

**LIFE COACHING FOR FEMALE HIGH SCHOOL LEARNERS: A CASE STUDY IN
GAUTENG PROVINCE**

by

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Acknowledgements and Dedications

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I dedicate this research to my mom, who was and still is the best life coach anyone could have and who has always believed in me.

Declaration

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Summary

This research aimed to investigate how life coaching influenced five female high school learners (aged 16 and 17 years old) at an independent school in Gauteng province. The learners attended four life-coaching sessions with an experienced and accredited life coach over a period of eight weeks. Data was collected from a literature review of previous research on life coaching and coaching in general, interviews with the learners both before and after the life coaching experience and from journal entries kept by the learners during the process. All learners learnt through the process and experienced positive changes in their lives. This included improved balance in their lives; improved time management, reduced stress and more positive mind-sets. They were able to set goals and achieve some success during the process. They expressed increased confidence in themselves and their abilities to overcome challenges in their lives and recommended life coaching for other learners.

Title of thesis:

**LIFE COACHING FOR FEMALE HIGH SCHOOL LEARNERS: A CASE STUDY IN
GAUTENG PROVINCE**

KEY TERMS:

Life coaching; Life coach; Cognitive Behavioural Therapy; Resilience, Stress management, Adolescence, Action research, Case study, Female high school learners, Strategies, Challenge, Problem-solving, Mental wellbeing, Emotion, Confidence, Goal setting, Values, Beliefs, Time Management, Self-esteem, Self-belief, Self-confidence, Positive thinking, Safe environment, Professional relationship, Ability, Learning, Balance, Academic performance, Achievements

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CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The idea of a coach has been linked to sports codes and sports teams. Successful coaches are proficient communicators who get different people to work together towards a common goal. This was reiterated by Jeff Cherubini where he states, “*Success in sports most often depends on the coach’s ability to positively and efficiently communicate to his or her athletes...*” (Cherubini. 2019:451). This is fundamental in empowering the player to improve as an individual and to succeed both individually and within the team. The key role of the coach is empowering his or her players to perform to their full potential, and a key factor to the success of coaching is the development of a high-quality relationship between coach and athlete (Cherubini 2019).

As both a sports coach and a life coach, and having been coached by various life coaches myself, I have experienced life coaching in the role of both coach and coaching recipient. As a coaching recipient, I was able to experience life coaching first hand and was positively influenced by the experience. My life coach helped me to think about my problems and find suitable solutions and to look at things from a different and more positive perspective, as well as teaching me the skills and tools that helped me achieve great success by realising my goals. This led me to become a qualified life coach and further increased my understanding of life coaching as a tool to empower people to reach their full potential as I was equipped to do. Having studied and researched life coaching since 2009, attended numerous courses and talks on the topic of life coaching for personal and professional development, I began subsequently to search for ways where more people could access life coaching, specifically high school learners, because of my positive experience. High school learners are navigating their way through a critical point in their lives as they move from adolescence into adulthood and need to make important decisions about their future profession. I believe that learners would greatly benefit from having a life coach during their high school career that could help them set goals and make decisions and thus thrive in their lives. By having a life coach from such a young age, learners would be able to discover what they want more clearly, set achievable goals and learn to think in a positive manner that supports their success.

“Life coaching is a professional practice which aims to help people flourish in life, by living according to their strengths, striving to reach goals, and achieve well-being in all areas of life” (Lefdahl-Davis, Huffman, Stancil & Alayan, 2018:69). From this definition, it can be assumed that life coaching is a tool that may benefit learners by helping them with setting and achieving goals to excel in all areas of life.

This research aims to establish if every student were given the opportunity to have their own life coach, dedicated to empowering him or her to succeed in school, then they might reap the positive benefits I experienced from life coaching early on in life. The benefits of implementing a life coaching programme to undergraduate learners have been documented in various research studies conducted (cf. Lefdahl-Davis et al., 2018). They found that after being coached, learners experienced greater levels of confidence in goal setting, increased confidence in self, as well as increased satisfaction with their studies.

Life coaching exists in many forms (Lefdahl-Davis et al., 2018), and the person being coached can choose to focus on differing goals and areas of improvement. The focus of this study will be on setting and realising goals related to high school, with the life coach supporting and coaching female learners to set and achieve their goals and overcome any obstacles, such as their own beliefs or values or perceived problems they are experiencing in their lives.

Life coaching could be a valuable part of a high school student’s education as it encourages dialogue between the student and the coach. Through this dialogue, a coaching process occurs which empowers the student to achieve her goals and tackle any challenges she may have. *“A relationship with a life coach can be encouraging, empowering, transformational”* (McGill, Huang, Davis, Humphrey, Pak, Thacker & Tom, 2018:33). This relationship is key to the success of coaching and, like any relationship, has to be built on trust. Dialogue will help the student and the life coach to develop a trusting relationship, which is imperative to the success of the life coaching process. This can take time, and this is one of the challenges of using coaching in schools. Life coaching needs to become an important component of the education experience that is integrated effectively into a student’s high school career in order for the student to gain maximum benefit. Maximum benefit or *“an efficient coaching process is where one utilises all available resources”* and *“leads to the highest available outcome at the lowest cost”* where cost is the least amount of time and easiest way to reach a goal (Jarosz, 2016:46).

The benefits of coaching accrue to the people who experience it and would also be of value to high school learners. School is the starting point of professional development for every student, and I argue that integrating coaching into their school portfolio of activities would be valuable.

Jarosz (2016) makes the argument that there are certain characteristics of the coaching process that ensure its effectiveness. These include:

- The coaching process has an objective.
- It is goal-directed.
- It is client-centred.
- It is rooted in the present and is future-orientated.

These characteristics will be used, as guidelines for the life coaching that will be provided to the female learners in this study. A life coaching process will be used as an intervention tool and applied to the five high school participants in order to study the influence of life coaching on their individual lives. I believe that the results will be as positive as those seen in Jarosz’s (2016:49) tables, which indicate the outcomes of coaching:

<i>Sense of self</i>	finding life purpose improved self-awareness self-discovery larger vision	Creed and Blume (2013) ICF (1998) ICF (1998) Ellis (1998)
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Table 2a: Outcomes as a result of coaching – sense of self and life of one’s dreams.

<i>Behaviour/ personality change</i>	hardiness self-efficacy more hope self-esteem more self-confidence stop a bad habit career change enhanced self-acceptance psychological courage self-determination better emotional regulation behaviour change decrease in self-reflection client becomes a priority changing problematic personality traits better time management	Gardiner and Kearns (2012); Green et al. (2007) Gordon-Bar (2014) Green et al. (2006); Green et al. (2007); Worgan (2013) Brady (2011); Pearson et al. (2012) ICF (1998) ICF (1998) ICF (1998) Zandvoort et al. (2009) Curtis and Kelly (2013) Curtis and Kelly (2013) Curtis and Kelly (2013) Lisspers et al. (1999) Grant (2003) Zandvoort et al. (2009) Martin et al. (2012) Boniwell and Sircova (2014)
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Table 1: Outcomes of coaching – behaviour/personality change (Jarosz, 2016:49)

In the table above, Jarosz (2016) shows the outcomes of life coaching in column two, as reported by the sources in column three. As the above table indicates, many sources have reported the same positive outcomes of life coaching for the people experiencing the life

coaching process. This is promising, as this study aims to determine the benefits of life coaching for female high school learners

1.2 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

As shown by Jarosz's (2016) table above, there are many benefits of life coaching. These benefits include increased self-esteem, better time management, more hope and enhanced self-acceptance, to name a few. All of these benefits would have a positive effect on the lives of high school learners and thus help them to reach their full potential.

As Green, Grant and Rynsaardt (2007) state, high school is a challenging time for learners because they feel the pressure to perform academically as their academic performance has a direct impact on their entrance to university and future opportunities. Kirdök and Harman (2018:242) reiterate Green et al.'s statement, maintaining that adolescence is a "*critical period in the course of life*" because it is during this period that adolescents need to make important life decisions while gaining clarity on their "*occupational identity*". The three main difficulties that prevent adolescents from making these decisions include "*lack of readiness, lack of information and inconsistent information*". Kirdök and Harman (2018) further state that factors such as negative beliefs, personality traits, self-efficacy perceptions and emotional intelligence may be the cause of career-decision difficulties in adolescents.

High school learners have been found to worry about issues such as relationships, family, friends and peers, as well as academic performance, which cause an increased occurrence of anxiety, depression and stress in high school (Amen and Reglin, 1992 and Smith and Sinclair, 2000, as cited in Green et al., 2007). High school learners were selected because they are also at an age where they will soon be transitioning into adulthood, around 18 years of age, and may need additional guidance and support to prepare them for this new phase of their lives. Female participants were selected to measure a more homogenous sample to improve the validity of the research.

Life coaching, as a solution-focused approach, has been shown to help participants have more hope and resilience (Green et al., 2007). Therefore, life coaching may be an ideal tool that could be used to work alongside education in school to add value to the lives of learners as they tackle the various social, personal, academic and relationship problems. A life coach

would also be able to provide high school learners with additional support as they make important career decisions.

This research aims to conduct a detailed study of life coaching as an intervention and its influence on the lives of five female high school learners.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Modern society places high demands on high school learners as they navigate their way through adolescence and make important career decisions (Kirdök & Harman, 2018). This is evident in the increased levels of stress, anxiety and depression that are found among high school learners. Sports coaches have been used extensively to help players take on challenges, improve their skills, build emotional intelligence and succeed. This idea could be applied to everyday life to assist high school learners in improving their skills, developing their emotional intelligence and succeeding in all areas of their lives. Therefore, high school learners may benefit from having their own personal coach to work with as they navigate the challenges of high school. The obvious concern becomes one of financial viability which could be mitigated by students opting in to this service and not having each student have their own life coach. This research aims to open up this conversation about a life coach in a school and the value that could be added. However, further research is needed to determine how best this could be applied to a school to ensure that the costs justify the value.

1.3.1 Research questions

The focus of this research is on understanding how life coaching may potentially influence female high school learners. A life coach is different from a mentor as mentorship is usually a long-term relationship, whereas life coaching can be used in the shorter-term. Mentorship is about providing support to a person in more general terms, whereas life coaching will focus on specific skills that a person is hoping to achieve or master (Bose, 2016). Jarosz (2016) recommends that more research be done on varied groups of high school learners to determine the benefits or detriments of life coaching as an intervention in a high school. This research aims to establish the potential benefits of this intervention in a school. Experiencing problems and challenges is a fundamental part of the human experience. However, learners do not need to deal with these problems and challenges alone and can seek support and assistance from a life coach.

The study is premised on the hypothesis that, in the main, the learners will benefit from life coaching. Simultaneously, I recognise that it is feasible that the intervention could potentially have a negative effect on learners. These assumptions and beliefs are based on my many years of research in the field of life coaching, as well as my personal experiences as both a life coach and as a recipient of life coaching. My life coaching experience has taught me many valuable skills and techniques that assist me in living a happier life and dealing more effectively with challenges. However, as a researcher, I must negate any potential bias. This will be done by questioning my existing assumptions and reporting facts in participants own words.

From this premise, the main research question may be framed as follows: **How does life coaching positively influence female high school learners in a selected school in the Gauteng Province?** The main research question now leads to the following sub-research questions:

- How can life coaching be defined in an educational context?
- What is the learner's understanding of life coaching before being coached?
- What is the learner's overall perception of life coaching after being coached?
- How has the learner changed, if at all, since the outset of life coaching?

1.3.2 Aims and objectives

The main aim of this study is to understand **how does life coaching positively influence female high school learners in a selected school in the Gauteng Province.** Learners understand the influence of life coaching on female high school learners. Accordingly, the following objectives have been set for achieving this aim:

- to conduct a substantive literature review on the concept of life coaching;
- to investigate the learners' understanding of the life coaching process before being coached;
- to identify the learners' perceptions of the life coaching process after experiencing life coaching first hand;
- to understand how the learner may have changed during the coaching process.

The purpose of this research is to study the influence of life coaching on female high school learners by conducting a small, in-depth case study using action research. The female high school learners will receive coaching from the same life coach over two months.

1.4 PRELIMINARY LITERATURE REVIEW

1.4.1 Introduction

In South Africa, high school learners are learners aged between 13 and 18 years and are categorised as adolescents as they develop into adulthood. As these learners enter the further education and training (FET) phase of their education (Grades 10 to 12), they need to begin making important life decisions. For example, what they are going to do after school, what career they would like to pursue, and what they need to do in order to pursue their chosen career. While doing this, they are also dealing with the other personal issues (family, friends, relationships, health, stress, and fears) that we as human beings all have to deal with. However, they do not need to deal with these decisions and issues alone, as they could seek the help of a life coach. While these issues are generally discussed with a parent, learners could also discuss them with a life coach who is trained to be more objective (than a parent). Who, based on their expertise and training, can teach learners about the tools they could use to help them achieve their goals. The potential exists for schools to look into adding life coaching to the portfolio of activities offered to high school learners at school in order to assist them through this complex time in their lives.

Kirdök and Harman (2018: 242-248) conducted research into the difficulties high school learners experience when making career decisions with a differing “*locus of control*”. They emphasise that adolescence “*spanning high school years is a critical period in the course of life*” because these learners need to make important decisions about their lives, including choosing a profession. Adding to the pressure of making important life decisions at a young age is the current “*rapid changes*”, such as “*technological developments*” that “*affect individuals’ perception regarding career and occupation*”, thus increasing the difficulties in making these critical life decisions (Kirdök & Harman, 2018:242).

Kirdök and Harman (2018) argue that some high school learners require support from others in making decisions and in dealing with problems linked to self-confidence. This is where life coaching can be a viable intervention that adds additional value to any other support that the

learners may be receiving from parents, teachers and family members. “*A relationship with a life coach can be encouraging, empowering, and transformational, especially during key periods in life transitions, when facing adjustments and difficulties, and when choosing to pursue a new direction*” (McGill et al., 2018, p. 33). This could become a valuable relationship, where learners who are entering an important transitional stage in their life that of leaving school and entering adulthood, are supported and empowered in order to move more successfully through this stage. However, the financial viability will need to be considered and measured against the possible benefits of this intervention within a school context as the financial demands may deem it unrealistic.

1.4.2 What is life coaching?

Life coaching may be defined as a “*collaborative solution-focused, result orientated and systematic process in which the coach facilitates the enhancement of life experiences and goal attainment in the personal and/or professional life of normal, non-clinical clients*” (Grant 2003:254 as cited in Jarosz, 2016). The life coaching process is results-focused, and therefore, outcomes are set and must be reached in order for the process to be effective. The term “*non-clinical clients*” (Jarosz, 2016) refers to people who are not currently undergoing clinical therapy for any diagnosed mental disorders. This is important if the life coaching process is to be effective, because life coaching may help people who are clinical (formally diagnosed with a mental disorder such as depression) but is not a replacement for traditional therapeutic methods for clinical patients.

Elena Aguilar defines coaching as “*an essential component of an effective professional development program. Coaching can build will, skill, knowledge, and capacity because it can go where no other professional development has gone before: into the intellect, behaviours, practices, beliefs, values, and feelings of an educator*” (Aguilar, 2013a). In her book titled *The Art of Coaching*, Elena Aguilar (2013a:6) provides a background to coaching, asserting that “coaching at its essence is the way that human beings, and individuals, have always learned best”. Aguilar (2013a:8) adds, “*coaching is a form of professional development that brings out the best in people, uncovers strengths and skills, builds effective teams, cultivates compassion, and builds emotionally resilient educators*”. It is for these reasons that life coaching as an intervention can be beneficial to both the teachers and the learners in a school and something that schools should include as part of the activities they offer.

McGill, Huang, Davis, Humphrey, Pak, Thacker and Tom (2018:33) argue that the professional relationship between client and coach is a “*trusting partnership*” where the coach helps the client “*explore their strengths, values and life purpose, overcome barriers, and reach their goals*”. This is a key component of the life coaching relationship because only once there is a degree of trust between coach and client will the relationship be fully effective. This means that learners can develop another supportive relationship in their lives to assist them with goal setting and career choices and overcoming any obstacles they may encounter. However, if the relationship is not built on trust, the life coaching process may not be effective.

For this research and the application of life coaching in an education context, life coaching is defined as a process whereby the life coach develops a relationship with a student and empowers the student in their existing situation. They help the student to understand, identify and rectify any limiting thoughts, behaviours and attitudes that may be contributing to the students’ situation. This process of discussion through questions and answers gives the student the skills to think through their own problems and thoughts and find their own solutions and create the results they desire.

1.4.3 Important components of the life coaching process

A life coach is a professional who works with clients (the person being coached) to assist them with setting and achieving goals and realising their full potential. In order for the life coaching process to work and the client to be able to function within the relationship, Jarosz (2016) states that three broad assumptions should be made about the person being coached. These are that clients come from normal (non-clinical) populations, clients are creative, resourceful and whole, and clients have the ability to change and grow. In addition to the above assumptions, Jarosz (2016) argues that for the coaching relationship to be successful, the following components need to be present:

- The life coaching relationship promotes what is right in the client.
- The coaching relationship creates a safe and open environment.
- The coach and client both equally design the relationship.
- Life coaching takes a client-centred, individual approach.
- The focus of coaching is a whole life.
- Coaching is dynamic; therefore, change is always part of the relationship.

Jarosz (2016) also makes the point that there are certain characteristics of the coaching process that ensure “*an efficient coaching process*”, where the person being coached can “*move from problems to solutions and completely new outcomes*” (Ellis, 2008, as cited in Jarosz, 2016:46). These characteristics include:

- the coaching process has an objective;
- it is goal-directed;
- it is client-centred;
- it is rooted in the present and is future-orientated.

McGill et al. (2018:33) also state that life coaching, when individualised to the specific student’s needs, “*promotes self-advocacy, overcomes obstacles to success, and encourages goal setting*”. This is of great significance, as life coaches need to adjust their life coaching to address the needs of the student they are coaching, thus increasing the benefits of life coaching for the individual student. In addition, “*personalized support and advising might bridge learners’ informational gaps and help learners complete tasks they might not otherwise complete*” (Bettinger and Baker 2011, as cited in McGill et al., 2018). There are multiple benefits of life coaching for learners in high school both during their high school career and during their transition from high school to their career or tertiary studies. Research has also shown a “*significantly positive impact*” of life coaching on “*self-efficacy statements in the final sessions of coaching than when the coaching process began*” (Gessnitzer, Schulte, and Kauffield 2016, as cited in McGill et al., 2018:34). Also noted in the same study was the fact that coaching has been found to “*reduce irrational beliefs and depression and increase work performance*” (David and Cobeau, 2016, as cited in McGill et al., 2018:35).

1.4.4 Issues that may hinder the life coaching process

In an article titled ‘*School-based Coaching*’, Alexander Russo (2004) discusses the positive results of coaching in numerous schools across the United States of America. However, the author cautions that schools need to carefully consider the many variations of coaching and should ensure that their expectations of coaching are clearly communicated before investing in it. Russo’s (2004) study was, however, based on the coaching of teachers and not learners. Russo also reveals the high costs involved in including coaching in various schools, citing \$6 billion spent across 97 schools. This is a large sum and, in a developing country such as South Africa, unrealistic. It is therefore imperative that a cost-effective model is developed

where learners can be coached with high rates of success without such a large financial investment. In South Africa, financial resources for schools are already strained and need to be spent on providing basics items for education such as classrooms and desks before coaching is even considered. This research study does not aim to resolve this issue but recommends that further research into this is required to ensure the financial viability of this intervention.

Aguilar (2013) discusses the importance of both the coach's readiness and the site's readiness in order for coaching to be successful. These are important factors that would need to be considered alongside the cost-effectiveness of coaching when including life coaching as an additional activity offered by the school. It is therefore imperative that any intervention added to a school is justifiable and has valuable outcomes for those involved. Nevertheless, the cost of life coaching may make it an unrealistic intervention in the majority of public schools in South Africa due to their lack of financial resources. Public schools need to use their funds to ensure that their primary role of teaching and learning is met before anything else can be considered or budgeted for.

Research into coaching is still in its infancy, although more and more research is being conducted. This research aims to discover the impact of one-on-one life coaching on female high school learners.

1.4.5 Life coaching as an intervention to help higher education learners

In the research conducted by Bettinger and Baker (2011), the effectiveness of individualised student coaching was assessed in eight different tertiary education institutions during the 2003–2004 and 2007–2008 academic school years. The focus of the study was on determining whether life coaching, using a programme called *“InsideTrack”* (Bettinger & Baker 2011) improved college retention.

Bettinger and Baker (2011) subsequently found that life coaching, as an intervention to improve retention rates among college learners, was a better form of intervention than other programmes such as counselling programmes and increased financial aid (2011:8-10). They state that in *“coaches’ interactions with learners, they work to help learners prioritize their studies, plan how they can be successful, and identify and overcome barriers to learners’ academic success”*.

Thus, when considering the important decisions that high schools learners need to make, we argue that a life coach could benefit learners and assist them in making pertinent decisions while overcoming any challenges they may be experiencing.

