

Dear Master Coach

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Dear Master Coach:

**When a client's agenda is to explore his or her life purpose, perfect career or personal brand, what tools do you use?
Challenged**

Dear Challenged:

When a client starts talking about their purpose in life, I slow down a bit. We might be on holy ground and the client's spirituality might be a resource. And the old saying that "you can't take people further than you've been yourself" applies. As coaches, clients like this challenge us to be grounded in our own sense of why we do what we do. I check in with my own spirituality and sense of purpose for this short time I've got on the Pebble.

Then I get curious about how my client sees the relationship between purpose, career and brand. Maybe those things are linked in their experience, maybe not. Maybe my client is getting ready for them to be. I remind myself to stay out of the expert role and to be curious about the questions to which I don't know the answer:

- *How do purpose, career and brand fit together now for you?*
- *What would it be like for you if they were linked? If they were separate?*
- *If they were linked, do you have a glimpse of what it could look like? Of what you'd be doing?*
- *Who knows (besides me) that these questions are starting to matter to you?*
- *And, as always, "Why now?"*

Yesterday I talked with a new client who showed up with this very agenda. He wants to link purpose, career and brand together in his life. He also wants to make more money. At one point he quoted a line from the theologian, Frederick Buechner, "Vocation is the place where our deep gladness meets the world's deep need."

The English word "vocation" has grown a little coolly practical, but through the centuries, the Latin verb that inspired it, "vocare", has carried the essential meaning of being called to a specific kind of work, to a craft or maybe to a master. As we continued to talk, it was clear to me that, to this man, identifying a sense of purpose or calling is both a spiritual and very energizing aspiration. He wants to explore how his career (i.e. the way he spends the majority of his adult waking hours) could better link to his sense of purpose, and from there to his web presence, visibility and income. For him, his spirituality is part of the conversation. His agenda is deep and dimensional, and he is wonderfully coachable.

You asked about tools. As always, our tools are supplements not substitutes to our solid engagement with our coaching partners. So in the weeks to come I'll send this client a copy of [The Vocare Compass](#). I've found that it's a tool that routinely inspires powerful questions in both my clients and in me. Feel free to use it yourself and let me know how it goes.

Don't you just love what we do?

PEB, MC