



Intrinsic Coach™

Interview

Inside This Intrinsic

Coach™ Interview:

Veronica (Ronnie) Costa,

Employee Assistance

Professional and Wellness

Coordinator, City of

Phoenix, AZ



Veronica (Ronnie) Costa,

Employee Assistance and Wellness Coordinator for the City of Phoenix, AZ, talks about the impact the Intrinsic Coaching™ methodology has on her, how she sees it affecting the City of Phoenix, and the hope and optimism Intrinsic Coaching™ can bring to people by asking them to look forward to create what is important to them.

Jodi Sivon, M.Ed.

in Community Health, BA in Exercise Physiology, CHES, and certified by ACSM, ACE, and through the Cooper Institute, is an Intrinsic Coach™ Mentor for Totally Coached, Inc. and Manager of Health & Wellness for Cuyahoga Community College's Metropolitan Campus. As Intrinsic Coach™ Mentor, Ms. Sivon trains new coaches in the Intrinsic Coaching™ methodology. As Manager of H&W for Cuyahoga Community College, Ms. Sivon manages the campus H&W Center, designs, promotes, and implements all campus wellness programs, and serves as a resource and coach for healthy lifestyle choices for over 450 full-time employees and 6,000 students.



Q

Ronnie, please tell me a little about yourself and your work for the City of Phoenix.

A

I am an Employees' Assistance Professional for the city of Phoenix and also the city's Wellness Coordinator. I have been here for 7½ years doing both jobs. It's a great position that utilizes my counseling background -- I have a Bachelors degree in Social Work and a Masters degree in Education. I have always worked in government. Prior to this position, I worked for the federal government for years and then I moved here and got this job with the City.

Q

Is it difficult to balance the roles of both Employees' Assistance Professional and Wellness Coordinator?

A

No, actually, it's a wonderful blend. I see wellness as a continuum, with physical and mental health at one end of the continuum and then physical and mental illness at the other end. So I think people fit somewhere in the continuum and, for that reason, it seems to be a nice blend.

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Q

How do you see Intrinsic Coaching™ making an impact on the employees of the City of Phoenix?

A

I want it to have a ripple effect and I am starting to see some first waves since incorporating the Intrinsic Coaching™ approach to what I do. I think, traditionally, we are problem focused; we want to solve problems and that is not what I believe in anymore since becoming an Intrinsic Coach™ professional. Being goal-focused is part of the Intrinsic Coaching™ methodology, for sure, and it is the direction that I think has the most optimism associated with it and, also, the most hope and possibility. So that is the direction we are moving in, not only just with the individuals I see one-on-one who are in crisis, but also with groups.

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A recent example of applying the Intrinsic Coaching™ methodology with a group involved a federal guideline that has gone into effect and to which we have to adjust. I was with a group that was complaining about how terrible it was going to be. They kept asking, “How are we going to handle this and how are we going to tell the employees?” Because of my Intrinsic Coach™ training, I knew how to work toward shifting the group from being problem-focused to being goal-focused. Just that one shift in thinking lifted the energy and created the possibility of thinking forward, together, in a situation that, really, was a tough situation. With the shift, members of the group started saying, “Oh, all right, if this is what we are going to do, then how about we do this, or what about we do that?” By shifting from being problem-focused to being goal-focused they shifted from complaining to moving forward.

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Q Being goal-focused does give people a sense of hope and optimism and they become more committed. How do you personally integrate Intrinsic Coaching™ into your work life?

A My work is so varied, but I always have Intrinsic Coaching™ in the front of my mind. There are also times when it's not the most appropriate approach. For example, when someone is in crisis and considering harming himself, it's not the time for coaching. It's an issue of me saying, “This is what needs to happen and this is what we need to do.” As an Intrinsic Coach™ I would describe non-coachable as a situation where the outcome depends almost entirely on what I do, and not so much on what the person does because that person is in crisis and truly can't think better in that moment. But, if I were to see that same employee after the crisis has been dealt with, I would want to move toward being goal-focused and, for that, I

would use the Intrinsic Coaching™ approach. So there is a time for crisis management and then there's a time for Intrinsic Coaching™.

Q So you identify when coaching is and isn't appropriate and when to blend your expertise in counseling and crisis management with your Intrinsic Coaching™ approach.

A Integrating coaching with other skills is important. You want to use the Intrinsic Coaching™ approach with everybody but, especially in my work in EAP, you also have to determine when Intrinsic Coaching™ is appropriate and when it's not and when to integrate Intrinsic Coaching™ with other skills..

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Q How do you know when another methodology, not Intrinsic Coaching™, is more appropriate?

A Well, I've probably handled it better sometimes than others. I am so enthusiastic about the Intrinsic Coaching™ conversation that, whenever I am in a conversation where someone is problem-focused, I want to move that person forward. That is the nature of using the Intrinsic Coaching™ approach. And being an Intrinsic Coach™ has taught me to be a better listener. Listening is an incredibly important skill and listening like an Intrinsic Coach™ comes in handy no matter whether the session is a coaching session or a crisis management session.