In a study conducted by Lefdahl-Davis et al. (2018:71), it was found that “*life coaching can be a beneficial tool to help learners effectively manage the plethora of stressors*” they experience. These authors also state that when higher education learners experience high levels of stress, there is a tendency for them to drop out of the course. Consequently, life coaching, as Bettinger and Baker (2011) state, may serve as an effective way to increase retention in these learners. The study by Lefdahl-Davis et al. (2018) collected data on 94 learners who underwent life coaching as an intervention between 2013 and 2016 while attending higher education. The results of their study indicate that life coaching had a positive impact on all of the learners.

1.4.6 Professional development through life coaching

Life coaching, as part of professional development in the workplace, has been well researched, and the results have been positive. Sparrow (2007) discusses the benefits of life coaching for both a business and an individual. In terms of the organisation, results such as increased profit and competitiveness as well as an improved ability to develop people further were found (International Coach Federation Survey, 1998, as cited in Sparrow, 2007). On an individual level, Sparrow (2007:278) states the following benefits through life coaching:

- Personal qualities have also been reported to be developed; presence, increased motivation levels, can initiate an enquiry into who they are (as distinct from what they are doing), express their deepest longings and life-joys, recognise broader thinking and feeling that are shaping underlying assumptions and beliefs.
- An increased openness to personal learning and development.
- Engagement and improvement in self-esteem.

This can be applied in a school context where students may not necessarily require professional development but rather life skill development. Students may benefit from learning valuable life skills through life coaching that may better prepare them for life as an adult.

1.4.7 Social interaction development through life coaching

An article by Thinking Collaborative (2018) states that their research has shown that principals who receive coaching are more likely to coach their teachers and teachers who are coached more will coach their learners more as well. Perhaps this is why the focus of coaching thus far has been on teachers. More research is needed on the benefits of coaching learners in schools, the impact of this coaching on their achievement and ability to adapt to life after school. This also implies that professional teachers make good coaches because of their experience and the skills acquired through the profession.

Research needs to be conducted to determine further whether coaching conducted outside the classroom setting would add the same or more benefits to the student not only in their school career but also in their life in general or if coaching within a classroom setting would be more effective in comparison.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

1.5.1 Research approach

In this research, the approach selected is a case study using action research. I will accordingly focus on drawing conclusions based on the data collected from the participants and the relevant literature. Hence, the collection of data should entail a “*systematic discovery of theory*” using clear methods for collection. The data must be handled correctly to provide “*modes of conceptualization for describing and explaining*” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967:3) and generate conclusions that are clear enough to be verified. This means that a clear research process needs to be followed in order to generate findings from the data collected. Moreover, the better the research process, the higher the quality of the conclusions.

As a qualitative researcher, I will not collect data disproving or confirming a hypothesis. Rather I will use inductive reasoning to generate themes from the data prior to developing a theory on life coaching as an intervention. Inductive reasoning will be used “*based on the interactions between different sources of information*” and is the result of “*constant comparative analysis*” (Ray, 2017:2). As a qualitative researcher, my role is to explore the

underlying reasons, opinions and motivations that provide insights into a problem or possible intervention (DeFranzo, 2011).

Action research is defined as “*studies undertaken by practitioners in schools that address an actual problem or issue in the school or classroom*” (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:1). Action research is also defined as a “*small-scale intervention in the functioning of the real world and a close examination of the effects of such intervention*” (Cohen & Manion, 1998:196, as cited in Milstein, 2009). In this research, the focus is on how life coaching as in an intervention can potentially influence female learners in high school, as they make important life-changing decisions on the cusp of adulthood. Action research requires participants to seek to understand social reality, as well as their own role in creating it in order to change (Wilson, 2002). This means that the participants will have to be actively involved in the life coaching process.

High school learners experience a plethora of change and challenge as they develop from adolescents into adulthood and make decisions about their future careers. This study aims to research the way in which life coaching as an intervention can benefit high school learners as they deal with these changes and challenges.

In this research, pre-coaching interviews will be conducted. During the life coaching experience, the participants will be required to make journal entries after each coaching session and immediately after the life coaching process has concluded further interviews will be conducted.

A case study is defined as “*qualitative research that examines a bounded system (i.e., a case) over time in detail, employing multiple sources of data found in the setting*” (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:1). This is applicable to this study as the research will involve a close study of five female high school learners before and after they have undergone a life coaching process lasting three months. The bounded system is female high school learners in an independent school being coached by a certified life coach.

To ascertain the effects of this process, each student will need to make journal entries after each life coaching session throughout the research process, and interviews will be conducted with them after they have been through the coaching process.

Participants will complete life coaching sessions every second week for two months. This will result in the participants having four life coaching sessions lasting 45 to 60 minutes each. Life coaching sessions can be conducted over the phone, via Skype or in person (in person would be at the life coach's office). The participants will be allowed to choose the method they prefer to ensure that coaching fits into their schedules. The life coaching sessions will cover the following four topics:

- Session 1: Goal setting;
- Session 2: Values;
- Session 3: Beliefs;
- Session 4: Conclusion.

The life coaching sessions will be conducted individually with each participant. Sessions will be individualised and may be directed by the participant but will loosely follow the above topics. The participants will be asked not to disclose their involvement in the research to anyone and not to discuss their life coaching with each other in order to maintain the integrity of the collected data.

1.5.2 Population and sampling

The site selected for the case study is an independent school based in Benoni, South Africa. This site was selected owing to its proximity to the life coach. Typically, life coaching is a costly service where life coaches are paid in exchange for life coaching services. Costs can vary from R300 to R20 000 per session, which means that this is an expensive intervention and not within the financial reach of public schools. An independent school was selected because of the financial resources available to learners and the school, which means that life coaching could be integrated into the education process more easily than in public schools, which may need any additional finances to be spent on infrastructure before looking at additional components. This research aims to determine the influence of life coaching on female high school learners while considering the practicality of implementing this intervention in a school.

The life coach is a certified and experienced life coach who has volunteered to conduct the life coaching sessions without being paid. As the researcher, I do not work at the site (school),

nor do I know any of the learners personally. Similarly, the life coach does not work at the site, nor do they know the learners. I am a life coach but not a practising one at this stage.

The participants in this study will be female learners aged 16 to 18 years of age. The total number of learners in the school is 416, with 202 being the number of female high school learners and 65 being the total number of Grade 10 and 11 female learners. Female learners were selected in order to determine the influence of coaching on the female gender specifically. Congruence in qualitative research refers to a “fit” between the chosen methodology and my own philosophical perspective. This includes the choice to research female learners only, as I am a female researcher. This “fit” includes a clearly aligned research question, methodology and data collection (Willgens, Cooper, Jadotte, Lilyea, Langtiw & Obenchain-Leeson, 2016). This congruence may result in “*producing a more authentic, if potentially partial, account of one’s experiences and position*” (Griffin, 2012:335), thereby producing more authentic results that will add to the body of research that has already been done. This congruence will assist in generating a theory from the body of data collected during the research process.

As the life coach is a female, this may make the participants feel more comfortable and increase the rapport between coach and participant, thereby increasing the effectiveness of the intervention. I, as the researcher, am also female, and the participants may be more comfortable being interviewed by another female.

However, as a female researcher, I need to be aware of “*researcher vulnerability*”, which is the notion that feminist researchers “*are affected by and affect the research.*” (Griffin, 2012:333). This means that I have to be aware of my own prejudices and assumptions affecting the way I interpret data and that I need to accommodate these when collecting and interpreting the results. I also need to be open to new findings as this is action research using a case study.

Bias refers to “*any tendency, which prevents unprejudiced consideration of a question*” and “*some degree of bias is nearly always present in a published study*” (Pannucci & Wilkins, 2010:!). As a researcher, I may not be able to eradicate bias. However, I can try to accommodate any possible bias in order to ensure the validity and reliability of the collected data. Standardising the interaction between interviewer and participant can accommodate interviewer bias (Pannucci & Wilkins, 2010). This may be achieved by using the same

standard questions for the pre-coaching and post-coaching interviews. The journal entries will also be guided by the same questions. Questions will be open-ended to allow participants to state their true feelings.

As an interviewer, I will also need to challenge my assumptions and beliefs to reduce the influence of my own confirmation bias on the collection and interpretation of the data. By using triangulation to analyse and interpret the data, I will be able to increase the validity and reliability of this research.

I will need to use reflexivity in the research. This refers to “*evaluating research procedures and practices critically from one or more perspectives*” (Jones, 2001:1-3). This includes analysing people’s “*assumptions, conventions and practices*” (Jones, 2001:3). This is still relevant today and, in particular, to this research because I will need to consider my own assumptions as well as those of the participants as I collect data.

A sample of five (n=5) female high school learners from the same independent school will be used. The sample has been kept small because life coaching is time-consuming and the life coach has volunteered to coach the participants free of charge. Learners will be invited to apply to participate in the research. The research will be explained to Grade 10 and 11 female learners at the school and they will be invited to contact me if they wish to participate in the study. Those who contact me will be asked to complete a Google Form containing the questions below to assist in making a typical case sample selection. Questions will include aspects such as age, involvement in extra murals, description of the social life and any challenges they may currently be facing.

Based on the answers obtained from this form, five participants will be selected using purposeful (typical case) sampling. Typical case sampling means that the participants must be a typical representation of the majority of high school learners. Selection will, therefore, be based on the age of the participant and the typicality of their characteristics that represent a common South African high school student at an independent school. These characteristics include typical age of the student (16–18 years of age), whether or not they are non-clinical (not currently undergoing any medical treatment for emotional disorders) and how active they are in sports and/or cultural activities that are typical of a female high school student. This also includes how socially active they are in a peer group of the same or similar age (determined by asking them to describe their social life). In addition to this, their willingness

to learn, improve and grow (this can be determined by their willingness to participate which shows that they are eager to learn and change as well as their identification of problems which shows a desire to improve and solve their problems) was assessed to determine their suitability to the study.

1.5.3 Instrumentation and data collection techniques

Two data collection techniques will be used, namely, interviews and journal entries. The participants will be interviewed at a meeting room at my current employer in order to maintain anonymity and to create a suitable climate to record the interview without disturbances.

1.5.3.1 Pre-coaching interviews

The choice of interview strategy is based on the context and purpose (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014) of the research and the participants. Before the participants begin the life coaching process, a face-to-face interview will be conducted where the predetermined questions will be asked. (See Appendix C)

1.5.3.2 Journal entries

Once the two-month life coaching process has begun, participants will be required to make journal entries after each coaching session using the pre-set questions as a guide (see Appendix D). Journal entries will need to be emailed to me after each life coaching session in order to ensure that they are being done promptly to obtain data as close to the time of the life coaching session as possible.

1.5.3.3 Post-coaching interviews

Immediately after the life coaching process has concluded, face-to-face semi-structured interviews will be conducted. These interviews will be used to clarify journal entries and ask core questions.

- Questions based on the individual journal entries will be asked.
- Describe your overall experience of life coaching (LC).
- What were the highlights of LC for you?

- What were the low points of LC for you?
- How did the LC meet/not meet your expectations?
- What issue/challenge would you have liked us to cover that we did not?
- Is there anything I did not ask that you would like to share?
- How effective or ineffective did you find coaching in helping you achieve your goals and make decisions?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how confident do you feel in your abilities?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how well do you deal with challenges in your life?

Each participant will be interviewed twice, once before life coaching and once afterwards. Participants will be required to email their journal entries to me promptly after each life coaching session.

1.5.4 Data analysis, interpretation and presentation

The data collected will be analysed as following the steps below:

- Step 1: Reading through data to become familiar with the information.
- Step 2: Determined key questions to focus on during analysis.
- Step 3: Data placed into categories through coding.
- Step 4: Themes and patterns are identified as well as the relationships between the themes and patterns.
- Step 5: Data will be interpreted and meaning attached to findings to draw final conclusions.

The data will be presented using quotes from the data collected in order to present findings based on the problem statement and aims of the research.

1.6 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE RESEARCH

The four components that make up the trustworthiness of qualitative research include credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability. In order to ensure trustworthiness, data will be collected as accurately as possible, and triangulation will be used from the participants' interviews and journal entries to ensure the credibility of the data.

The use of purposeful case sampling will also enable the results from the research to be transferable across a variety of contexts. Purposeful case sampling involves selecting participants with an intention or purpose. Life coaching, as an intervention, is a new intervention and is suited to a student who wants to partake. Therefore, a sample that wants to be involved or shows interest in the intervention is needed. The research is also focused on female students in Grade 10 or 11, specifically data collection in this study. This will ensure that the data is analysed without bias and personal motivations from myself, the researcher and maintain the neutrality of the data analysis. In order to ensure the confirmability of the data, an audit trail will be used to show the steps of

Finally, the research will be easily replicable by other researchers to ensure the dependability of the results and study. Other researchers will be able to follow the same research steps (Statistics Solutions, 2019).

1.7 RESEARCH ETHICS

An ethical application was lodged and approved by the University of South Africa to ensure that all research is conducted ethically. This will also ensure the trustworthiness and reliability of the data collection and results of the study.

In order to uphold research ethics, participation in this study will be voluntary, and permission will be obtained, in writing, from the school (site) and the participants, as well as the participants' parents and/or guardians (if learners are younger than 18 years of age), to participate in the research.

All participants will remain anonymous in the research report to protect their privacy. Each participant will receive a copy of the transcription of her interview to verify the accuracy of it. Participants will have the ability to withdraw without penalty throughout the research.

Neither the participants nor the life coach will be paid as part of this research. The life coach is a volunteer with no personal relationship to the researcher and is certified with New Insights Africa.

1.8 LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study will have a limited scope, as only five learners will participate in the research. The learners will be female aged between 16 and 18 years. These learners will be selected to determine the impact of coaching on a specific gender and age group of learners who attend an independent school. The learners will be matched with a suitable life coach who has agreed to participate in the research and, thus, learners will not be able to choose any life coach operating in the country. Coaching will take place every second week over three months.

The context of the study is an independent high school based in Johannesburg, South Africa. This will also limit the results and application of the conclusions.

1.9 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

1.9.1 Life coach

A life coach is defined as *“someone whose job involves helping people to improve their lives by doing challenging and worthwhile things”* (Anonymous 2010). This refers to the person who will be providing the life coaching service to the participants.

Jarosz (2016:35) cites Hudson (1999, p.6) who further describes a life coach as: *“[A] person who facilitates experiential learning that results in future-oriented abilities. [A coach] refers to a person who is a trusted role model, adviser, wise person, friend, mensch, steward, or guide – a person who works with emerging human and organisational forces to tap new energy and purpose, to shape new vision and plans, and to generate desired results. A coach is someone trained in and devoted to guiding others into increased competence, commitment, and confidence”*.

1.9.2 Life coaching

The definition of life coaching as cited by Jarosz (2016:35) is *“Life coaching has been recognised as a motivational and behavioural change approach that helps people to set and reach better goals, leading to enhanced well-being and personal functioning”* (Grant & O’Hara, 2006; Green, Oades & Grant, 2006; Newnham-Kanas et al., 2010). This refers to the actual process that will take place or the actual service provided for by the life coach.

According to Grant (2003, p.254) as cited in Jarosz (2016:35), *“Life coaching can be broadly defined as a collaborative solution-focused, result orientated and systematic process in which the coach facilitates the enhancement of life experience and goal attainment in the personal and/or professional life of normal, non-clinical clients”*.

From the definitions, it is clear that life coaching is a process that involves improving the life of the person being coaching by facilitating the person in a professional setting to achieve their goals and personal as well as professional success. This process is carried out by a person referred to as a life coach.

1.10 PLANNING OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1 includes an introduction to the study, its purpose as well as the statement of the problem. The research aims and objectives that are derived directly from the problem statement are also discussed. This chapter will also include the limitations of the study as well as ethical considerations to uphold the integrity of the research and to ensure it is reliable.

In chapter 2, the literature is reviewed in order to obtain a sound understanding of life coaching, previous studies conducted in this field as well as gaps in the current research. The review will be used to clarify concepts, identify the benefits and drawbacks of life coaching high school learners and help define this research within the field of existing knowledge.

Chapter 3 will focus on the research design and discuss in detail how the research will be conducted. It will include a description of the site, the reason for its selection, which sampling method was used, and how the sample was selected from the population. This chapter will include the data collection methods and instruments used to collect the data. Finally, the manner in which data will be analysed will be discussed in detail.

Chapter 4 will include the presentation of the findings as well as the analysis and discussion of the results. This will include data collected from the pre-coaching interviews, post-coaching interviews, as well as the participant’s journal entries. Data will be collated and presented in this chapter. The data will be analysed according to the sub-aims of the study.

Chapter 5 will present a summary of the study, and the presentation of the findings and recommendations form the study.

1.11 CONCLUSION

Life coaching is a powerful tool that has proved successful for both educators and other professionals in various careers, and this is why the focus of this research is on life coaching and using this powerful tool. This chapter focused on defining the problem statement, the aims of this study as well as preliminarily reviewing the literature to introduce the topic and focus of this research. This chapter has provided a road map of how the research will be conducted, analysed and presented as well as what each chapter will entail.

In the next chapter, the literature review will focus on positioning this research within the existing body of research while defining concepts further. It will include a detailed look into life coaching as a process, its benefits and drawbacks and any gaps that may exist within this field of research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter 2, the literature is reviewed in order to obtain a sound understanding of life coaching, previous studies conducted in this field as well as gaps in the current research. The review will be used to clarify concepts, identify the benefits and drawbacks of life coaching high school learners and help define this research within the field of existing knowledge. The review includes a definition of life coaching in a variety of contexts, important components that make up the life coaching process and hindrances to the process. It continues to discuss life coaching as an intervention for high school learners, its impact on learning, professional development and life skill development through coaching and teacher development through life coaching. Finally, the review covers previous research that details the positive benefits of life coaching

In South Africa, high school learners are learners aged between 13 and 18 years and are categorised as adolescents as they develop into adulthood. As these learners enter the FET phase of their education (Grades 10 to 12), they need to begin making important life decisions. For example, what they are going to do after school, what career they would like to pursue, and what they need to do in order to pursue their chosen career.

This period in a human's life is characterised by *"tumultuous transitions and difficult life experiences, is a pivotal time in the course of human development"* (Berger 2014:91). As adolescents deal with *"intense processes of identity formation, socialization and academic advancement, navigating life's complicated challenges alone can be confusing and distressing"* (Berger 2014:91). This is reiterated in research conducted by Suzy Green, Anthony Grant and Jo Rynsaardt where they state, *"Students frequently feel under considerable pressure to perform well academically as performance at high school impacts on university and future career prospects"* (Green, Grant & Rynsaardt, 2007:25).

While doing this, they are also dealing with the other personal issues (family, friends, relationships, health, stress, and fears) that we as human beings all have to deal with. However, they do not need to deal with these decisions and issues alone, as they could seek the help of a life coach. While these issues are generally discussed with a parent, learners

could also discuss them with a life coach who is trained to be more objective (than a parent). Who, based on their expertise and training, can teach learners about the tools they could use to help them achieve their goals. Jessica Rae Berger (2014) has found that *“life coaching for adolescents has become an increasingly popular pathway towards supporting teens in overcoming obstacles, maximizing potential and improving overall well-being”* (Berger 2014:91). Schools could add life coaching, as an intervention, to the portfolio of activities offered to high school learners at school in order to assist them through this complex time in their lives. Green, Grant and Rynsaardt note that there has been an increase in *“developing interventions that build high school students’ resilience and well-being, rather than merely treating symptoms of dysfunctionality”* and the researchers further define resilience as *“an individual’s capacity for maintenance, recovery and improvement in mental health”* (2007:25). Berger (2014: 9-10) also found the following about coaching:

Coaching is an ideal pathway for maximizing adolescent well-being for a variety of reasons. First, adolescents who are turned off by the stigma of traditional therapy are increasingly attracted to coaching. Where “therapy as usual” often focuses on healing dysfunction and suffering, coaching appears to be a more appealing option because it focuses on leveraging strengths as opposed to diagnosing weaknesses. Second, the coach can act as objective listener, supporter and accountability buddy.

Kirdök and Harman (2018) conducted research into the difficulties high school learners experience when making career decisions with a differing “locus of control”. They emphasise that adolescence *“spanning high school years is a critical period in the course of life”* because these learners need to make important decisions about their lives, including choosing a profession. Adding to the pressure of making important life decisions at a young age is the current *“rapid changes”* that are taking place, such as *“technological developments”* that *“affect individuals’ perception regarding career and occupation”*, thus increasing the difficulties in making these critical life decisions (Kirdök & Harman, 2018).

