Studio](#) for educators, offered by the Stanford Life Design Lab. The Studio is an intensive 4-day empowerment training – not a DYL course instruction certification. Studio participants are program and curriculum developers who will return to their home institutions to develop localized programming by applying the Stanford Lab’s life design strategies through active prototyping, which is begun during the Studio.

Studio admission is by application and restricted to teams of three persons (minimum) from select accredited institutions of higher education (community colleges, colleges, and universities). Through 2020, the Lab has trained nearly 200 institutions serving over a million students worldwide. There is much more interest in the Studio than there is capacity and space is limited. Following participation in the Studio, institutions are invited to join an ongoing educational learning community of life design educators. Inquiries about the Studio can be directed through the Lab website (www.lifedesignlab.stanford.edu)

I am not sure which DYL training is best for me?

To get a full run-down on what each of these trainings offer, please check out our [DYL Training Explanation Chart](#).