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Q Listening like an Intrinsic Coach™ listens is a gift, in and of itself. Ronnie, as an Intrinsic Coach™, what is your vision for the City of Phoenix?

A Just recently, for the first time, we had someone who is a middle manager sign up for the Intrinsic Coach™ Development Series. My vision is that Intrinsic Coaching™ is no longer a mystery, that people understand what the Intrinsic Coaching™ approach is, and that it grows across the City of Phoenix. I would really like people within our department to understand that this is about having a different conversation. If we talk about goals rather than problems, we are better able to move people forward. I want the Intrinsic Coaching™ methodology to grow and grow throughout every department in Phoenix, so that everywhere, years from now, we have people thinking from a goal-focused perspective about how to move forward.

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We have all kinds of issues to address in our City and, of course, we address them on a daily basis. Integrating the Intrinsic Coaching™ approach, including as a part of everyday conversation, would make such a difference. So I just imagine expanding Intrinsic Coaching™ little by little until this wonderful methodology gets more and more momentum and becomes the skill that everybody knows about and wants – because everybody wants to have those more powerful kinds of conversations.

Q Intrinsic Coaching™ does have a rippling effect. How has Intrinsic Coaching™ expanded what you believe is possible for the employees of Phoenix?

A It goes back to that feeling of hope that comes from being goal-focused. I almost can't say that enough. I think there is so much to be said for a job that portrays hope and that comes with an incredible hopeful element. Intrinsic Coaching™ gives hope to people. People who have hope can get in touch with what they really want and then they can identify solutions they didn't see before. They know that good things can happen and life can be improved and the City can be improved. So, I think the hope that comes

with Intrinsic Coaching™, just naturally, is a big piece of what Intrinsic Coaching™ can do for City employees – it brings the hope that what's better truly is possible and there's a way to create it.

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Q What is the most rewarding thing for you as an Intrinsic Coach™?

A What's really rewarding is to have the ability to truly be with someone and not feel so pressured to give them a lot of solutions, but to truly be with someone and watch them unfold their own possibilities. That is inspiring and has given me such hope. It's not a good feeling – in fact, it's an inadequate feeling – when I have thousands of solutions, but none of those solutions are right for the person sitting in front of me.

Helping someone get in touch with her own path and discover what it is he or she truly wants is deeply rewarding. It's a relief to know I don't have to provide the answers; I only have to elicit their own better thinking so they can find the better answers for themselves.

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Q Seeing those better answers emerge is so rewarding . How has Intrinsic Coaching™ impacted you personally?

A We've talked about Intrinsic Coaching™ a lot in my family. My two teenage sons are spinning off into worlds of their own and instead of handling things with them in that finger-pointing sort of way and the “you should” and “you should not,” our conversations have switched to “What is it that you truly want?” and “What is it that is truly important to you?” Our conversations at home are definitely much more respectful and in tune with the fact that parents really don't have all the answers for their children. So we have another way, now, that we didn't have before. I am reminded of the three “C's”, capable, creative and complete, with my sons; as parents we need to be in touch with that.

Q I, too, know Intrinsic Coaching™ as a gift to our families. Do you have any final thoughts for us?

A I am just so thankful for having Intrinsic Coaching™. I went to Italy this summer with my 16 year old son and visited a friend who works for the government. One morning, I had a coaching conversation with my friend while we were just sitting together. I simply said to her, “I am your friend and I would be happy to coach you about this.” It worked out really well, it provided her with some direction, and it gave her hope.

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I think spreading the Intrinsic Coaching™ message and touching people in all kinds of places and in all kinds of ways would create such a spark. I know it created a spark for her and, when she settles down in her new job, I hope she will want to incorporate Intrinsic Coaching™, as well.

Q A common theme you talked about through this interview is “hope”. Is there anything else you'd like to say?

A What gives people hope is that Intrinsic Coaching™ conversations are better conversations. They provide new learning and “ah-hahs” that are far beyond anything you could have even imagined. I think stopping those tapes in our heads and having an alternative to recycling the same thoughts over and over again and having a way to create new learning and new solutions and being clearer about your goals is what creates the hope. Intrinsic Coaching™ brings that about.

I am so grateful for having had the experience of the Intrinsic Coach™ training that Totally Coached, Inc. provides. It continues to grow in me to provide continually improving listening and communicating with other people and being able to support them in creating their future. It's such a rewarding skill to have, for both coach and coachee.

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Who is Totally Coached, Inc.?

Totally Coached, Inc. is a Scottsdale, AZ based company that founded the proprietary and uniquely effective Intrinsic Coaching™ methodology. Reaching internationally, the Intrinsic Coaching™ methodology enables “Thinking better. Together.™” for benefits that extend across the workplace and beyond the organization’s walls to create healthier lives, healthier organizations, and a healthier world.

To be an Intrinsic Coach™ like Veronica Costa, contact 480-515-5220 or totallycoached@totallycoached.com.

Make a better life.
Live a better world.™