To a certain extent, a person’s happiness rests on choosing a career or vocation that they enjoy because of the duration of their life spent involved in and pursuing this chosen career. *There is a “general agreement that happy workers are to be productive workers”* (Joo & Lee, 2017:1). This also means that if individuals are able to choose a satisfying career and experience greater levels of happiness in this career, they will be more productive. Research

has found that *“happy individuals are likely to be more active, approach-oriented, energetic, interested in their work, sympathetic to their colleagues, and persistent in the face of difficulties compared to unhappy employees”* (Joo & Lee, 2017:2). This increase in productivity positively impacts the business as it increases the profitability of the business, which has a positive impact on economic growth and development. Therefore, supporting learners as they make important decisions regarding their career can help them to experience greater job satisfaction and happiness later in their lives. Life coaching can, therefore, be used in schools as a tool to help learners to choose careers early on in their lives and to help learners to enjoy the work they choose to do resulting in them being more productive in the workplace and more satisfied in their careers.

Research conducted by Faragher, Cass and Cooper (2005:105) found that *“current trends in employment conditions may be eroding levels of job satisfaction— and directly damaging the physical and mental health of employees”*. The researchers found that the workplace is changing at a fast pace because of the advances in technology and this is placing additional pressure on employees and increasing their stress levels as they have *“less control over their workload”*. This is leading to government placing pressure on companies to reduce the negative impact of these changes on their employees by implementing stress management interventions. This creates the opportunity for life coaching of learners while they are in school to enable them to learn stress management techniques earlier in life. Therefore increase their ability to manage the demands of the changing workplace, work better and reduce the company’s expenses of implementing such programs later in employees’ careers.

Kirdök and Harman (2018) argue that some high school learners require support from others in making decisions and in dealing with problems linked to self-confidence. This is where life coaching can be a viable intervention that adds additional value to any other support that the learners may be receiving from parents, teachers and family members. *“A relationship with a life coach can be encouraging, empowering, and transformational, especially during key periods in life transitions, when facing adjustments and difficulties, and when choosing to pursue a new direction”* (McGill et al., 2018:33). This could become a valuable relationship, where learners who are entering an important transitional stage in their life that of leaving school and entering adulthood, are supported and empowered in order to move more successfully through this stage.

Devine, Meyers and Houssemand acknowledge the increasing need for educational reform and a holistic approach to education in order to meet the challenges of the modern world and the need for educational institutions *“to provide young people with the skills and competencies needed to succeed and flourish in this rapidly changing world”* (Devine, Meyers & Houssemand 2013:1383). Life coaching has the potential to bridge this gap and provide learners with a holistic educational experience that can equip them to better deal with their emotions, develop emotional resilience and face challenges in their lives more effectively.

2.2 THE CONCEPT OF LIFE COACHING

Life coaching is a form of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), which is defined by *Psychology today* as, *“a form of psychotherapy that treats problems and boosts happiness by modifying dysfunctional emotions, behaviors, and thoughts”* (“Cognitive Behavioural Therapy” 2019:1). CBT differs from traditional Freudian psycho-analysis where childhood traumas are discussed and processed. Historically, coaching was a method used to *“help athletes, managers and companies to set goals and focus on strengths by promoting resilience and performance”* (Hudson 1999 as cited in Allen, Baker & Behnke 2018:66). Nowadays, the concept of life coaching has been adapted to be applied in a variety of different areas of specialisation including academic coaching, family coaching, parent coaching, teacher coaching and executive coaching, to name a few. Life coaching can be used to help high school learners to become aware of their dysfunctional emotions, behaviours and thoughts and adjust these in such a way to help them to gain more from their school career, make better career decisions and experience greater levels of individual success, both during their school years as well as afterwards. From this standpoint, it appears as though CBT is more deficit-orientated compared to life coaching, which is more appreciative-orientated. However, the article refines CBT further to include more modern ideas related to life coaching. Life coaching focuses on the appreciative while helping the individual to resolve deficits they wish to resolve.

In the same article, the following is stated, CBT, rather focuses on *“solutions, encouraging patients to challenge distorted cognitions and change destructive patterns of behavior”* (“Cognitive Behavioural Therapy” 2019). A life coach can help high school learners to change their behaviour and habits by questioning their current thoughts and perceptions and in cultivating functional and beneficial habits and behaviours that will enable them to work towards achieving the success they want to achieve in their lives. Life coaching as CBT *“rests*

on the idea that thoughts and perceptions influence behavior. Feeling distressed, in some cases, may distort one's perception of reality. CBT aims to identify harmful thoughts, assess whether they are an accurate depiction of reality, and if they are not, employ strategies to challenge and overcome them" ("Cognitive Behavioural Therapy", 2019:1). Therefore, a life coach can help a high school learner to become aware of her own distorted perceptions and alter these. In doing so, this may help the learner to identify what they like and are good at, what they value and what they would enjoy doing as a career.

Through identifying and altering perceptions, learners may become more aware of what they are naturally skilled at, what they would enjoy doing and then make a more decisive career choice earlier in their lives. By selecting a career choice more effectively, this may enable them to choose the right course of study sooner and help improve their resilience, preventing higher dropout rates. This will enable the learner to be happier and more satisfied in their careers which may result in them achieving greater success earlier on in life and their career.

As stated in the article mentioned above, *"CBT is appropriate for people of all ages, including children, adolescents, and adults. Evidence has mounted that CBT can benefit numerous conditions, such as major depressive disorder, anxiety disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, eating disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorders, and many others. Research also indicates that CBT can be delivered effectively online, in addition to face-to-face therapy sessions"* ("Cognitive Behavioural Therapy", 2019). It is important to note that coaching is *"distinct from mentoring, therapy, and teaching"* (Lefdahl et al. 2018:70). Life coaching may have elements of therapy but differs in terms of its process and application. Life coaching focuses on solutions, goals and what the individual needs to do to achieve these solutions and goals.

Life coaching helps individuals to create and pursue their goals and life coaches are *"experts on personal development"* who have *"devoted their lives to helping people get the most out of life"* (Sheehan (2011:7)). The life coach is focused on empowering the person being coached to make internal and external changes that help them develop to become the person they want to become and in doing so create a fulfilling life for themselves (Sheehan (2011)). *"Life coaching is motivational, with a purpose to provide people with the skills to start asking themselves smarter questions, making commitments, fulfilling on them and then assessing them"* (Sheehan (2011:7)). Life coaching coaches individuals to be more self-aware, and this helps the person being coached to understand their own *"strengths, weaknesses, needs and*

internal drivers” better. This increased self-awareness *“enables an individual to choose their responses to feelings and reframe their actions to make them more congruent with what they are attempting to do”*. This helps them in the pursuit of achieving their pre-set goals and achieving the success they desire (Sheehan (2011:8)).

Life coaching may further be defined as a *“collaborative solution-focused, result orientated and systematic process in which the coach facilitates the enhancement of life experiences and goal attainment in the personal and/or professional life of normal, non-clinical clients”* (Grant 2003:254 as cited in Jarosz, 2016). The life coaching process is results-focused and therefore, outcomes are set and must be reached in order for the process to be effective. The term *“non-clinical clients”* refers to people who are not currently undergoing clinical therapy for any diagnosed mental disorders. This is important if the life coaching process is to be effective, because life coaching may help people who are clinical (formally diagnosed with a mental disorder such as depression) but is not a replacement for traditional therapeutic methods for clinical patients.

Elena Aguilar defines coaching as *“an essential component of an effective professional development program. Coaching can build will, skill, knowledge, and capacity because it can go where no other professional development has gone before: into the intellect, behaviors, practices, beliefs, values, and feelings of an educator”* (Aguilar, 2013a). In her book titled *The Art of Coaching*, Elena Aguilar (2013:6) provides a background to coaching, asserting that *“coaching at its essence is the way that human beings, and individuals, have always learned best”*. Aguilar (2013a:8) adds that *“coaching is a form of professional development that brings out the best in people, uncovers strengths and skills, builds effective teams, cultivates compassion, and builds emotionally resilient educators”*. It is for these reasons that life coaching as an intervention can be beneficial to both the teachers and the learners in a school and something that schools should include as part of the activities they offer.

The common purposes of coaching in a professional context include; *“developing a process of professional learning; achieving a level of individual or institutional change”* (Burley & Pomphrey 2011:31). Life coaching is about helping individuals to learn information that they need to help them to create change in their lives. However, contextual factors such as *“location factors might relate to issues such as socio-economic variables, diversity issues, urban or rural environments, the availability of physical space for the mentoring and coaching relationship to take place; the extent to which internal or external personnel*

contribute; status, diversity and power factors such as gender, ethnicity, disability and organisational features such as contracts, policies and degree of formality; individual, institutional and societal goals; quality of relationships; underlying values and power relations; dominant discourses used within the institution” may impact the coaching purposes (Clutterbuck (2003) as cited in Burley & Pomphrey 2011:32).

McGill et al. (2018) argue that the professional relationship between client and coach is a *“trusting partnership”* where the coach helps the client (or learner in this case) *“explore their strengths, values and life purpose, overcome barriers, and reach their goals”*. This is a key component of the life coaching relationship because only once there is a degree of trust between coach and client will the relationship be fully effective. This means that learners can develop another supportive relationship in their lives to assist them with goal setting and career choices and overcoming any obstacles they may encounter. However, if the relationship is not built on trust, the life coaching process may not be effective.

Life coaching is a type of behavioural therapy that focuses on developing a supportive and trusting relationship in which the person being coached can define goals and problems, discover ways to reach goals and overcome problems and learn tools and techniques that enable them to handle life’s challenges more effectively. Life coaching focuses on the solutions that the client (or in this case learner) wants and the life coach aims to facilitate the client in achieving this for himself or herself so that they are empowered and not made dependant on the coach.

2.3 THE IMPORTANT COMPONENTS OF THE LIFE COACHING PROCESS

A life coach is a professional who works with clients (the person being coached) to assist them with setting and achieving goals and realising their full potential. In order for the life coaching process to work and the client to be able to function within the relationship, Jarosz (2016) states that three broad assumptions should be made about the person being coached. These are that clients come from normal (non-clinical) populations, clients are creative, resourceful and whole, and clients have the ability to change and grow. In addition to the above assumptions, Jarosz (2016) argues that for the coaching relationship to be successful, the following components need to be present:

- The life coaching relationship promotes what is right in the client.

- The coaching relationship creates a safe and open environment.
- The coach and client both equally design the relationship.
- Life coaching takes a client-centred, individual approach.
- The focus of coaching is a whole life.
- Coaching is dynamic; therefore, change is always part of the relationship.

Jarosz (2016) also makes the point that there are certain characteristics of the coaching process that ensure “*an efficient coaching process*”, where the person being coached can “move from problems to solutions and completely new outcomes” (Ellis, 2008, as cited in Jarosz, 2016). These characteristics include:

- the coaching process has an objective;
- it is goal-directed;
- it is client-centred;
- it is rooted in the present and is future-orientated.

McGill et al. (2018) also state that life coaching, when individualised to the specific student’s needs, “*promotes self-advocacy, overcomes obstacles to success, and encourages goal setting*”. This is of great significance, as life coaches need to adjust their life coaching to address the needs to the learner they are coaching, thus increasing the benefits of life coaching for the individual learner. In addition, “*personalized support and advising might bridge students’ informational gaps and help students complete tasks they might not otherwise complete*” (Bettinger & Baker 2011, as cited in McGill et al., 2018). There are multiple benefits of life coaching for learners in high school both during their high school career and during their transition from high school to their career or tertiary studies. Research has also shown a “*significantly positive impact*” of life coaching on “*self-efficacy statements in the final sessions of coaching than when the coaching process began*” (Gessnitzer, Schulte & Kauffield 2016, as cited in McGill et al., 2018). Also noted in the same study was the fact that coaching has been found to “*reduce irrational beliefs and depression and increase work performance*” (David & Cobeau, 2016, as cited in McGill et al., 2018).

In order for life coaching to be effective, it is important that a “*trusting relationship and connection*” exists between the coach and the person being coached (Petrucelli & Bodnar (2016:4)). The researchers include research conducted by Bresser and Wilson in 2010, where they further define the eight facets that ensure a good coaching experience. These

include *“responsibility, self-belief, blame free, solution-focus, challenge, action, trust, and awareness”* (2016:5). These are key elements that must be present in order to ensure the effectiveness of life coaching.

Life coaching was also identified as providing a *“safe space”* for adolescents to share their feelings and *“painful secrets”* without being worried about feelings of *“embarrassment, shame or self-loathing”* that they may experience when sharing these with their parents. Life coaching also provides adolescents with the *“opportunity to cultivate trust with a caring, open-minded and educated adult who can offer effective, custom-tailored support”* and teaches them tools and strategies that may assist them in dealing effectively with future challenges they may incur (Berger 2014:10).

Grant (2005) adds that there are two opposing views regarding the role of life coaching. One such view is that the life coach is a facilitator of the client’s self-discovery and should follow a *“non-directional ask-not-tell approach”* (2005:3). This is compared against the second view, which focuses on being *“directional, tell-rather, than-ask”* (2005:3) which is about giving the client direct feedback and advice on the life coaching process. Grant argues that both of these approaches can be used in the life coaching process as long as they are used in a manner that best suits the person being coached. A life coach can use both approaches depending on what the client needs most to reach the goals they are working towards. It is about *“striking the right balance between process facilitation and content or information delivery and this balance varies at different points in the overall coaching engagement and within individual coaching sessions”*. (2005:3) To apply both approaches successfully requires that the life coach be an expert who is skilful and experienced and able to determine when to use each approach. Life coaches also need to have an excellent understanding of the *“issues and context”* (2005:3) of the person being coached. This is a vital component of the life coaching process because the level of experience and skill of the life coach will influence how life coaching is conducted and the overall outcomes of the process.

In addition to the components mentioned above, coaches need to develop effective and active listening skills and ensure that the goal of coaching is focused on what works for the person being coached (Petrucci & Bodnar (2016:5)). They also need to ask *“powerful questions”* (2016:6) to clarify answers and responses from the person being coached. When coaches ask questions to gain great understanding and clarity from the person being coached, they

“prompt students to think and develop their answer to an obstacle” (2016:6) which empowers the person being coached to think more deeply and solve their own challenges.

2.4 ISSUES THAT MAY HINDER THE LIFE COACHING PROCESS

In an article titled *‘School-based Coaching’*, Alexander Russo (2004) discusses the positive results of coaching in numerous schools across the United States of America. However, the author cautions that schools need to carefully consider the many variations of coaching and should ensure that their expectations of coaching are clearly communicated before investing in it. Russo’s (2004) study was, however, based on the coaching of teachers and not students. Russo also reveals the high costs involved in including coaching in various schools, citing \$6 billion spent across 97 schools. This is a large sum and, in a developing country such as South Africa, unrealistic. It is therefore imperative that a cost-effective model is developed where learners can be coached with high rates of success without such a large financial investment. In South Africa, financial resources for schools are already strained and need to be spent on providing basic items for education such as classrooms and desks before coaching is even considered.

Aguilar (2013) discusses the importance of both the coach’s readiness and the site’s readiness in order for coaching to be successful. These are important factors that would need to be considered alongside the cost-effectiveness of coaching when including life coaching as an additional activity offered by the school. It is therefore imperative that any intervention added to a school is justifiable and has valuable outcomes for those involved. Nevertheless, the cost of life coaching may make it an unrealistic intervention in the majority of public schools in South Africa due to their lack of financial resources. Public schools need to use their funds to ensure that their primary role of teaching and learning is met before anything else can be considered or budgeted for.

The coaching process variables may affect the outcomes of coaching. Variables such as:

- *strategies used in organising mentoring relationships such as frequency of meetings, usage of technology, record keeping;*
- *the nature and quality of the dialogue;*
- *the nature and quality of the collaboration;*
- *mentoring and coaching for professional learning;*

- *the use of different approaches such as the inquiry-based approach through investigation, reflection and questioning;*
- *the underlying model of professional learning (Clutterbuck (2003) as cited in Burley & Pomphrey 2011:33).*

It is important to pay attention to variables such as those mentioned above when drawing conclusions from the research of life coaching.

Research into coaching is still in its infancy, although more and more research is being conducted. This research aims to discover the impact of one-on-one life coaching on female high school students. It would also be important to consider the learner's motivation to be coached and attitude towards coaching as a tool as this will influence the learner's involvement in the coaching process and therefore, their overall outcomes.

2.5 LIFE COACHING AS AN INTERVENTION TO HELP HIGH SCHOOL AND HIGHER EDUCATION LEARNERS

In the research conducted by Bettinger and Baker (2011), the effectiveness of individualised learner coaching was assessed in eight different tertiary education institutions during the 2003–2004 and 2007–2008 academic school years. The focus of the study was on determining whether life coaching, using a programme called "*InsideTrack*", improved college retention.

Bettinger and Baker (2011) subsequently found that life coaching, as an intervention to improve retention rates among college learners, was a better form of intervention than other programmes such as counselling programmes and increased financial aid (2011:8-10). They state that in "*coaches' interactions with students, they work to help students prioritize their studies, plan how they can be successful, and identify and overcome barriers to students' academic success*".

Thus, when considering the important decisions that high schools learners need to make, we can argue that a life coach could benefit high school learners and assist them in making pertinent decisions while overcoming any challenges they may be experiencing. Tertiary education learners may have more autonomy than high school learners; however, the

learning context is similar, and the demands on learners can be applied to both levels of education. From the study above, it is noted that life coaching improved college retention rates, and one could argue that it may also improve high school learners' retention rates thereby encouraging them to complete this important part of their education career. Once learners complete high school, they are more likely to be encouraged to pursue higher education, which is an ageing choice in our modern world and especially in South Africa where a more skilled labour force is needed.

In a study conducted by Lefdahl-Davis et al. (2018), it was found that *"life coaching can be a beneficial tool to help students effectively manage the plethora of stressors"* they experience. This was further supported by research conducted by Devine, Meyers and Houssemand who concluded that coaching did help learners manage stress, which has an important impact on academic performance. (Devine, Meyers & Houssemand, 2013) These authors also state that when higher education learners experience high levels of stress, there is a tendency for them to drop out of the course. Consequently, life coaching, as Bettinger and Baker (2011) state, may serve as an effective way to increase retention in these learners. The study by Lefdahl-Davis et al. (2018) collected data on 94 learners who underwent life coaching as an intervention between 2013 and 2016 while attending higher education. The results of their study indicate that life coaching had a positive impact on all of the learners.

2.6 LIFE COACHING AND LEARNING

Kerryn Griffiths (2005) conducted research into how life coaching, as a growing field, could be a tool for effective learning. She states that little research has been done into the use of life coaching for learning and proposes that personal coaching could be used as a *“model for active, collaborative, authentic and engaging learning that courageously challenges and moves beyond more conventional transmission models of learning”* (2005:55). She goes on to add that the International Coach Federation (2004) identifies “facilitating learning and results” as a key competency of a life coach who has a role in promoting learning and development in the person being coached. This means that life coaches can help learners to learn more effectively and that the life coaching process could be a beneficial tool used alongside conventional education in schools.

In an article by Griffiths, she reflects on her later research, where she identified three stages of learning involved in coaching, namely, “discovery, application and integration” (2015:14). In it, she says that learning was fully integrated into the process of coaching because the coaching recipient was encouraged to take responsibility and self-coach. Through the life coaching process, the recipients' self-knowledge increased through the process of setting and achieving goals. Griffiths notes that an individual's personal goals, rather than curriculum, determine the direction of learning. She states *“[I]n their pursuit of these goals, they discover new knowledge, apply it to their personally meaningful contexts and eventually integrate it, so it becomes part of who they know themselves to be and what they are capable of”* (2015:15). This means that life coaching can be an effective tool that encourages and motivates learners to learn more effectively both inside and outside the classroom. Griffiths Combined Coaching-Learning Model is depicted below.

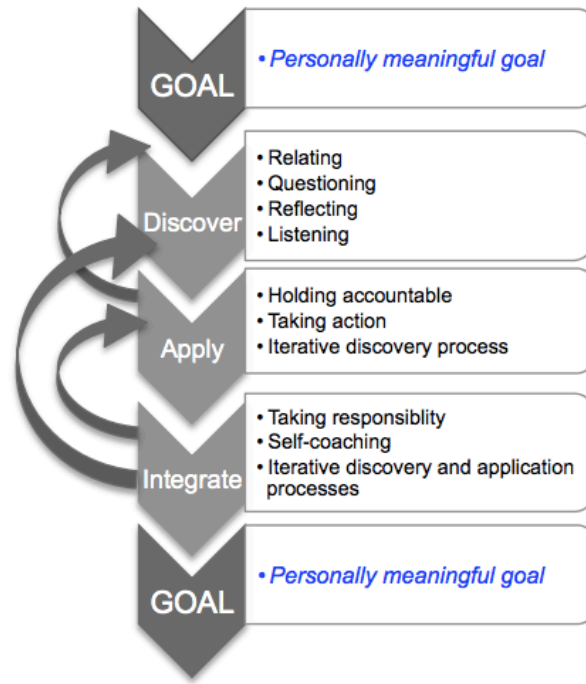


Figure 1: Griffiths Combined Coaching-Learning Model (2015:15)

It is important to acknowledge Qing Wang’s (2012) study that argues that coaching for learning is different; however, life and executive coaching. In the study, it is noted that coaching is already used for many different purposes in educational contexts, as stated below:

“Coaching is used in a wide range of educational contexts for a variety of purposes”.

