Knowing Your D.A.T.A.

*There are a zillion ways to know yourself better. In addition to assessments and inventories, try thinking through these four categories. Before anything else, the role of any assessment is for your coachee to better understand his or her own story, hopes and resources. Of course, assessments also help us as coaches to shape our curiosity and questions. Think of this as much as an intuitive and emotional exercise as an analytical one.*

***Desires.*** What do you feel passionately about? If $$ were no object, what would you do? What do other people love about what you do—and would (or do) gladly they compensate you for? Other than money, how do you like to be compensated? What did you love as a kid that you still love?

***Abilities.*** This is the stuff that tends to show up on a traditional résumé. What goes on your list of unique skills, training, professional capabilities, experience, etc.? For example: managing projects, info tech, writing, speaking, solving problems, ability to learn from experience, working as a part of a team, working with your hands, leadership, and influence, managing teams, co-creating agreements, etc. This is the subject matter expertise (SME) that you’ve spent years learning and refining.

As you think about your Abilities, you’ll notice some bring energy, others may feel ready to retire.

***Temperament.*** This is the Core of who you are. I expand “temperament” to mean a few other things, like:

* knowing how to understand and use your values (your time and $$)
* knowing how you like to solve problems
* how you’re likely to behave in conflict, or when you’re stressed or exhausted
* knowing what happens when you’re physically, emotionally, socially at the “top of your game”
* and what happens when you’re mobilizing for action
* maybe what makes you tiresome and irritating to be around
* or, even better, what makes you wonderful to be around
* knowing how you recharge your batteries and dodge burnout

***Assets.*** These are your unique life advantages that can deepen the work you do and the conversations and situations you get into. For example:

* + You grew up with or have become fluent in a second or third language
  + You have a faith tradition that informs your approach to life and relationships
  + You’ve never met a software program that you couldn’t master
  + You have a family member with a disability
  + You’re in solid recovery from an addiction
  + You were an Eagle Scout or a Merit Scholar
  + You are a parent

**Thanks to William Bridges, who wrote early and often about transitions, for first suggesting the DATA acronym.**

**Now use the next page as a brainstorming tool.**

Your DATA Worksheet

| Desires | Abilities | Temperament | Assets |
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