- *Initial teacher training which uses coaching as a key part of the training process.*
- *Continuing professional development of teachers.*
- *Leadership programmes which use coaching for specific development of the individuals at senior level and for broader institutional purposes.*
- *Coaching in the wider school workforce to support school students with learning or behavioural difficulties.*
- *Working with school students in order to develop motivation and aspiration.*
- *Coaching in schools to develop abilities, skills and talents in specified areas such as music, art or sports” (Burley & Pomphrey, 2011 as cited in Wang 2012:179).*

It is evident that coaching has been applied in education in a variety of contexts and that we need more research into specific types of coaching, such as life coaching, as it is applied in a specific context, such as a high school.

Research conducted by Passmore and Brown over three years and 18 schools also found that coaching *“can be an effective intervention with a non-adult population in helping students enhance examination results”* (Passmore & Brown 2009:7). Their extensive research into previous research suggests that by building resilience and hope in young people, a benefit of coaching identified by Green, Grant and Rynsaardt, they are better able to cope with challenges that appear later in life from *“university pressures, to changes in employment status and the emerging self-identity as an adult worker and parent”* (Passmore & Brown 2009:8). This is further supported by Devine, Meyers and Houssemand who state that *“coaching has been applied successfully with students by coaches, teachers and student counselors, and also by students coaching students showing promising results”* (Devine, Meyers & Houssemand 2013:1386). This further adds to the argument that life coaching can be a beneficial tool to be used alongside formal schooling.

2.7 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH LIFE COACHING

Life coaching, as part of professional development in the workplace, has been well researched, and the results have been positive. Sparrow (2007) discusses the benefits of life coaching for both a business and an individual. In terms of the organisation, results such as *“improved profit, client service and competitiveness, and an ability to develop people for the next level”* were found (International Coach Federation Survey, 1998, as cited in Sparrow, 2007). On an individual level, Sparrow (2007) states:

Personal qualities have also been reported to be developed; presence, increased motivation levels, can initiate [an] enquiry into who they are (as distinct from what they are doing), express their deepest longings and life-joys, recognizes broader thinking and feeling that are shaping underlying assumptions and beliefs (Lazar and Bergquist, 2003, as cited in Sparrow, 2007); increased openness to personal learning and development (Wilson, 2004, as cited in Sparrow, 2007), engagement and improvement in self-esteem (Kassell, 2005, as cited in Sparrow, 2007).

In the research conducted by Losch, Traut-Mattausch, Mühlberger and Jonas (2016), they compare the effectiveness of individual coaching, self-coaching and group training and how leadership makes the difference in the workplace. They found that individual coaching of employees was the most effective in facilitating participants' goal attainment, which is the main aim of life coaching. They also found that both individual and group coaching reduced participants' procrastination. The most significant difference between individual and group coaching was that individual coaching, to metacognitive learning skills while group coaching enhanced the participant's relevant knowledge and skills which lead to a more obvious learning process enabling participants' to demonstrate their skills. However, the research found that being supported in the workplace without a coach was not as effective in enhancing performance and facilitating goal attainment as when working with a coach.

This further indicates that life coaching has many benefits as a part of professional development in the workplace. It can be argued that formal schooling is aimed at preparing learners for the workplace and this means that exposing learners to life coaching while they are at school may be an important part of preparing them for the workplace in the future.

Life coaching is also not limited to those who have identified having a problem they need help with but *“already-successful people most often use life coaches because they know the importance of making the most of every opportunity for personal growth. They know that having an ‘edge’ is important, and that a good life coach can give them that edge. Individuals/organisations come to coaching because they want to improve their life, not because they should or need to, because coaching is about doing what you want”* (Sheehan (2006:4)). Therefore, coaching can be used by all types of individuals. Once learners begin using life coaching during their school careers, they may be more willing to engage in life coaching throughout their lives to ensure that they continue to learn and grow throughout their lives and in all areas of their lives.

2.8 TEACHER DEVELOPMENT THROUGH LIFE COACHING

An article by Thinking Collaborative (2018) states that their research has shown that *“when principals are coached, they coach teachers more, and when teachers are coached regularly, they coach students more”*. Perhaps this is why the focus of coaching thus far has been on teachers. More research is needed on the benefits of coaching learners in schools and the impact of this coaching on their achievement and ability to adapt to life after school. This also

implies that professional teachers make good coaches because of their experience and the skills acquired through the profession.

In her research, Phyllis Lutchman (2019) explores how instructional coaching that aims to help teachers improve their instructional skills in the classroom is beneficial as it leads to improved success for the learners in the classroom. She notes the benefits of coaching teachers that were identified by the study done by the Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University in 2004 and include:

- *“Coaching encourages teachers to reflect more on their teaching. It also encourages them to collaborate with each other.*
- *The culture of the schools is improved by effective coaching of teachers.*
- *Data collection and analysis is encouraged. It helps to bridge the different levels of the school system. Areas of need can be identified, and strategies developed to address these needs. Coaches can be better chosen who have the expertise to address these needs.*
- *A coach can support a teacher on an ongoing basis. Teachers and their colleagues can be guided to work together as well as be accountable to each other. Coaches can improve the teaching and learning process. Instructional coaching is school-based so the learning takes place in a real-life situation.*
- *Coaching supports positive relationships between administration and teachers. They work together to transform the school system”* (Lutchman, 2019:1).

There are many benefits of instructional coaching for teachers and also for the learners they teach. If coaching can benefit teachers to such a large extent than it could benefit learners too. If both learners and teachers are working together from a similar mindset and focus developed from life coaching, it could lead to improved success for the learner, teacher and school. The positive outcomes of coaching for teachers encourage research into how life coaching could then also benefit individual learners. If all role-players involved in teaching and learning can benefit from coaching, this could lead to positive outcomes that reach further than just the classroom. When both teachers and learners are being coached and applying this coaching in the classroom and their lives, it may lead to more effective teaching and learning. This improved teaching and learning helps learners to experience greater success in their personal and professional lives and may result in more educated and successful communities and economies.

Research needs to be conducted to determine whether coaching conducted outside the classroom setting would add the same or more benefits to the learner not only in their school career but also in their life in general.

2.9 POSITIVE BENEFITS OF LIFE COACHING

Lefdahl, Huffman and Stancil make a case for life coaching as a positive tool that *“aims to help people flourish in life by living according to their strengths, striving to reach goals and achieve well-being in all areas of life”* (2018:69). They also summarise results from other studies that life coaching has been found to have *“significant positive impacts”* on an individual's life including *“improved well-being, attainment of goals, alignment with values, strengths and purpose, overcoming obstacles and successfully managing transitions”* (2018:69).

Life coaching can be used as an intervention in high schools where learners are life coached as they deal with their own academic and personal challenges, and while they make future career decisions. This intervention can be used to help learners to cope better with high school and achieve more in their personal and academic lives. It will help them make better career decisions and in doing so, enjoy greater levels of success in all areas of their lives, both while they are in school and their lives after school. A coach *“literally helps people to get to their desired goal”*. Petrucelli and Bodnar (2016:4) state part of the life coaching process is *“identifying and nurturing what students value and are good at, helping them find ways to optimize their strengths, and helping them find niches where they can live out their strengths, and to provide them with life skills that will enable them to succeed throughout life”* (Devine, Meyers & Houssemand 2013:1387).

Petrucelli and Bodner add to the argument that life coaching has a positive benefit for the individual being coached by citing Bresser and Wilson's research where they found that *“elements of coaching help students make better decisions, solve problems that are holding them back, learn new skills, and progress forward in their academic goals”* (2016:5). Their research focused on teachers using coaching strategies to help learners overcome academic adversity, and they found that using coaching strategies and *“facilitating student learning as to how to manage one's weaknesses is as important as taking advantage of one's strengths. Gaining insight into how core motivation impacts the potential for success or failure in any given task leads to the development of self-awareness and funnels into productive, forward-*

focusing plans. Instructors who assist students in identifying and exploring their core motivation will help them grow and empower them to solve their problems” (2016:6). These basic coaching strategies were able to help learners to overcome academic adversity and had a positive impact on their performance.

Petrucci and Bodnar included the following in their report:

A study from Stanford University compared one-on-one coaching for 8,000 students to a group of 5,500 students who did not receive any coaching (Bettinger & Baker, 2011). The researchers collected data on their retention after 6, 12, 18, and 24 months, and the results of the study found that the groups that received coaching increased their retention and completion rates from college (Bettinger & Baker, 2011) (2016:5).

Further, Duckworth’s (2013) research suggests that sustained interest in a commitment to learning, grit, increased confidence, and self-efficacy leads to higher achievement. Thus, a resilient behavior is more likely to increase in the classroom as a result of utilizing the elements of coaching characteristics (2016:5).

Research has found numerous positive benefits of life coaching. These benefits are found within educational institutions and with life coaching learners who are in high school and completing their undergraduate studies after their high school years. The case can be made that life coaching does have a positive impact on the people who are coached and more specifically, on learners and their success in their studies as well as the improvement of their overall well-being and mental health. If life coaching is able to build resilience in learners, they will be more likely to remain in their studies, to work hard even when they come up against challenges and to experience greater success both in school and in life after school and studies.

Sheehan (2006) adds that managing stress is another positive benefit from life coaching and can help the learner to learn how to manage stress during their school career. The tools and techniques that learners acquire from the life coaching process can be applied to their later lives when they could experience even greater levels of stress as economically active citizens who are also building and raising a family, running a home, dealing with ageing parents,

managing a social life, and pursuing their dreams. The dynamic modern world requires that each person be able to adapt to rapid change, take on new and demanding roles and deal with increasing pressures of “*complex environments*” (2006:9) which all lead to increased stress and anxiety. “*The coaching relationship provides a safe and supportive environment within which to express and explore fears and anxieties, to identify coping skills and strategies and test out new behaviours. Additionally, some coaches encourage practical discussions around identifying and understanding causes of stress, time management, lifestyle, healthy eating and exercise, stress-reducing relaxation and meditation techniques*” (2006:9). Therefore, learners who enter into the life coaching process at a younger age may learn to cope better with stress earlier on in their life. This will help them to apply the tools and techniques, they learnt from life coaching, as their levels of stress increase throughout their life.

Therefore, life coaching adolescents may help them to alter their perceptions, make better decisions aligned with what they value and achieve success earlier in their lives helping them to lead happier and more satisfying lives positively impacting others around them.

2.10 CONCLUSION

The literature review defined the concept of life coaching and drew insights from previous research on the key components that the process should entail in order to be effective. The life coach’s level of skill and experience play an important role in the experience and outcomes of the process. Both the benefits and potential pitfalls of life coaching were discussed. It suggests that through life coaching, learners may develop more resilience, which enables them to deal more effectively with challenges that they face during their school career in areas such as academic performance, examination writing, and career choices as well as challenges they may face later in life in the workplace and in their personal lives. Life coaching may also be able to teach learners useful stress management techniques that they can apply in their lives during their school careers as well as later in their lives. Learning is a key outcome that is part of the life coaching process and those being coached do learn through the life coaching process. It was noted that more research is need in the field of life coaching learners, specifically high school learners, as there is an extensive body of knowledge on life coaching teachers as well as professionals in the workplace. Additional research is needed to determine how life coaching can best suit a

high school learner so that they too can experience the many positive outcomes of the life coaching process.

The next chapter will detail the purpose of the study as well as the research design and methodology. It will also include ethical considerations and the validity of the research.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the existing literature on life coaching was reviewed in order to obtain a sound understanding of life coaching, its processes, as well as its benefits and drawbacks. It helped to define this research within the field of existing knowledge.

In this chapter, the research methodology and design will be discussed. It will include the purpose and aims of the study, the research method and approach as well as the site and population selection, sampling techniques, research instrumentation and procedures for data collection. Also included in this chapter will be a discussion on the data presentation and analysis.

Finally, this chapter will also include a discussion on ethical considerations imperative to ensuring the validity and reliability of the qualitative research design.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

3.2.1 Introduction

The research design was the general plan for the research and was defined as the “*plan that describes the conditions and procedures for collecting and analysing data*” (McMillan & Schumacher 2014:4). It described the procedures that the study would follow, including details such as “*when, from whom, and under what conditions the data will be obtained*” (McMillan & Schumacher 2014:28). It included details regarding what participants would experience and what methods and instruments would be used to collect data from the selected sample of participants.

For this study, qualitative research was selected in order to obtain participants personal accounts of the experience of life coaching. The research approach is discussed, in detail, in the next section.

3.2.2 Research approach

In this research, the approach selected was a case study using action research. The data must be handled correctly to provide *“modes of conceptualization for describing and explaining”* (Glaser & Strauss, 1967:3) and in generating conclusions that were clear enough to be verified. To generate findings from the data, *“most hypotheses and concepts not only come from data, but are systematically worked out in relation to the data during the course of research”*. This meant that a clear research process needed to be followed in order to generate a theory from the data collected. Moreover, the better the research process, the higher the quality of the theory.

As a qualitative researcher, my role was to explore the underlying reasons, opinions and motivations that provide insights into a problem or possible intervention. (DeFranzo, 2011) As a qualitative researcher, I would not collect data disproving or confirming a hypothesis; rather, I would use inductive reasoning to generate themes from the data prior to developing a theory on life coaching as an intervention. This was done to allow themes to “emerge” and come through from the data collected instead of imposing themes onto the data beforehand (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:3). Inductive reasoning would be used, resulting from comparative analysis based on the relationships between different sources of information and data (Ray, 2017). By allowing themes to come from the data collected, I would be able to draw conclusions from the subjective experiences of the participants to gain an accurate idea about their individual experience of the life coaching process.

Action research techniques such as *“studies undertaken by practitioners in schools that address an actual problem or issue in the school or classroom”* (McMillan and Schumacher, 2014:1) are defined as a *“small-scale intervention in the functioning of the real world and a close examination of the effects of such intervention”* (Cohen and Manion, 1998:196, as cited in Milstein, 2009). In this research, the focus was on how life coaching as an intervention can potentially influence female students in high school, as they make important life-changing decisions on the cusp of adulthood. Action research required participants to seek and to understand social reality, as well as their own role in creating it in order to change (Wilson, 2002). This meant that the participants would have to be actively involved in the life coaching process. High school students experience a plethora of change and challenge as they develop from adolescents into adulthood and make decisions about their future careers. This study aimed to research the way in which life coaching as an

intervention could benefit high school students as they dealt with these changes and challenges.

In this research, pre-coaching interviews were conducted. During the life coaching experience, the participants were required to make journal entries after each coaching session. Immediately after the life coaching process had concluded, further interviews were conducted.

A case study is defined as *“qualitative research that examines a bounded system (i.e., a case) over time in detail, employing multiple sources of data found in the setting”* (McMillan and Schumacher, 2014:1). This applied to this study, as the research would involve a close study of five female high school students before and after they had undergone a life coaching process lasting three months. The bounded system is female high school students in an independent school being coached by a certified life coach.

3.2.2.1 The life coaching process

Participants would complete life coaching sessions every second week for two months. This would result in the participants having four life coaching sessions lasting 45 to 60 minutes each. Life coaching sessions can be conducted over the phone, via Skype or in person (in person would be at the life coach’s office). The participants were allowed to choose the method they preferred to ensure that coaching fitted into their schedules.

The life coaching sessions would cover the following four topics:

- Session 1: Goal setting
 - This included setting a goal or desire that the participants would like to achieve with the help of the life coach and discussing the importance of this in one’s life.
- Session 2: Values
 - This included discussing what is most important to the participant such as family, friends, success as well as character traits such as honesty, love or discipline, to name a few.

- Session 3: Beliefs
 - This included explaining what beliefs are and helping the participant to uncover beliefs they may have about themselves, their abilities and the world around them.
- Session 4: Conclusion
 - This would be a summation of the process where participants reflected on what they have learnt through the process and determine what they needed to do to continue moving forward and towards their goals.

The life coaching sessions were conducted individually with each participant. Sessions were individualised and directed by the participant but would loosely follow the above topics. The participants were asked not to disclose their involvement in the research to anyone and not to discuss their life coaching with each other in order to maintain the integrity of the collected data.

3.2.3 Research question and sub-questions

In chapter 1 and 2, the complex life stage of adolescence was discussed indicating the many stressors, and pressures high school learners may encounter as they navigate their way through their high school career. They are also at a stage in their lives where they need to make consequential life decisions regarding their careers and futures. They face many challenges in their lives and could benefit from having a life coach to assist them through this complex time in their lives.

From this premise, the main research question, as stated in chapter 1, may be framed as follows:

How does life coaching positively influence female high school learners in a selected school in Gauteng Province?

The focus of this research was to find out if life coaching could influence female high school learners and if there was a place for life coaching in a learner's school career.

The main research question now leads to the following sub-research questions:

- What is life coaching?
- What is the learner's understanding of life coaching before being coached
- What is the learner's overall perception of life coaching after being coached?
- How has the learner changed, if at all, since the outset of life coaching?

3.2.3 Aims of the research

As mentioned in chapter 1, the main aim of this study was to understand **how life coaching influences female high school learners in a selected school in Gauteng Province.**

Accordingly, the following objectives have been set for achieving these aims:

- to conduct a substantive literature review on the concept of life coaching;
- to investigate learners' understanding of the life coaching process before being coached;
- to identify the learners' perceptions of the life coaching process after experiencing life coaching first hand;
- to understand how the learner may have changed during the coaching process.

The purpose of this research was to study the influence of life coaching on female high school learners by conducting a small, in-depth case study using action research. The female high school learners would receive coaching from the same life coach over two months.

3.3 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

The site selected for the case study was an independent school based in Gauteng, South Africa. This site was selected owing to its proximity to the life coach. Typically, life coaching is a costly service where life coaches are paid in exchange for life coaching services. Costs can vary from R300 to R20 000 per session, which means that this is an expensive intervention and not feasible within the financial reach of public schools. The population was independent schools because of the financial resources available to students and the school, which means that life coaching could be integrated into the education process more easily than in public schools, which may need any additional finances to be spent on infrastructure before looking at additional components. This research aimed to determine

the influence of life coaching on female high school students while considering the practicality of implementing this intervention in a school.

The life coach is a certified and experienced life coach who had volunteered to conduct the life coaching sessions without being paid. She has been practicing for over 20 years. As the researcher, I do not work at the site (school), nor do I know of any of the students personally. Similarly, the life coach does not work at the site, nor do they know the students. I am a certified life coach but do not practice privately outside my current profession as a schoolteacher.

In addition, all female students aged 16 to 18 years of age would be the populations of the case study. Female students were selected in order to determine the influence of coaching on the female gender specifically. Congruence in qualitative research refers to a *'fit'* between the chosen methodology and my own philosophical perspective. This included the choice to research female students only, as I am a female researcher. This *'fit'* included a clearly aligned research question, methodology and data collection (Willgens, Cooper, Jadotte, Lilyea, Langtiw & Obenchain-Leeson, 2016). This congruence may result in *"producing a more authentic, if potentially partial, account of one's experiences and position"* (Griffin, 2012:335), thereby producing more authentic results that would add to the body of research that has already been done. This congruence would assist in generating a theory from the body of data collected during the research process.

As the life coach is a female this may make the participants feel more comfortable and increase the rapport between coach and participant, thereby increasing the effectiveness of the intervention. I, as the researcher, am also female, and the participants may be more comfortable being interviewed by another female.

However, as a female researcher, I needed to be aware of *"researcher vulnerability"*, which is the notion that feminist researchers *"are affected by and affect the research"* that they do (Griffin, 2012:333). This meant that I had to be aware of my own prejudices and assumptions affecting the way I interpreted data and that I needed to accommodate these when collecting and interpreting the results. I also needed to be open to new findings as this was action research using a case study.

Bias refers to *“any tendency, which prevents unprejudiced consideration of a question”* and *“some degree of bias is nearly always present in a published study”* (Pannucci & Wilkins, 2010:1). As a researcher, I might not be able to eradicate bias, but I could try to accommodate any possible bias in order to ensure the validity and reliability of the collected data. Standardising the interaction between interviewer and participant can accommodate interviewer bias (Pannucci & Wilkins, 2010). This may be achieved by using the same standard questions for the pre-coaching and post-coaching interviews. The journal entries would also be guided by the same questions. Questions would be open-ended to allow participants to state their true feelings and interpretation of their experience.

As an interviewer, I would also need to challenge my own assumptions and beliefs to reduce the influence of my own confirmation bias on the collection and interpretation of the data. By using triangulation to analyse and interpret the data, I would be able to increase the validity and reliability of this research.

I would need to use reflexivity in the research. This refers to *“evaluating research procedures and practices critically from one or more perspectives”* (Jones, 2001:1). This included analysing people’s *“assumptions, conventions and practices”* (Jones, 2001:1). This is still relevant today and, in particular, to this research because I would need to consider my own assumptions as well as those of the participants as I collect data.

A sample of five (n=5) female high school students from the same independent school would be used. The sample was kept small because life coaching is time-consuming and the life coach had volunteered to coach the participants free of charge. Students would be invited to apply to participate in the research. The research would be explained to the Grade 10 and 11 female students at the school and they would be invited to contact me if they wished to participate in the study. Those who contacted me would be asked to complete a Google Form containing the questions below to assist in making a typical case sample selection.

- What is your age?
- Have you ever been formally diagnosed with a psychological disorder?
- Are you currently undergoing any medical treatment for the abovementioned diagnosis?

- Describe your level of activity in extramurals at the school. (None, light, moderate, extensive).
- Describe your social life.
- What are the biggest challenges you are facing right now, and how do you plan on tackling them?

Based on the answers obtained from this form, five participants were selected using purposeful (typical case) sampling. Typical case sampling meant that the participants must be a typical representation of the majority of high school students. Selection would, therefore, be based on the age of the participant and the typicality of their characteristics that represented a common South African high school student at an independent school. These characteristics include:

- Typical age (16–18 years of age).
- Non-clinical (not currently undergoing any medical treatment for emotional disorders).
- Moderately active in sports and/or cultural activities that are typical of a female high school student.
- Socially active in a peer group of the same or similar age (determined by asking them to describe their social life).
- Shows a willingness to learn, improve and grow (this can be determined by their willingness to participate which shows that they are eager to learn and change as well as their identification of problems which shows a desire to improve and solve their problems).

3.4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

3.4.1 Introduction

McMillan and Schumacher (2010:262) stated that “*a credible research design involves not only selecting informants and effective research strategies but also adhering to research ethics*”. As a qualitative researcher, careful planning of how ethics would be handled was imperative to ensure the validity of the study.

As part of this research study, informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity would be considered in order to ensure the research was valid, reliable and did not harm the participants in any way.

As the researcher, it was important that interviews were recorded and interpreted without bias and that each participant's actual experience was carefully recorded and analysed before drawing conclusions. This was done by recording each interview and then using the transcription of each interview where the participant's own words are used to analyse the data.

3.4.2 Informed consent

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010:363), *"the Institutional review board (IRB) requires a protocol for informed consent to be signed by each participant"*. In the case of this research, parental or guardian consent was required because the participants were minors and not of legal age to give their own consent.

Consent to perform the research using learners from the selected site would be obtained from the principal of the independent school before the study began. The potential participants would be invited to apply to partake in the research, but they would have to return completed parental or guardian consent forms before they could begin the research, should they be chosen as part of the sample.

3.4.3 Anonymity, privacy and confidentiality

The research participants, as well as the site, should not be identifiable in the write up of this research and should remain anonymous (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). It was the responsibility of the researcher to *"protect individuals' confidence from other persons in the setting and to protect informants from the general reading public"* (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010: 363). As a researcher, I would uphold this responsibility by not using the names of the participants or the site.

Participants would be informed beforehand that all the information from this research would be treated as private and confidential and that their identities would not be revealed or known to anyone other than the researcher. This would assure participants that the information they

provide, especially that of a more sensitive matter, would be treated properly and that they would remain anonymous. This would build trust and help participants to divulge more personal and detailed accounts of their experiences during the life coaching process.

I would also seek ethical clearance from the University of South Africa to ensure that my research study adhered to the appropriate ethical standards. I would only commence the study once the committee had approved my research and make every effort to apply strict controls throughout the collection and analysis of data to maintain anonymity, privacy and confidentiality of the participants and research information.

3.5 INSTRUMENTATION AND DATA COLLECTION PROCESSES

3.5.1 Introduction

Instrumentation refers to the procedures and measures for data collection (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014) and includes questionnaires, interviews, documents and artefact collection.

In this qualitative research, an application form would be used to assist in selecting the sample before semi-structured interviews would be conducted with participants before and after the life coaching process. During the life coaching process, the participants would be asked to make entries into a journal after each life coaching session.

The participants would be interviewed in a meeting room at my current employer in order to maintain anonymity and to create a suitable climate to record the interview without disturbances.

3.5.2 Pre-coaching interviews

The choice of interview strategy was based on the “context and purpose” (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014) of the research and the participants. Before the participants began the life coaching process, a face-to-face interview would be conducted where the following questions would be asked:

- What is your understanding of LC?

- Explain any LC experiences you have had or experienced?
- Describe the level of support you have in your life when dealing with any challenges?
- What are the biggest problems or challenges you are dealing with in your life right now?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how prepared do you feel to tackle life's challenges? Why?
- Why do you want to participate in this project?
- What do you expect to gain from LC?
- What issues would you like the LC to cover?
- Is there anything I have not asked that you would like to share?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how confident do you feel in your abilities?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how well do you deal with challenges in your life?

3.5.3 Journal entries

After each life coaching session, participants would need to record their personal thoughts in a journal that would be submitted for review. Entries would be guided using the following questions:

- What did you learn in the session?
- How could you use this going forward?
- What went well?
- What did not go as well?
- On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being not confident and 10 being exceptionally confident), how confident do you feel that you have the skills to overcome any challenges and achieve your goals?

Journal entries would need to be submitted after each life coaching session in order to ensure that they were being done promptly to obtain data as close to the time of the life coaching session as possible.

3.5.4 Post-coaching interviews

Within one week of the completion of the life coaching process, face-to-face semi-structured interviews would be conducted. These interviews would be used to clarify journal entries and ask core questions to determine each participant's personal account and experience of the life coaching process in order to answer the research questions and sub-questions that

were defined in chapter 1 and earlier in this chapter. The following questions would be asked as well as additional questions based on the participants' answers:

- Questions based on the individual journal entries will be asked.
- Describe your overall experience of LC.
- What were the highlights of LC for you?
- What were the low points of LC for you?
- How did the LC meet/not meet your expectations?
- What issue/challenge would you have liked us to cover that we did not?
- Is there anything I did not ask that you would like to share?
- How effective or ineffective did you find coaching in helping you achieve your goals and make decisions?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how confident do you feel in your abilities?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how well do you deal with challenges in your life?
- Any additional questions to clarify the participants' experience or answers to previous questions.

Each participant would be interviewed a total of twice, once before life coaching and once afterwards. Participants would be required to email their journal entries to me promptly after each life coaching session.

3.5.5 The researcher's role

In qualitative research, the researcher forms part of instrumentation because the researcher wants to collect data "*directly from the source*" by spending time interacting directly with the setting, participants and documents that form part of the research (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:346). This aids in the data collection process. However, the researcher needs to be aware of potential biases, subjectivity and observer effects that may impact on the data collected. In order to avoid or limit the effects of this on the data collected, the researcher needs to prepare all instruments correctly and use clear and effective communication when interacting with participants as well as be aware of any bias or subjectivity as it crops up during the research process.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

3.6.1 Introduction

Data collected from qualitative research needs to be “*analysed, summarised and interpreted*” (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:395). When analysing data collected from qualitative research, inductive analysis was used to organise data into categories and identify patterns and relationships among the categories. Inductive analysis was also known as the process where researchers “*synthesize and make meaning from the data, starting with a specific date and ending with categories and patterns*” in order to draw general themes and conclusions from the actual data collected (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:395).

In qualitative research, there is no standard process for analysing data because this relies heavily on the ability of the researcher to interpret the data and draw conclusions from this data. However, the following steps can be followed to guide the researcher in data analysis and interpretation:

1. Collecting data: Involves using questionnaires, interviews, observations and other forms of data collection methods to obtain data based on the research problem.
2. Organise data: Data collected needs to be sorted into workable amounts in order to be analysed. This can include, for example, transcribing interviews.
3. Transcribe data into segments: Once data is sorted, it needs to be transcribed into segments that are easier to understand, for example, by participant or question.
4. Code data: Once data is carefully sorted and segmented, it needs to be a descriptive name.
5. Describe data: Codes need to be described for increased clarity and understanding. This also gives the researcher time to work with the data and gain in-depth insights about what has been collected.
6. Categorise data: Data can be categorised into broad categories and can use predetermined categories such as type of data collected or participant or date, to name a few.
7. Developing patterns: Entails working with the categorised data to find any patterns or common themes that may emerge in order to analyse the data properly and draw conclusions (McMillan & Schumacher,2014:397).

It was vital that the researcher attempt to analyse from the data in as objective a manner as possible in order to record the personal experiences and accounts of each of the participants accurately.

3.6.2 Data analysis

The data collection process would begin when participants completed the life coaching process from both the pre-coaching and post-coaching interviews, as well as the participants' journal entries. All interviews would be recorded and transcribed in order to accurately analyse the participants' responses to the questions posed to gain an understanding of how participants' experienced the life coaching process.

Data collected would be organised by participant in order to properly analyse each participant's actual experience of the life coaching process. Once this was sorted the following steps, as suggested by McMillan and Schumacher (2014:399-400), would be followed to code the data:

- *Get a sense of the whole by writing down data as each transcription or entry is read.*
- *Generate initial codes from the data by asking what each segment is about and what words have been used to describe it.*
- *Compare codes for duplication by making a list of codes to check for repetition and common ideas.*
- *Try out provisional coding.*
- *Refine the coding system after continued re-analysis.*

During the analysis, the researcher provides his or her own description of their experience with the phenomenon before identifying statements used in the data by participants that describe the phenomenon, in this case, life coaching. Thereafter, *"meaningful units are formed from the statements"* (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:404) before the researcher reflects on his or her experiences in order to integrate the researchers and participants understandings and experiences. Finally, the *"meaning of experience is constructed"* (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:404).

Once the data is coded, common themes or categories are created by grouping similar codes together and then patterns, defined as a *"relationship among categories"* are made

from examining the coded and categorised data. This process requires the researcher to carefully judge what data and codes are most important while monitoring how they go about this process in order to reduce researcher bias and ensure the credibility of the research (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:406).

3.6.3 Data presentation

Data would be presented in transcripts that included meaningful quotes from interviews as well as important excerpts from the participants' journal entries in order to address and answer the main research question and sub-questions.

3.7 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE RESEARCH

3.7.1 Introduction

It was important for research to be trustworthy so that it added value to the existing body of knowledge but could be quite a challenge when completing qualitative research because of how much more concrete it was to determine the trustworthiness of quantitative research. However, this does not take away from the important role that qualitative research plays. Anderson noted that *"qualitative research can sometimes provide a better understanding of the nature of educational problems and thus add to insights into teaching and learning in a number of contexts"* (2010:1). Qualitative research was an important approach to researching important problems and can offer insightful solutions if sound trustworthiness was established.

Both Stenton (2004) and Krefting (1990) propose Guba's Model of Trustworthiness of qualitative research (1981) which focuses on four key criteria, namely; credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability which are discussed in detail below. McMillan and Schumacher also note that in order to select trustworthy data, the researcher needs to be aware of their own *"assumptions, predispositions, and influence on the social situation"* (2014:407). This requires the researcher to have a strong sense of themselves as well as their way of thinking and potential bias when conducting research and collecting data.

3.7.2 Credibility

Credibility looks into internal validity, ensuring that the research actually measures what it intended to measure. In order to determine the credibility of the study, the following are important:

- correct application of research methods;
- familiarity with the culture of participants;
- random sampling;
- triangulation;
- ensuring honesty of informants;
- proper questioning and addressing discrepancies;
- negative case analysis;
- regular debriefing;
- peer scrutiny of the research;
- reflexivity;
- background, qualifications and experience of the researcher;
- member checks;
- scrutiny of the description of the phenomenon;
- examining previous research to determine congruence (Shenton, 2004:69).

In this research, a combination of the abovementioned strategies would be used to ensure the data collected is trustworthy beginning with the proper research methods being followed and correctly documented. Triangulation, as well as reflexivity (both discussed in greater detail below), would also be used.

3.7.3 Transferability and dependability

Transferability is focused on how the research can be transferred or applied to a larger population or group. This is an important aspect because qualitative research, as is the case with this research, involves a small sample size. This research can be understood in other similar contexts in terms of female high school students of aged 16-18 years of age attending an independent school. However, adjustments would have to be made for a larger size sample as well as a different context. For example, should a rural setting be used, journal entries may need to be handwritten and not submitted via the internet. A larger

sample size may require more than one life coach. A larger sample size may also require different types of life coaches as the development of a relationship is important to the process. Therefore, a life coach that students could relate to may need to be used.

Dependability addresses *“the issue of reliability, the positivist employs techniques to show that, if the work were repeated, in the same context, with the same methods and with the same participants, similar results would be obtained”* (Stenton 2010:71). This is done by clearly documenting and recording the steps and procedures taken to conduct the research so that another researcher could repeat the research and obtain the same or similar results. This documentation or recording should include:

- *the research design and its implementation, describing what was planned and executed on a strategic level;*
- *the operational detail of data gathering, addressing the minutiae of what was done in the field;*
- *reflective appraisal of the project, evaluating the effectiveness of the process of inquiry undertaken* (Stenton, 2010:71-72).

The research process and procedures would be clearly and correctly recorded and documented to ensure that the study could easily be replicated and to ensure that the research as well as data collected and analysed was dependable and added to the existing body of knowledge.

3.7.4 Confirmability

Confirmability has to do with ensuring objectivity, which poses a challenge in qualitative data collected from different sources and methods to determine if any patterns occur.

In this research, participants would be interviewed on two separate occasions, once before and once after they have gone through the life coaching process. They would also be required to make frequent journal entries, which would enable the researcher to cross-validate the data collected.

3.7.5 Reflexivity and the researcher

Reflexivity was an important tool to establish the credibility of qualitative research and is defined as “rigorous self-examination of the researcher” throughout the research process (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:356). No researcher can be fully objective or detached from the research because of the researcher's role in the research. However, in order to reduce the impact of researcher bias on the research and subsequent results it is important for the research to continually reflect on their own assumptions, ideas and biases that may impact the study.

The researcher was required to question his or her assumptions and biases throughout the research process, especially when conducting interviews and analysing the data collected to remain as objective and neutral as possible.

3.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter focused on the research design and methodology that was selected for this research. The chapter also dealt with the process to be followed in collecting, analysing and presenting the data as well as important ethical considerations. It also discussed the instruments and data collection techniques to be used before sorting, coding and interpreting the data. The chapter also noted the important aspects that need to be dealt with by the researcher in order to ensure the validity and reliability of the research as it fits within the existing body of knowledge.

Chapter 4 will present and interpret the data in detail.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the selected methodology and qualitative research design were discussed in detail. This chapter included the aims of the research, sampling method used, instrumentation and data collection processes involved in the study. I also included a discussion on ethical issues and considerations, which included the trustworthiness of the research.

In chapter 4, I will present and interpret the data collected from the pre- and post-coaching interviews as well as the journal entries made by each participant in an attempt to answer the main and sub-research questions. The perspectives of the participants and data provided will be presented using graphs, charts, tables, as well as verbatim quotations in order to present the findings accurately.

4.2 THE RESEARCH PROCESS

4.2.1 Introduction

For this study, a qualitative research design was used. The approach was a case study using action research to obtain data from the participant's personal experience of life coaching as a process. I obtained permission from the selected school (labelled **S1**) to conduct the research using learners from the school. Five female high school learners (aged 16-17) were selected and labelled as **P1-P5**. All participants were required to assent to participate in the research, and because they were all under 18 years of age, parental consent was also obtained.

Participants were interviewed using semi-structured interviews both before they have begun the life coaching process as well as after they completed the life coaching process.

Participants were also required to complete journal entries, with guided questions, after each life coaching session. Interviews were recorded and transcribed to assist with accurate and detailed analysis of the data.

4.2.2 Methods used for collecting data

In order to begin the research, the researcher obtained permission from the principal of the selected school to conduct the research using five female learners from the school. Once permission was granted, the researcher presented the research information to a group of approximately 40 Grade 11 female learners, aged 16-18 years of age, and invited them to apply to be part of the research. Eight female learners applied to be part of the research, but one eventually decided that she did not want to participate, leaving the researcher with seven participants. These participants fit the typical case sampling of a female high school learner as they were non-clinical (were not being treated for any other mental illnesses) and were representative of a typical female high school learner. The participants varied in race, religion and interests typical of a high school learner. Five participants out of the seven remaining applicants were then contacted at random to participate in the study because all participants fit the typical case sampling profile. However, two participants declined to participate, and the remaining five were used as the participants of the research.

Parental consent was obtained before the participants began the research. Semi-structured interviews were then conducted before the participants began the life coaching process. Participants were then instructed to contact the independent life coach to set up their life coaching sessions at times that suited them every two weeks for eight weeks. After each session, participants submitted their journal entries to the researcher. After all four life coaching sessions were completed after eight weeks, all five participants were interviewed again using a semi-structured interview. The interview was used to obtain the participants' experience of life coaching, its influence on their lives as well as to clarify any entries from their journals. All interviews were recorded and transcribed. The transcribed interviews were coded and grouped under specific headings or categories before patterns or themes were extracted to answer the research questions.

4.2.3 Challenges experienced during the research process

During the research process, two of the participants needed reminders to submit their journal entries but did so promptly after being asked. One of the participants had difficulty completing her last two sessions but finally completed these within one week of each other in the last two weeks of the research period.

4.2.4 Positive aspects experienced during the research process

The school approached was very helpful and eager to participate in the research. It was easy to speak with the female learners and obtain a sample of five participants. The participants were open to the experience of life coaching and showed a lot of enthusiasm. They were eager to provide responses and feedback and were mature enough to provide detailed insights into their experience. The research process was enlightening and taught me a lot as a researcher. It was a valuable experience for both myself and the participants involved.

4.3 BIOGRAPHICAL DATA OF THE PARTICIPANTS

Five participants (P1-P5) were selected from the same school (site) and interviewed twice each for 10 interviews ($5 \times 2 = 10$). They each submitted one journal entry after each of the four life coaching sessions giving the researcher 20 ($4 \times 5 = 20$) journal entries in total. This collected data was used to answer the main research question:

How does life coaching influence female high school learners in a selected school in Gauteng Province?

The collected data was also used to answer the sub-research questions:

- What is life coaching?
- What is the learner's understanding of life coaching before being coached?
- What is the learner's overall perception of life coaching after being coached?
- How has the learner changed, if at all, since the outset of life coaching?

The following demographic information was obtained from the participants:

Table 2: Participant ages and level of extramural activity per week

Participant	Age	Level of extramural activity per week
P1	17	1-2 days per week
P2	17	None
P3	17	1-2 days per week
P4	17	3-5 days per week
P5	16	3-5 days per week

Table 2 shows that the research was conducted with five female participants aged 16-17 years old and their level of extramural activity per week.

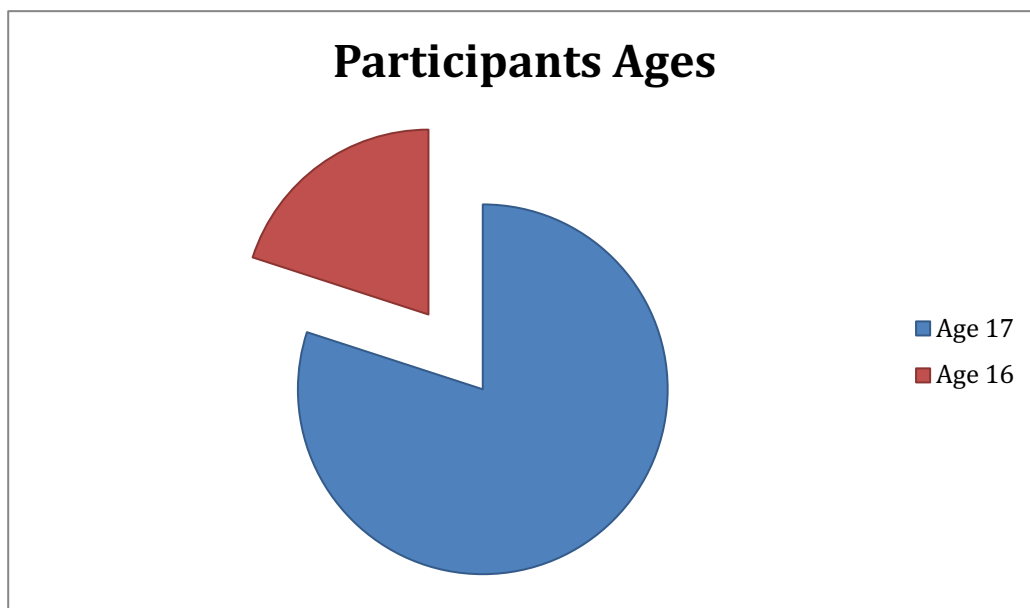


Figure 4.1: Participants Ages

Figure 4.1 shows that the participants ranged from 16 to 17 years of age. All five participants were female. This sample was deliberately selected based on the research question of how life coaching influences female high school learners in a selected school in Gauteng Province.

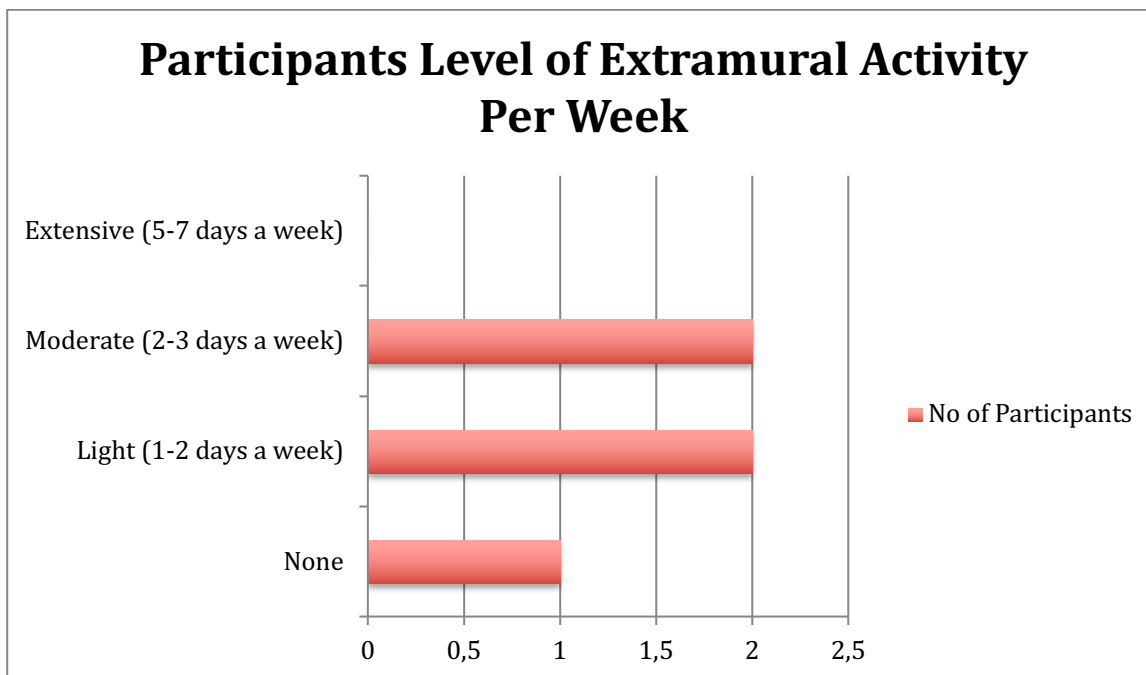


Figure 4.2 Participants Level of Extramural Activity Per Week

Figure 4.2 shows how the participants described their involvement in extramurals during each week. It was important to ensure that the sample represents a typical high school learner so that the study could see how life coaching could influence a typical high school learner by being integrated into their everyday life. This is useful when drawing conclusions regarding whether or not life coaching is a viable process that could be implemented into a high school learner’s life.

Five female high school learners aged 16 and 17 years old were selected to participate in the research to determine the influence life coaching has on their lives and to draw conclusions about how useful and viable, this practice may be if integrated into a typical high school learner's life. The learners who were selected to participate in are representative of typical female high school learners in Gauteng and attending an independent school. They represent a typical high school learner in terms of being:

- Typical age (16–18 years of age).
- Non-clinical (not currently undergoing any medical treatment for emotional disorders).
- Moderately active in sports and/or cultural activities that are typical of a female high school student.
- Socially active in a peer group of the same or similar age (determined by asking them to describe their social life).

- Shows a willingness to learn, improve and grow (this can be determined by their willingness to participate which shows that they are eager to learn and change as well as their identification of problems which shows a desire to improve and solve their problems).

A typical high school learner was selected to participate in the study to be able to apply the results of the research to the general high school populations when using inductive analysis and drawing final conclusions from the findings.

4.4 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF DATA COLLECTED FROM PRE-COACHING INTERVIEWS

4.4.1 Introduction

Qualitative research analysis is *“primarily an inductive process of organizing data into categories and identifying patterns and relationships among the categories”* (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014:395). Inductive analysis is the process of pulling general patterns or categories from specific data. Generalisations could not be drawn due to the size and nature of this study. The data collected during the pre-coaching interviews will be presented in this section according to the questions asked (categories) and themes identified from the interviews. The data is presented using quotations from the participant’s interviews and then interpreting these to answer the research questions. The data presented were analysed using inductive analysis. The interviews were held at an appropriate location to ensure the participant's safety as well as to ensure participants were comfortable enough to answer openly and honestly. Each interview was recorded and transcribed to assist in the analysis process.

4.4.2 Data regarding any previous life coaching experience and participant’s initial understanding of life coaching

When asked if they had ever experienced life coaching before, none of the participants answered yes. None of the participant’s had ever experienced life coaching before. **P1** had seen a psychologist a few years ago but never a life coach.

The participants were asked about their understanding of life coaching. A common idea emerged of a person who helps in their lives in some way. **P5** said, *“It is someone that helps you find your correct path and how you can have an almost better life. Someone who can help you to be the best and manage everything in your life at that point”*. **P3**’s response was similar stating, *“You help the person with decision-making and goal setting and the way you have to look at life”*. **P2** described her understanding of life coaching as someone who *“...will give you advice on how to tackle some situations in your life in a better way”*. While **P1** said, *“...help you get through things you need to get through if you have an issue with something and they will help you deal with it and find solutions to your issue with you”*. From the data, it is evident that none of the participants had any experience of life coaching. However, all the participants had an idea of a life coach as someone who would help them set goals, solve problems and improve their life in some way.

4.4.3 Data regarding participant’s current level of support and biggest challenges

All participants described getting support from their parents, and in the case of **P1** and **P4** extended family, in some way or another. **P1**, **P3** and **P5** all described their mothers as their primary support. The main way in which they received support was through advice from their parents or extended family. **P1** also mentioned that her mother supports her with homework. **P2** mentioned that her parents support her but are not always able to understand what she is going through at school and are unable to give her advice that is relevant to her current experiences.

Each participant was experiencing different challenges in their lives. **P5** mentioned, *“...battling to balance everything out because I have a lot going on...”*. The participant further clarified what she meant saying, *“I want to balance family-time, school, studying and social life and still being active...at the moment I feel like I am doing too much school and then not enough of anything else...”*. **P3** described the challenges she was facing based on having moved schools, and the change is the school syllabus. **P3** described her current challenges as *“a lot of stress and hard work”*. She had changed from the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) to Independent Examinations Board (IEB) and found a gap in her existing knowledge. **P3** was already making use of a tutor to assist her with his challenge. **P4** also described an academic challenge, *“I was in top ten, but now that I am in high school, I am not in top ten anymore. There is that pressure on me because my parents are always like how come you were in top ten and all of a sudden you’re not”*.

P2 described her challenges with school and her weight loss. She said, *“...my studies especially with Science because it is really hard and you have to get a certain amount to pass, and I want to be a doctor, so I know I to get everything above just to do better in it”*. She also mentioned, *“Also with my weight loss. This is a bit of a struggle, and I know I am getting there slowly, but I know it takes time”*. **P2** was also attending extra lessons for Mathematics and Science and was currently going to gym. **P1**’s biggest challenge was social as her best friend had left the school, and she stated, *“...we are very close. So, she left the school and with her not being there, I am very shy. I don’t speak up when I have to and she usually; if I have a question she will ask it for me”*. She also stated *“making new friends”*, dealing with her cousin’s suicide attempt a month prior to the interview and the amount of schoolwork and the need to get high marks for her future choices.

Each participant had different challenges they were dealing with. While they were receiving support from their parents, extended family and a tutor, they still described the challenges as present and real in their lives. In some cases, their support, their parents, were also creating the challenge as in **P4**’s situation. Similar challenges regarding school work came up, including the pressure to perform and manage the workload. Additional challenges such as weight loss, making friends, managing time and making decisions about their future were also discussed.

4.4.4 Data regarding how well participants felt they could handle their challenges

When asked the question, *“On a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being not well at all and 10 being very well, how well do you deal with challenges in your life?”* each participant rated themselves and discussed why they gave themselves this rating. The following responses were obtained. **P2** rated herself a five out of ten but noted that it *“has to depend on the challenge for me to see how I am going to do it”*. She said that she was good at *“logical type of thinking because you have all your facts right there, so it is easy to get through. But, the non-logical one I struggle with because you have to start taking other people’s opinions”*. **P4** rated herself six out of ten, and her reasons were, *“because when I am faced with the challenge, I don’t panic...I try to go through it, and I try overcome that challenge. I try my best”*.

P3 gave herself a four out of ten. She mentioned, *“...I don’t know how to deal with the challenges because I get so frustrated because I can’t do something or I don’t get it right,*

and then I get frustrated, and I get upset, and then I can't cope with it". P5 gave herself an eight out of ten. She stated, "...I can definitely deal with it and other things I definitely can't deal with it, but most of the time I do deal with it". She went on further to describe, "Not...if I am very stressed because I am very bad with at dealing with stress and pressure. If I am under pressure, I just break. But if it is something school wise I am very good at getting through all of it if I have a lot of things to do even though I am pressured I will have a breakdown, but then I will get through it and get everything done. And then social life I am very good at managing everything, so I do try and push through that". P1 described her way of dealing with challenges as overthinking, "I overthink a lot of things, and I will make the situation worse by thinking about all the possible things that could go wrong..."

The participants rated themselves based on how they felt they were able to deal with challenges in their lives. Only one of the participants rated herself an eight while the others rated themselves lower. They described how they felt when dealing with challenges and emotions such as frustrations and panic were mentioned due to pressure and stress caused by various challenges in their lives.

4.4.5 Data regarding why the participants wanted to be part of the research

The participants were asked why they wanted to participate in this research and what they wanted to gain from participating. P5 was encouraged to participate by her mother, who had considered going to a life coach herself. P5 wanted to be able to gain more balance in her life, and she wanted *"a more positive life, so if I can try and find a more positive mindset"*. She also said, *"My family situation is quite bad, so if I could try and change that and my understanding of that. My Mom and I have quite a lot of fights, so for that to be more calm"*.

P3 wanted to see if life coaching could help her in any way, and she stated, *"I want to be positive in my mind about the future. I don't want to be stuck in today the whole time"*. She also said she would like help with, *"Motivation and looking at something from a different perspective so you don't only see challenges, but you also see the opportunities because that is what I struggle with. I only see the bad and not the good"*. P4 wanted to experience life coaching because she had never done it before and because a friend had experienced life coaching and told her, it was a good experience. P4 wanted to see how it would benefit her. She also wanted a space to *"...say things that I can't say to my parents because there are certain things I won't tell my parents because I am scared like sometimes they are strict"*

so some of the stuff I can't say so I feel if I come to life coaching and ask for advice, it will be better so I would get the advice I need".

P2 responded by saying, *"I felt like it would be a good impact on me...it will give me a different perspective on things and in a way it will give me new points of how to do things in certain manners and will really be beneficial for me".* She hoped to gain *"better and easier ways to tackle situations"* that she had not thought of before. **P1** also had an open mind towards life coaching and said: *"I thought it could be a great chance to discover more things...how to do more things".* She also mentioned having someone to guide her in building her confidence and discovering more about herself. She also said she would like to gain motivation, goal setting and to become more open. She further discussed building her confidence and ability to make friends.

The participants approached the life coaching experience openly and with the idea that they would gain something from participating in the research. This could lead to confirmation bias, where the participants would look for the positive benefits of life coaching to reconfirm their beliefs. However, their openness and eagerness to participate also enabled them to give more to the life coaching process thereby enabling them to gain more from it compared to if they were closed off to the process and unwilling to participate fully. All the participants had a deeper "why" with regard to participating, which is an important part of doing anything as human beings. When we have a reason or motivation for acting, we are more likely to be more engaged in order to obtain the benefit that we are looking for. This is important because a key component of the success of life coaching for the person being coached is their willingness to engage with the coach, be honest and open with the coach and do the actions they need to in order to obtain the results they want to obtain.

4.4.6 Data regarding participant's self-confidence

Each participant was asked to rate how confident they felt in themselves and their abilities on a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being not confident and 10 being extremely confident. This question was asked to gain an idea as to how they saw themselves and to determine whether life coaching would have any influence on how confident the participants believed themselves to be. This was asked to collect data in order to answer the research question *'How has the learner changed, if at all, since the outset of life coaching?'* By asking this question, the researcher could gauge a set point of how the participants felt and could ask this question again at the

end of the life coaching process to determine if the participants changed in any way relating to their self-confidence.

P1 mentioned that is was dependent on the situation and that some days she could be a seven whereas other days two or three. She expressed that she felt less confident when talking to people and slightly more confident in her school career. **P2** rated herself a three and stated that she was *“not really that confident”*. She further explained her rating by stating, *“...I like to stay in my comfort zone, and I don't really go out, and that affects my confidence because I am scared I am going to do something that embarrasses me and then it will be stuck in my mind what happened and then it decreases my confidence level quite a lot”*. She felt that this level of confidence was the same in all areas of her life.

P3 stated, *“Not very well. I would say a five or six”*. When asked why she responded, *“I am not a very confident person. I am very scared... I am also a very talkative person, so sometimes I talk and talk and I feel that I shouldn't have said that”*. She also explained that she feels more confident around people that she knows and less confidence at school. She expressed confidence in her ability to play hockey.

P5 was unsure at first and started on an eight and then said a seven or lower. *“My self-confidence is quite low especially if I get nervous then I am just very self-conscious and then I don't want to do anything, and I don't want to understand anything, so I block everything out”*.

It was interesting to hear the way each participant described and viewed their confidence in themselves and their abilities. What struck me as evident was their fear of vulnerability. They mention being scared of doing something embarrassing or saying something wrong. Brené Brown has done extensive research on vulnerability and how we do shy away from it even though it is part of a meaningful life. Her research has found that we need to embrace our vulnerability in order to ‘Dare Greatly’, pursue our goals, connect with others and live more fully (Brown, 2015). The participants did not express great confidence in themselves and mentioned situations in which they feel their lack of confidence. These areas were closely related to the challenges they had mentioned earlier in their interviews.

4.4.7 Summary

From the pre-coaching interviews, it was deduced that none of the participants had ever been life coached before, but they all had a general idea of what a life coach is and what the relationship entails. From the literature, life coaching is defined as a *“form of psychotherapy that treats problems and boosts happiness by modifying emotions, behaviors and thoughts”* (“Cognitive Behavioural Therapy” 2019:1). The participants viewed the life coach as someone who could help them tackle obstacles and improve their lives, which are aligned with the definition of life coaching and the role of a life coach.

The participants displayed openness towards the experience and had general expectations of obtaining ‘help’ from the life coach and the experience.

All the participants had some type of support from their parents for their lives in general. However, they rated themselves relatively low in terms of how confident they felt in themselves and their abilities to tackle challenges that come up in their lives. The research gave the participant the opportunity to develop another supportive relationship with the life coach who could assist them in setting and achieving goals and overcoming challenges they were experiencing at the time.

4.5 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF DATA COLLECTED FROM JOURNAL ENTRIES

4.5.1 Introduction

During the life coaching process, which entailed the participants scheduling four life coaching sessions, one session every fortnight, over eight weeks, participants were required to submit journal entries after each session. The journal entries were guided using set questions, including:

- What did you learn in the session?
- How will this help you going forward?
- What went well?
- What did not go well?

- On a scale of 1 to 10, how confident do you feel that you have the skills to overcome any challenges and achieve your goals?

Participants were also given space to write down any additional feelings they wished to express after each session. These entries were to be submitted as soon after each session as possible. This section will present and analyse each participant's journal entries.

4.5.2 Data analysed from participant 1's (P1) journal entries

P1 attended sessions face-to-face and consistently every second week. All journal entries were submitted on time and in full. In the first session, she wrote that she learnt the following:

I learnt how to break down my goals such as for maths it is to increase my marks, and by breaking it into sections, I can see what I need to work on and how much it actually is to do. I also learnt that by being positive, there will be a positive outcome; this will help me with my confidence. I'll also be doing a mind map with my goals for maths and my other subjects as well as a goal sheet for my marks of my subject.

In session two, she learnt about talking with a friend who was “going down a bad path” as well as “awareness and validation” for herself and “being more confident”. In session three, she learnt how to spend time on things when she has limited time and using positive intentions to decrease her nervousness. In the final session, she learnt how to deal with anxiety and conflict. It is evident that she did learn something new after each session. She also noted that learning these things can help her with her anxiety, staying positive, not wasting time, not being as nervous, telling her friends how she feels, improving her marks, improving her self-confidence and remembering her goals to maintain motivation. This was aligned with the expectations she mentioned in her pre-coaching interview where she said, “I thought it could be a great chance to discover more things...how to do more things” and having someone to guide her in building her confidence and discovering more about herself. She also hoped to gain motivation, goal setting while building her confidence and ability to make friends.

When providing feedback about each session, she noted that the sessions went well, were interesting and that she was able to do most of the work set the session before. She also highlighted that she enjoyed learning about awareness and intention in session four. She did not find anything wrong with the sessions but recorded where she did not do actions set. When rating herself for the question, *“On a scale of 1 to 10 how confident do you feel that you have the skills to overcome any challenges and achieve your goals?”* she rated herself an eight for the first three sessions and a nine for her final session. **P1** also added that she felt very motivated after session two.

From her journal entries, the researcher was able to determine that this participant did learn a lot in each session and that her confidence to overcome challenges and reach her goals, as rated by herself, had improved.

4.5.3 Data analysed from participant 2 (P2) journal entries

P2 conducted all of her life coaching sessions via a WhatsApp call and submitted all of her journal entries on time and in full. From her journal entries, **P2** noted that she learnt, *“Better solutions and ideas that could help with my stress when it comes to studying and with my distractions with studying”* in session one. In session two, she learnt how to improve her weight loss, and that is was *“realistically achievable”*. She also learnt how to motivate herself to keep working towards her goals as they give her *“positive feelings”* and to keep motivating herself, ask herself questions in her free time to lift her stress, doing things like packing her school bag earlier to reduce stress and avoid forgetting something important in session three and four respectively.

She was able to connect what she learnt with how it would help her in her life by noting that it gave her a better perspective on what to do. It made her feel motivated to do it, making losing weight a lifestyle, maintaining motivation and sticking with the tips she learnt to help her carry on achieving her goals. This was aligned with her expectations, where she stated that she hoped to gain *“better and easier ways to tackle situations”* that she had not thought of before.

When assessing each session, she wrote that the solutions the life coach presented were not things she had ever thought of, such as with regard to her academics and marks. She implemented the suggestions from the coach and was successful in between sessions as

well as in the final session where she achieved her weight loss goal. She wrote that each session went well.

When rating herself for the question, *“On a scale of 1 to 10 how confident do you feel that you have the skills to overcome any challenges and achieve your goals?”* she rated herself an eight in session one, a nine in session two, a ten in session three and ten in session 4. She also added an additional note at the end of session four, *“These life coaching sessions has really improved balance in my life, and more students should do these sessions as it really helps improve things in one’s life. I’m grateful I had this opportunity”*.

P2 learnt a lot from the sessions and was able to apply what she learnt successfully into her life. She achieved numerous goals during the coaching process, and her confidence improved from an eight to ten, as rated by herself. She expressed her positive experience and opinion of the life coaching process.

4.5.4 Data analysed from Participant 3’s (P3) journal entries

P3 conducted all of her life coaching sessions via a WhatsApp call and submitted all of her journal entries in full. She submitted her second journal entry late. **P3** mentioned the following things that she learnt from the life coaching sessions:

- New approaches that she would do and see if they were effective.
- How to cope with stress, internally and externally.
- Strategies for balancing school and personal life.
- Way of processing issues before reacting to them.
- Using time wisely and to her advantage.
- Setting an intention for each day.
- How to feel better, physically and emotionally.
- To not be so hard on herself and do what she can with the time she has.
- Four quadrants of time and how to apply it to her life.

She wrote that learning these things will help her to not over-analyse every detail, to reduce her stress by focusing on *“one step at a time”* and *“planning”* in order to *“have enough time to complete whatever is due”*. She also wrote about the strategies she tried and that some were not effective for her, but she was open to trying new approaches. The expectations **P3**

had ahead of the process included, *“I want to be positive in my mind about the future. I don’t want to be stuck in today the whole time”* and that she would like help with *“Motivation and looking at something from a different perspective so you don’t only see challenges, but you also see the opportunities because that is what I struggle with. I only see the bad and not the good”*. Her expectations and lessons learnt were not exact but indirectly aligned.

P3 noted that the following went well from the sessions:

- Easy to listen to the life coach.
- Advice from someone she does not know gave her a new perspective.
- Getting questions answered.
- Gaining a view on what to do.
- Tips on how to manage time and studies proactively.
- Finding more balance between school and personal life.
- Discovering solutions to problems, she experiences.
- Things from previous sessions were working well for her.

P3 did not mention too many things not going well from the sessions except that she found it difficult to remember to repeat a mantra every morning to cheer herself up.

When rating herself for the question, *“On a scale of 1 to 10 how confident do you feel that you have the skills to overcome any challenges and achieve your goals?”* she rated herself a five in session one, a seven in session two, an eight in session three and nine in session four. She also added an additional note at the end of session two and four:

I apologize for the late journal entry. I will make sure to double send the journal entry for the next session. Thank you again for this amazing opportunity.

Thank you for the opportunity.

P3 did learn a lot from the life coaching process and was able to implement some of the strategies into her life. She found some strategies less useful but remained open to try new approaches. She achieved success towards session three and four, where she noted that the things discussed in the previous session were working for her and that she was finding balance and getting the advice, she wanted. Her confidence, as rated by herself, improved

significantly from a five in session one to nine in session four. This is a positive result as she is expressing increased confidence in her ability to handle challenges and achieve her goals.

4.5.5 Data analysed from Participant 4's (P4) journal entries

P4 completed all four of her life coaching sessions over WhatsApp calls. She submitted her journal entries in full and on time. From her entries, she noted that she learnt how to set goals for herself by using a vision board and writing down the marks she wanted to achieve by the end of the term, year and Grade 12. She also learnt different study methods, such as using mind maps and colours when writing her notes. She learnt how to motivate herself when studying, to celebrate when she achieves what she has set out to achieve, how to make time for herself to read and the four quadrants of time management. She wrote that these lessons would help her with her studies, help her to stay motivated and reach her goals, *“study with confidence”* and do what she needs to do, complete important things first and *“finish reading her books”*.

P4 found every session to have gone well and found nothing wrong with the sessions and nothing that needed to improve the sessions.

When rating herself for the question, *“On a scale of 1 to 10 how confident do you feel that you have the skills to overcome any challenges and achieve your goals?”* she rated herself an eight in session one, two and four and nine in session three. She also added the following additional notes at the end of each journal entry:

1st session of life coaching went really well.

Today was a great session.

Having an amazing life coaching experience so far.

This was a great life coaching experience.

P4 wanted to experience life coaching because she had never done it before and because a friend had experienced life coaching and told her, it was a good experience. **P4** wanted to see how it would benefit her. She also wanted a space to *“...say things that I can't say to my parents because there are certain things I won't tell my parents because I am scared like sometimes they are strict so some of the stuff I can't say so I feel if I come to life coaching*

and ask for advice, it will be better so I would get the advice I need". From what she was expecting, her journal entries indicate that her expectations were met and possibly exceeded as she learnt a lot from each session and noted her positive experience of life coaching.

4.5.6 Data analysed from Participant 5's (P5) journal entries

P5 completed her first two sessions face-to-face and then due to holiday and her examinations; she completed her last two sessions over WhatsApp called in the last two weeks of the study. She submitted all four of her journal entries in full. **P5** wrote that she learnt how to break down a situation and go over it to see the cause and problem more clearly and how to fix it. Lessons included that she needs to *"start preparing in advance and organise everything beforehand"*, how to set triggers to remind herself to say positive things about how her day will go, how to use her spare time more effectively and the four quadrants of time. She identified that the things she learnt that would help her breakdown activities to see their importance and urgency. It would help her with exams, improving her mood and how she views her day, help her with reducing stress and managing exam and studying times and how to deal with and *"read certain situations"*.

P5 was encouraged to participate by her mother, who had considered going to a life coach herself. **P5** wanted to be able to gain more balance in her life, and she wanted *"a more positive life, so if I can try and find a more positive mindset"*. She also said, *"My family situation is quite bad, so if I could try and change that and my understanding of that. My Mom and I have quite a lot of fights, so for that to be more calm"*. When analysing her journal entries and expectations of life coaching, one can deduce that she did learn more than she expected and that she was able to work on finding a more positive mindset.

When answering what went well, **P5** noted that she learnt a lot in each session and was able to look at situations in different ways. She found session two especially positive, motivating and helpful. She did not make a note of anything not having gone well or needing improvement in the sessions.

When rating herself for the question, *"On a scale of 1 to 10 how confident do you feel that you have the skills to overcome any challenges and achieve your goals?"* she rated herself a six in session one, an eight in two and three and nine in session four. She also added the

following additional notes at the end of journal entry two, *“It’s helping a lot with being more positive and it’s helping better my moods and relationships with certain people”*.

From her journal entries, **P5** had a positive life coaching experience, learnt a lot and was able to achieve success in terms of being more positive, bettering her moods and managing her time and stress with her school work.

4.5.7 Summary

The journal entries proved to be a useful source of data regarding the participant’s experience of each life coaching session. Every participant was able to learn something from each session and positively related these lessons to their effectiveness and applicability in their lives. This supports Kerryn Griffiths (2005) research that life coaching could be used as a *“model for active, collaborative, authentic and engaging learning that courageously challenges and moves beyond more conventional transmission models of learning”* (2005:55). She also mentions that a core competency of a life coach (as defined by the International Coach Federation (2004)) is to facilitate learning and development in the person being coached. This short life coaching experience was able to teach the five participants numerous things that they were able to identify and derive value from, and this supports the idea of using life coaching in educational contexts to assist in improved learning.

Passmore and Brown (2009) found that life coaching helped learners improve their examination results. While this study was not extensive enough, two of the participants defined improving their academic performance as goals to achieve and were able to improve their academic results through the life coaching process.

The participants provided many positive reviews of the life coaching sessions. They did not find fault with any of the sessions, but rather wanted improvements in terms of their own behaviour in between sessions. This could be because the participants had never experienced life coaching before and therefore have no frame of reference to compare the sessions in order to criticise the sessions. The participant may also have misinterpreted the question to mean what could have gone better for them as opposed to what could have been better with the actual life coaching session. However, Petrucelli and Bodnar (2016:4) note that in order for life coaching to be successful, a *“trusting relationship and connection”*

must exist between the coach and the individual being coached. Each participant experienced a degree of success through the process, meaning that this trusting relationship was established, resulting in a more positive experience of the life coaching process.

Each participant's rating of their confidence in themselves to handle challenges and achieve their goals improved over the four life coaching sessions. This shows the usefulness of life coaching but also shows that it is a process that requires time to benefit the person receiving life coaching. Some participants did experience improvements immediately from the first session, whereas others needed a bit more time to reap the full benefits of the life coaching process. Our rapidly changing world continues to increase the number of challenges learners' face, which means they will always have to deal with a variety of challenges. Devine, Meyers and Houssemand purported that educational institutions need to *"provide young people with the skills and competencies needed to succeed and flourish in this rapidly changing world"* (2013:1383). This opens the opportunity for educational institutions to implement life coaching to help support their learner to overcome challenges in their lives better, therefore, empowering them to succeed both within the educational institution and in their lives a whole.

4.6 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF DATA COLLECTED FROM POST-COACHING INTERVIEWS

4.6.1 Introduction

This section will include the data collected during the post-coaching interviews and will be presented according to the questions asked and themes identified from the interviews. Inductive data analysis will once again be used (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). The data is presented using quotations from the participant's interviews and then interpreting these to answer the research questions. The data presented will be analysed. The interviews were, again, held at a neutral location to ensure the participant's safety as well as to ensure participants were comfortable enough to answer openly and honestly. Each interview was recorded and transcribed for analysis.

4.6.2 Data regarding participant's overall experience of life coaching

Each participant was asked to describe their overall experience of life coaching as well as the high and low points they experienced during life coaching. **P1** stated that she *“enjoyed it”* and found that certain things improved her self-confidence and that the life coach gave her techniques to use when she felt insecure, and she grew as a person. She also discovered ways of going about improving her math by spending extra time on it. She tried everything that the life coach gave her, and she enjoyed learning through the process. For her, the high point was going to a place by herself. She stated that this gave her the confidence to do more things on her own. Her low point was when she did not obtain the math mark she was hoping for after putting in the extra effort. For **P1**, she felt that she was more confident after the life coaching experience. She was able to start conversations with people in her group of friends, drawing them closer together and resulting in her going out with them more and feeling *“more comfortable”* with the group. The researcher also noticed an improvement in **P1**'s confidence and ability to communicate compared to the pre-coaching interview.

P2 described the experience as *“great”* and stated that it *“gave me a new way of how to handle my life”*. She noted that she felt less stress and that life coaching helped make her life easier because she was able to reduce stress and do what she needed to do instead of postponing it. For her, the high point was the tips the life coach gave her that made her life easier to achieve goals. These tips included being told to keep a vision board where she studies to keep herself motivated. She also found that the life coach helped her to see things is a new way and not in a stressful way, and she noted that she would continue to use the tips she learnt. **P2** expressed that the life coach encouraged her to see a way to overcome her challenges and helped her mindset and what she was thinking. **P2** did not express any low points with the life coaching process.

P3 expressed that she did not think she was going to get much out of the experience. However, after the first session, she got strategies that helped her with her studies and that her marks have improved through life coaching. These strategies included studying methods, ways of reducing stress, avoiding overcomplicating things and going over her notes when she is in the car or standing in a queue. For **P3**, the highest point was the *“balance between my personal life and my school life”*. What she meant by this was that she was able to make time for her studies as well as her personal life. She discovered what was

important and used the four quadrants of time management to know what to do each day and prevent herself from experiencing stress. The low points **P3** discussed were the strategies that did not work for her but that she was able to adapt, with the help of the life coach, to suit her better.

P4 said that it “*was really amazing actually*” and that she learnt a lot through her first life coaching experience and would consider doing it again. She added that she learnt a lot and that the life coach gave her advice that she was able to use. This included how to manage her time, how to motivate herself, how to do what she must and reward herself for taking action, and how to learn to enjoy reading and make time to read. **P4** expressed that everything was the high point for her and that the more she attended sessions that she really liked it because she was able to apply what she learnt from the life coach to achieve her goals and that she could use these lessons in the future. She was happy that she had already achieved her goals through the life coaching process. She did not feel that there were any low points.

P5 found the experience to be different from what she had initially thought because she thought life coaching would help her get through “*small things, but it was much bigger*”. It helped her find small time gaps to manage school and herself, and it helped her a lot. She expressed that it was a better outcome than she was expecting because it was about moving forward and improving things in her life. The high points of the experience for **P5** included time management principles where she can use her mind maps to revise her school work when she has gaps in her day and that she can do a lot in five minutes. She did not mention any low point because she really did enjoy the process.

From the data collected, it is evident that each participant had a very positive experience going through life coaching. They were open to the experience beforehand and did expect a good outcome, as identified from their pre-coaching interviews. However, two participants mentioned that the life coaching experience was not what they expected and was actually much more or more helpful than they initially thought. The participants expressed that they learnt a lot, especially with regard to strategies that they can use in their daily lives to help deal with challenges in school and life. Life coaching was effective in motivating each participant to set goals and work towards achieving these goals in a variety of ways.

Each participant was able to identify numerous benefits of life coaching, including reduce stress, improve time management, improved self-confidence and improved ability to overcome challenges. Two participants focused on improving their academic results and achieved this through the process. All the participants experienced some degree of success during the process by setting and achieving goals with the life coach. All participants enjoyed the advice and tips they received from the life coach. Not every tip or strategy worked, but they learnt that they could adjust these or try new approaches that did work for them.

4.6.3 Data regarding participant's feelings about their ability to deal with challenges in their own lives

In the pre-coaching interview each participant was asked *"On a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being not well at all and 10 being very well, how well do you deal with challenges in your life?"* and each participant rated themselves. This question was asked again to note any changes in the participants' rating of their own abilities to deal with challenges after they had been life coached.

In the pre-coaching interview, **P2** rated herself a five out of ten but noted that it *"has to depend on the challenge for me to see how I am going to do it"*. She said that she was good at *"logical type of thinking because you have all your facts right there, so it is easy to get through. But, the non-logical one I struggle with because you have to start taking other people's opinions"*. In her post-coaching interview, **P2** rated herself a 10 but stated that she could not explain exactly why and said: *"going through this experience it has helped me overcome all those levels that I needed to get through...we just go through it all"*.

P4 rated herself six out of ten, and her reasons were, *"because when I am faced with the challenge, I don't panic...I try to go through it, and I try to overcome that challenge. I try my best"*. When asked this question again in the post-coaching interview, she responded by rating herself a seven and said, *"That's good. I have improved from before, and I have become better and more confident right now, and things are becoming easier. I don't have a lot of stress on me. I'm more calm"*.

P3 gave herself a four out of ten. She mentioned, *"...I don't know how to deal with the challenges because I get so frustrated because I can't do something or I don't get it right,*

and I get frustrated, and I get upset, and then I can't cope with it". In the post-coaching interview, she rated herself an 8 by saying that she is not a ten and that she did not think anybody could be but that she can "at least try and that is what life coaching also taught me. You can always try even though you don't see the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow just carry on walking and then you'll see it".

P5 gave herself an eight out of ten. She stated, *"...I can definitely deal with it and other things I definitely can't deal with it, but most of the time I do deal with it".* She went on further to describe, *"Not...if I am very stressed because I am very bad with at dealing with stress and pressure. If I am under pressure, I just break. But if it is something school wise I am very good at getting through all of it if I have a lot of things to do even though I am pressured I will have a breakdown, but then I will get through it and get everything done. And then social life I am very good at managing everything, so I do try and push through that.* In her post-coaching interview, she said, *"an eighth or a nine because it's the small things".* She went on to explain that the tips such as morning affirmations that the life coach gave her made her more positive and is helping her to deal with challenges. She felt that it would help her if she had any future challenges.

The significant improvement in the participant's rating showed that each participant felt more confident in their ability to handle challenges in their lives after they had gone through life coaching. Many of them attributed this to the tips and strategies that the life coach shared with them that they then went on to apply to their own lives in between each session. This is an important result because this research set out to determine how life coaching can influence female high school learners. As noted in the previous section, there are many benefits of life coaching for the participant's, including that it helped the participants to feel more confident in their own abilities to tackle challenges in their lives.

4.6.4 Data regarding participant's feelings about their confidence and how they changed through life coaching

In the pre-coaching interview, each participant was asked to rate how confident they felt in themselves and their abilities on a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being not confident and 10 being extremely confident. The same question was then asked again in the post-coaching interview to determine if there was any change in participant's confidence levels as rated by themselves.

P1 mentioned that is was dependent on the situation and that some days she could be a seven whereas other days two or three. She expressed that she felt less confident when talking to people and slightly more confident in her school career. In the post-coaching interview, she rated herself an eight and added, *“I’m happier. I’m able to just do things I want to do, and I feel better now”*. She added that she had changed through the life coaching process in terms of how shy she was before coaching and that during and after the coaching process she felt more confident in herself and that she had improved because was able to put up her hand in class.

P2 rated herself a three and stated that she was *“not really that confident”*. She further explained her rating by stating, *“...I like to stay in my comfort zone and I don’t really go out and that affects my confidence because I am scared I am going to do something that embarrasses me and then it will be stuck in my mind what happened and then it decreases my confidence level quite a lot”*. She felt that this level of confidence was the same in all areas of her life. In her post-coaching interview, she said it was a nine and feels much better and added, *“I feel like I can do anything with all of this new knowledge”*. She felt more confident in herself and her abilities.

P3 stated, *“Not very well. I would say a five or six”*. When asked why she responded, *“I am not a very confident person. I am very scared... I am also a very talkative person, so sometimes I talk and talk and I feel that I shouldn’t have said that”*. She also explained that she feels more confident around people that she knows and less confidence at school. She expressed confidence in her ability to play hockey. In her post-coaching interview, she rated herself a seven because she felt she would always have doubts, but because of the techniques she had learnt from life coaching, she felt she could just revise when exams approached reducing her stress levels. She added that her mom noticed a change in her and said that she was nicer because she was not as stressed and felt she was making more time for her personal life.

P5 was unsure at first and started on an eight and then said a seven or lower. *“My self-confidence is quite low especially if I get nervous then I am just very self-conscious and then I don’t want to do anything, and I don’t want to understand anything, so I block everything out”*. In the post-coaching interview she rated herself a nine because she has become a lot more confident implementing some of the techniques the life coach taught her, like saying ‘well done’ to herself and not needing other people to do this. In addition, she

also said that she had changed through the process and has become more determined to study, more positive and more balanced in her life, which she felt had helped her a lot.

P4 rated herself a seven in her post-coaching interview and said that it could still improve with life coaching. She also added that life coaching made her more confident and helped her to achieve her goals.

All five participants expressed that they felt an improved sense of confidence in themselves as well as their own abilities to overcome challenges that come up in their lives. Each participant expressed that they had changed in some way during the process and that all changes were positive and helpful to them. As with the previous question and data collected, this shows that there are multiple positive influences of life coaching for the female high school learner. It also showed that the participants had changed for the better through the life coaching process.

4.6.7 Data regarding participants description of life coaching and how it can fit into a learner's life

Each participant was asked the following questions about the life coaching process:

- If you had to describe to somebody what life coaching is, and what the benefits are, what would you say?
- How best do you think life coaching can work in a learner's life?
- Did you enjoy having it in your spare time or do you think it is something you should have at school as well?
- Would you want to continue with life coaching?

P1 described life coaching as *"...somebody to talk to that you can kind of get different ideas of ways of doing something and going from where you are now to where you want to be and...that the main benefit is to build yourself more and become better"*. **P1** felt that if it were offered in school, it would be a good idea but that it worked well in her spare time. When asked how it would best fit in a student's life, she replied, *"it would help because you'd learn how to properly organise things and have different ideas...it would be better to have that in your life because it just helps a lot"*. **P2** stated that she would definitely want to continue with coaching because she could continue to learn new things to get over her struggles. She

found it easy to fit life coaching into her schedule, and she found having sessions over the phone to be convenient. **P2** added that it is helpful in your spare time but that it could also help at school where you have more stress. She stated, *“it really helped and would really help us overcome all our stress”*. When describing life coaching and its benefits, **P2** said, *“...life coaching is a new way that they help you to overcome your struggles to achieve your goals and the benefits of it is that it gives you easier and more achievable ways of doing things. Those achievable things are way up there. With it, it is in your boundary and works for you, not against you”*. **P2** also said she would recommend it to others and felt it came at a perfect time with her being in Grade 11 where she was experiencing greater stress and also before exams.

P3 described life coaching as, *“you need to know what your challenges are because life coaching isn’t you talk to someone and they help you through it. It is you talk to someone, and they give you ways to get through it. She gave me so many ways of overcoming things”*. She added that her mom would like her to continue and that she would as well. **P3** added that *“You need that person from the outside that doesn’t know you personally and also doesn’t know anything about you to listen to what you are struggling with and give you an opinion and just talk to you”*. She found life coaching worked well in her spare time and over the phone.

P4 said that she would want to continue with life coaching but not right away. She would continue, she came across any problems or when she wants to achieve something else or just to talk to someone. She added that it was convenient over the phone and in her spare time but that, it could work in school because of the challenges that learners experience at school and that then learners could access the life coach when they need it. She described life coaching as, *“...you become a better person when you do life coaching, and it will help you grow and overcome challenges and achieve your goals. Life coaching helps with your life. It is there to help you...to achieve what you want to achieve in the future or fi problems in your life”*.

P5 did want to continue with life coaching and found that it fitted in her schedule well until it got closer to exam time. She completed sessions over the phone and face-to-face, and as much as she prefers to speak with someone face-to-face, she found the session over the phone convenient and quick. **P5’s** thought it could benefit students if it were part of school because she did not know about time management and other segments that were dealt with

in the life coaching and that if it were offered at school a lot of other people would benefit from it. When describing life coaching, she said, *“...it could help get over certain things that you are going through, and if you want to set a goal then it could help you overcome that. It depends on how much time you have or how many sessions you go to, and it would help you be a lot more positive, and a few little small tips can really change...if you did that it could help a lot”*. **P5** found it hard to define but said, *“...kind of like a course, but it’s going to someone, and then they give you small little tips to help you overcome something, so you have to do it yourself...it is just someone who directs you, even though you know what to do, she just directs you to your goal”*.

Each participant had a slightly different view of what life coaching is based on their subjective experience of the life coaching process. They also expressed the common idea of someone who helps them to overcome challenges, achieve their goals and learn new things. They all managed to incorporate life coaching into the day but felt it could benefit learners if it were offered at school. Both face-to-face and over the phone sessions were accepted and found not to hinder the life coaching process in any way.

All five participants would recommend life coaching to other learners and expressed its value in their lives as female high school learners. Participants expressed that life coaching was effective when conducted face-to-face and over the phone. Some participants preferred face-to-face as a personal preference but noted that coaching was just as effective telephonically. Other participants emphasised the convenience of being life coached over the phone as they did not need to rely on others to transport them to and from sessions and could fit life coaching easily into their individual schedules.

4.6.8 Data regarding what participants feel could have improved the experience

The participants were asked what could have improved the experience for them. **P5** replied that she enjoyed the process and could not think of anything to improve the experience. **P3** responded that it would have been better if it was longer with more sessions and the opportunity to set more goals. **P2** found the life coaching experience *“perfect”* and that it was *“just right”*.

It was clear that each participant had a more positive experience and gained a lot from the life coaching process. None of the participants had ever experienced life coaching before.

They thus had no point of reference for which to compare the experience with and this could have resulted in them being unable to identify was the life coaching could have been improved for them. If they were to experience more coaching or had experienced it before this study, they might have been in a more credible position to answer the question asked.

4.6.9 Summary

The post-coaching interviews were extremely positive, and each participant expressed their satisfaction with the life coaching process. Every participant learnt a lot from the life coach and was open to applying these lessons into their lives. Elena Aguilar (2013:6) found in her research that *“coaching at its essence is the way that human beings, and individuals have always learned best”*. Therefore, life coaching was a valuable way for the participants to learn new things that they could then use in their lives to reach their goals, overcome obstacles and experience more well-being.

Each participant experienced some level of success with regard to the goals they set. The participant’s stated numerous benefits they felt they gained through the life coaching process including, reduced stress levels, better understanding of themselves, more positive mindsets, and practical strategies that they could use in their daily lives. It was evident that each participant experienced some degree of change in themselves.

The participants spoke about having increased levels of motivation, and this is aligned with the definition of a life coach as defined by Kirdök and Harman (2018) where they state that *“A relationship with a life coach can be encouraging, empowering and transformational...”*. The idea of life coaching as a transformative process is also important to note because each participant experienced some change in themselves and their lives as a result of going through the four life coaching sessions.

They all experienced increased levels of self-confidence and confidence in their abilities to deal with challenges in their lives. It is noted in the literature review that this period in a person’s life is characterised by *“tumultuous transitions and difficult life experiences...”* (Berger, 2014:91) which can be perceived as a challenge in the life of a learner and cause a lot of stress. Stress is further increased by the *“considerable pressure to perform well academically as performance at high school impacts of university and future career prospects”* (Green, Grant & Rynsaardt, 2007:25). While every learner has different

obstacles and challenges to deal with, it was evident from the data collected that all the participants felt more confident in their own abilities to overcome these various challenges. This is supported by Jessica Rae Berger (2014) who found that *“life coaching for adolescents has become an increasingly popular pathway towards supporting teens in overcoming obstacles, maximizing potential and improving overall well-being”* (Berger, 2014:91). The results from the research support the idea that life coaching can support learners and help them become more resilient and better able to tackle the challenges in their own lives.

When asked to define what life coaching was, they were able to identify that it was a relationship where the life coach helps and supports them in achieving goals and overcoming challenges.

Again, they were not able to critically evaluate the life coach and the life coaching sessions, and this could be due to the fact that none of the participants had ever experienced life coaching before. However, it is important to note that this could be because the life coaching process met the characteristics of “an efficient coaching process” as defined by Ellis (2008 as cited in Jarosz, 2016), including having an objective, being goal-direct, client-centred and rooted in the present while focusing on the future.

There were no significant differences noted in terms of having the life coaching sessions face-to-face or over the phone, and each participant was easily able to fit life coaching into their current schedules. All the participants recommended life coaching for other learners and found it to be a helpful tool in their own lives.

4.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter explained the research process that was followed, as well as the methods and instruments that were used to collect the research data. It is also dealt with the positive aspects that were experienced during the research process and the various challenges that were experienced. This chapter presented and analysed the data that was collected from the pre-coaching and post-coaching interviews as well as the journal entries submitted by each of the five participants. Quotations and the language used by participants were used to ensure the trustworthiness of the research and to convey each participant’s actual meaning and experience of life coaching.

The data was coded beforehand and presented as headings in this chapter. After the data was presented and analysed, it was interpreted to answer the research questions set at the beginning of the research. The research questions below were presented and answered in the data analysis and interpretation above.

- What is life coaching?
- What is the learner's understanding of life coaching before being coached?
- What is the learner's overall perception of life coaching after being coached?
- How has the learner changed, if at all, since the outset of life coaching?

In conclusion, it was found that life coaching was a positive experience for female high school learners in a selected school in Gauteng Province and that each participant gained multiple benefits from going through the four life coaching sessions. Life coaching can be a very beneficial tool that learners could greatly benefit from having while they navigate their way through adolescence and the various challenges they face during their school career.

In the next chapter, chapter 5, the findings will be discussed, conclusions will be drawn, and the research is summarised. Recommendations will also be made in chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE STUDY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the data collected from the research were presented and interpreted. This chapter focuses on presenting a summary of the research as well as the findings and recommendations of the study. The main aim of the research was to investigate **how life coaching positively influenced female high school learners at a school in Gauteng Province**. The sub-aims of their research included:

- to define life coaching relevant to a school context;
- to investigate learners' understanding of life coaching before being coached;
- to determine learner's overall perception of life coaching after being coached;
- to investigate how has the learner changed, if at all, through the life coaching experience process.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH

This study focused on how life coaching could influence female high school learners as they navigate through adolescence and the demands and pressures this stage of their lives brings. The focus of the research was to determine if having a life coach while in school is beneficial and how it could be practically implemented into a school. An overview of the study was provided in chapter 1. This chapter introduced the concept of life coaching and how it has evolved from coaching predominantly provided in sports into a variety of different types of coaching (cf.par.1.1). It gave background information on life coaching as a profession, the benefits that have already been discovered through research as well as the components that ensure its effectiveness (cf.par.1.1). While considering the challenges that our learners in high school currently face as they deal with their school career, a rapidly changing workplace as well as the normal adolescent struggled it, led to the researcher asking: *how does life coaching influence female high school learners in an independent school in Gauteng Province?*

The research was further sub-divided into four sub-questions (cf.par.1.3.1):

- What is life coaching?
- What is the learner's understanding of life coaching before being coached
- What is the learner's overall perception of life coaching after being coached?
- How has the learner changed, if at all, since the outset of life coaching?

The purpose of this research was also stated, which was to study the influence of life coaching on female high school learners by conducting a small, in-depth case study using action research. This was done by placing five female high school learners with a life coach to attend four life coaching sessions over eight weeks (cf.par.1.3.2).

Chapter 2 provided a detailed literature study on life coaching as a profession and its effects on those being coached. The chapter defined life coaching (cf.par.2.2) and defined the key components that ensure life coaching is effective (cf.par.2.3) as well as any hindrances to the process (cf.par.2.4). A growing volume of research is available on the multiple benefits of life coaching in all the fields in which it is applied including helping adolescents (cf.par.2.5), as a tool for professional development (cf.par.2.7), as an aid to learning (cf.par.2.5) and in teacher development (cf.par.2.8). The chapter concluded that life coaching has many noted benefits. It may help learners develop more resilience enabling them to deal more effectively with challenges that they face during their school career in areas such as academic performance, examination writing, and career choices as well as challenges they may face later in life in the workplace and in their personal lives. Life coaching may also be able to teach learners useful stress management techniques and aid them in learning (cf.par.2.10).

Chapter 3 discussed the research design and methodology that was used in this study. For this study, qualitative research was used in order to obtain participants personal accounts of the experience of life coaching (cf.par.3.2.1). The approach used was a case study using action research (cf.par.3.2.2). The researcher explains why this method was selected to collect, process and evaluate the data. This study made use of semi-structured interviews and journal entries using open-ended questions to collect the data from the participant's experience of the life coaching experience. The life coaching experience was described in detail (cf.par.3.2.2.1). This chapter outlined how the data would be presented and analysed (cf.par.3.6) and discussed the strategies employed to ensure the trustworthiness of the research (cf.par.3.7) and how ethics were considered and upheld (cf.par.3.4).

Chapter 4 presented, analysed and interpreted the data collected from the study. The methods for collecting the data were discussed (cf.par.4.2.2) as well as the challenges (cf.par.4.2.3) and positive experiences (cf.par.4.2.4) experienced during the research process. The data was analysed and discussed by transcribing the interviews and then analysing the transcriptions together with the journal entries by coding the data into different categories and themes, later used as headings (cf.par.4.4, 4.5, 4.6). Verbatim quotations were used in the discussion to analyse participants' subjective experience of life coaching in their own words.

Chapter 5 summarises the study by including the findings related to the main research question and sub-research questions outlined in chapter 3. Recommendations will also be discussed in this chapter.

5.3 FINDINGS FROM THE STUDY

5.3.1 Introduction

The findings of the study will be discussed based on the literature review and data that was collected, analysed and interpreted. The findings will be discussed according to the sub-research questions outlined above.

5.3.2 Findings with regard to sub-research question one: what is life coaching?

This research question aimed to define what life coaching is based on existing literature. Multiple definitions have been used. However, the essence of what life coaching entails remained similar across the various definitions. Life coaching focuses on adapting, modifying and changing an individual's behaviour, thoughts and emotions in order to help them find solutions to problems they are experiencing, achieve goals to reach their fullest potential, learn and develop, and experience greater life success and satisfaction (cf.par.2.2). Certain elements must be present for life coaching to be effective (cf.par.2.3) including a relationship of trust, a focus on goals, focus on solutions and the client as a whole. It should be flexible in its approach and adaptable to the individual being coached. It is important that the life coach provides a safe space for the person being coached, specifically the learners, in this case, to enable them to be open to sharing their own feelings and vulnerabilities.

Life coaching has been found to help learners improve their academic results, reduce stress levels and cope better in general with the challenges they experience during their education career (cf.par.2.5). It has also been found to assist them in making decisions based on their futures and careers. Life coaching has been used as a tool to help individuals develop professionally (cf.par.2.7) as well as an aid to learning in a variety of contexts (cf.par.2.6).

In conclusion, an exact definition of life coaching does not exist, but a variety of definitions points to a similar concept of life coaching as a process entailing adapting, modifying and changing an individual's behaviour, thoughts and emotions in order to help them find solutions to problems they are experiencing, achieve goals to reach their fullest potential, learn and develop, and experience greater life success and satisfaction (cf.par.2.2). The essence of life coaching, in an educational context, is that it is a process where a life coach empowers a student to understand, identify and rectify any attitude, behaviours or thinking that may be causing problems in the student's life. The life coach uses questions to help the student explore their own minds and create the change and results they desire. Life coaching is more easily defined after one has experienced it for themselves.

5.3.3 Findings with regard to sub-research question two: what is the learner's understanding of life coaching before being coached?

The second sub-research question was used to gauge each participant's understanding of and background into life coaching before experiencing the life coaching process. This was done to determine if the participants had experienced coaching before and to identify their expectations before beginning the research.

It was found that none of the participants had experienced life coaching before this study (cf.par.4.4.2). However, each participant had an understanding of what life coaching is and what it entails. The common understanding that emerged amongst the participants was that of someone helping the participants to better their lives. This including someone helping them to be the best they could be and helping them manage everything in their life at that point. Participants also mentioned that they received help with decision-making and goal setting and that a life coach is someone who advises on how to tackle situations, overcome issues and help you find solutions (cf.par.4.4.2).

It was also found that all the participants had positive expectations for the life coaching experience (cf.par.4.4.5). The participants were expecting to gain more balance in their lives, improve their family situations, become more positive and future-focused, gain increased motivation, and gain new perspectives on their current situations. In addition to these expectations, the participants expected to get advice to tackle challenges, have someone who did not know them to speak more openly and to discover how to do more things.

In conclusion, none of the participants had any prior experience of life coaching before being part of this study. However, they all expressed a knowledgeable idea about what life coaching is and what it entails. Each participant expressed positive expectations for the experience and hoped to gain something of benefit out of the experience before it began. These positive expectations and learners' openness to the life coaching experience may have made them more engaged and active in the life coaching process, which is a key component of effective life coaching. This could have added to the positive outcomes every learner experienced.

5.3.4 Findings with regard to sub-research question three: what is the learner's overall perception of life coaching after being coached?

The third sub-research question made up an integral part of the research by identifying how the participants experienced life coaching and their resulting perception of the process as a tool in their own lives.

Each participant expressed that they enjoyed the life coaching experience and gained more than they expected to gain through the experience (cf.par.4.6.2). A common finding was that each participant gained a lot of knowledge from the life coach in the form of tips and strategies that they could use in their daily lives to help them overcome challenges, achieve their goals and feel better in themselves. Time management lessons that were taught were amongst the most spoken about by the participants. They enjoyed learning how to manage their time and found it easy to apply the lessons taught by the life coaching into their lives. Two participants spoke about improving balance in their lives by being able to manage their time better. Two participants were able to use their time more wisely to study more effectively and improve their academic results.

The participants' experience of life coaching was a positive one, and this was identified by their positive feedback regarding their improved self-confidence in themselves as well as their abilities to handle challenges in their own lives. The participants noted that they had discovered new ways to tackle challenges in their lives, develop more positive mindsets and gain increased motivation (cf.par.4.6.2).

Participants expressed that life coaching was effective when conducted face-to-face and over the phone. Some participants preferred face-to-face as a personal preference but noted that coaching was just as effective telephonically. Other participants emphasised the convenience of being life coached over the phone as they did not need to rely on others to transport them to and from sessions and could fit life coaching easily into their individual schedules.

After the life coaching experience, participants defined a life coach as a person whom they can talk to who gives them advice to overcome challenges, achieve their goals and learn new ways of doing things which helps them reduce their stress, increase their self-belief and discover solutions for themselves as well (cf.par.4.6.7). They perceived the life coaching process as one that helps them become a better person and achieve what they want to achieve. The participants recommended life coaching to others and expressed that they felt it would be a valuable tool for other learners.

In conclusion, the participants had a positive experience of life coaching. They did have positive expectations of life coaching from the beginning, but these expectations were surpassed. Every participant expressed many personal benefits or gains from the life coaching experience and stated that they would recommend it to other learners. The participants did not express a preference for life coaching face-to-face or telephonically but mentioned that telephonically was more convenient.

5.3.5 Findings with regard to sub-research question four: how has the learner changed, if at all, since the outset of life coaching?

Sub-research question 4 was focused on how the learner changed through the life coaching process if they changed at all. This question was used to determine how effective life coaching is in helping learners to change for the better.

Every participant expressed that their confidence in their ability to handle challenges in their own lives improved from the beginning of the experience, in between coaching sessions and after the completion of the life coaching experience. The participants also expressed an increase in their self-confidence and their ability to reach their goals (cf.par.4.6.3 and 4.6.4).

These changes were further noted when participants described what had improved in their lives from more positive attitudes, reduced stress levels, increased balance in their lives, and new perspectives when looking at their lives and problems.

In conclusion, it was found that every participant did change to some degree through the life coaching experience. These changes include changes in mindset, attitude, motivation, thinking, as well as increased self-confidence, increased confidence in handling challenges and increased balance in their lives. Each participant learnt new things and tried to apply these lessons into their lives. Some new lessons worked while others required slight changes to suit the respective participant. However, each participant showed an openness to life coaching, and this enabled them to experience positive change in their lives over the four life coaching sessions.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE STUDY

5.4.1 Introduction

The main focus of this study was to determine how life coaching influenced female high school learners in an independent school in Gauteng Province. Furthermore, the study aimed to determine learners understanding and perception of life coaching, before and after going through life coaching experience, how learners experienced life coaching and how learners may have changed through the life coaching process if they changed at all.

After discussing the findings collected from the data gathered from the qualitative case study using semi-structured interviews and journal entries, recommendations can now be proposed suggesting that the main focus of the study has been achieved, in determining 'how life coaching influences female high school learners in an independent school in Gauteng Province.'

5.4.2 Recommendations with regard to sub-research question one: what is life coaching?

Sub-research question one was aimed at clearly defining life coaching as a practice or tool (cf.par.1.3.1). From the volume of literature, numerous definitions were found with common ideas defining life coaching (cf.par.2.2). From the literature review and multiple definitions from a variety of sources, life coaching was defined as a process entailing adapting, modifying and changing an individual's behaviour, thoughts and emotions in order to help them find solutions to problems they are experiencing, achieve goals to reach their fullest potential, learn and develop, and experience greater life success and satisfaction.

Recommendation: Life coaching is a developing profession with multiple definitions. However, at the essence, it is about empowering people to make a change in their thoughts, beliefs, feelings and behaviours in order to achieve goals, overcome challenges and experience greater life satisfaction. The definition of life coaching is better understood once a person has experienced the process. This is true for most experiences. We can intellectually know what a doctor does, but we only really understand the process and benefits once we have experienced it for ourselves. Life coaches offer free sessions frequently, and it is recommended that learners use these opportunities to experience life coaching as a tool. This will ensure that learners know what it is, understand what it is and after experiencing it are able to define it for themselves and choose how best to use it to their benefit.

5.4.3 Recommendations with regard to sub-research question two: what is the learner's understanding of life coaching before being coached?

Sub-research question two was to identify learners understanding of life coaching before beginning the life coaching process (cf. par.1.3.1). The data revealed that learners may

have some understanding about life coaching but have not experienced it for themselves (cf. par.5.3.2).

Recommendation: Life coaching as a tool needs to be introduced to learners for them to learn about it and know that it is a tool that they can use in their lives. This will help learners to understand what it does and what it can offer them, which will give them a choice to use it should they need it. It is also beneficial for learners to know that there are people available to help them and that they do not need to struggle with challenges on their own. Once learners have a better understanding of what life coaching is and how it can work in their lives, they will be able to choose to make use of it as a support tool and will know how to gain maximum benefit, for themselves, from the process.

5.4.4 Recommendations with regard to sub-research question three: what is the learner's overall perception of life coaching after being coached?

Sub-research question three aimed at identifying learners' experience of life coaching and their perception after having experienced life coaching (cf.par.1.3.1). The data revealed numerous positive outcomes from the life coaching experience for the learners. Learners' expectations were exceeded after experiencing life coaching, and they had a positive perception of life coaching as a valuable tool that they could use in their lives and that other learners could also benefit from (cf.par.5.3.4).

Recommendation: Life coaching has been found to be a valuable and beneficial process that has many benefits for the person being life coached, especially for female high school learners. These benefits include reduced stress levels, improved academic performance, more positive mindset, increased self-confidence, new perspectives, increased confidence in own ability to overcome challenges as well as increased motivation in working towards achieving goals (cf.par.4.6.2-4.6.7).

Therefore, it is recommended that life coaching be made aware to all high school learners as a tool for helping them to overcome the many challenges they experience at this particular time in their lives. High school learners should be made aware of life coaching as a tool to improve their self-confidence and motivation. Also to help them achieve the success they desire and that life coaching be made accessible to all learners either in the school environment or as a partner to the school. This would enable learners to have

access to a life coach while at school and when needed. Life coaching can be easily implemented into a learner's life thanks to the improvements in technology. Learners can be life coached easily over the telephone, mobile phone, and internet using software such as Skype, FaceTime and Zoom calls. This makes it possible for all learners to have access to a life coach, irrespective of location or limits. It also means that life coaching can easily be scheduled to fit into a learner's life because of the convenience of not having to leave their location. This makes life coaching more convenient and accessible to more learners. In addition, even shorter experiences of life coaching can add benefit to learners, as seen in this research. The learners gained many benefits from only four life coaching sessions over eight weeks. However, more research would be required to determine how frequent life coaching should be and how long the duration of the process should be in order for learners to gain the maximum benefit.

5.4.6 Recommendations with regard to sub-research question four: how has the learner changed, if at all, since the outset of life coaching?

Sub-research question four focused on identifying how learners may have changed, if at all through the life coaching process (cf.par.1.3.1). The data revealed that learners do change through being life coaching in numerous ways. (It is important to note that all the participants in this study wanted to be coached and were open to being coached. therefore put in the effort necessary to change through the process.) These ways include increased self-confidence, increased motivation, increased confidence in own ability to overcome challenges, more positive mindset, new perspectives, better life balance and improved academic results (cf.par.4.6.3 and 4.6.4).

Recommendation: Life coaching is an effective tool that is able to help learners to change in order to create the results they want. Learners also experience a change in other ways that they may not have set out to change, such as changes in mindset, thinking, motivation and confidence. It is recommended that learners use life coaching as an effective support tool to help them learn more, set and achieve goals, overcome challenges and experience greater success and fulfilment in their lives. It is recommended that learners use life coaching to change their thinking in a way that benefits them. This includes reducing limiting and destructive thinking and increasing constructive, positive and empowering thinking that will benefit the learners in all areas of their lives. Life coaching can be used to help learners

to create the change they want to create in their lives in order to achieve the goals they want to achieve and feel the emotions they wish to experience.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

From the findings, it is evident that life coaching is a valuable tool that can add numerous benefits to the lives of female high school learners as they face the many challenges that their life stage, adolescence, presents (cf.par.2.1). The researcher contends that life coaching is a valuable tool that learners should have access to through their high school career in order to assist them in overcoming challenges, learning valuable lessons, setting and achieving goals, improving academic performance and improving resilience and mental attitudes to help them achieve greater success in school and their futures.

However, more research is required to determine how best life coaching could be made available to all high school learners in order for them to be able to access this valuable tool and how it would be financially viable for both the learners and schools. More research is also needed to determine if all learners would benefit from life coaching, even if they did not want to be coached, or if the value of life coaching depends largely on an individual's 'want' to be coached and effort put into the life coaching process. Additional research would also be required over a longer period to determine the optimum length of life coaching required for learners to gain the best benefit and whether or not it should be something they constantly use or only during certain periods in their lives.

Life coaching is a growing profession, and the volume of existing research has grown tremendously. Further research is required to refine how best life coaching could be implemented into a learners life, how long it would be needed for and how viable it could be if implemented directly into a school. Further research is also required into how all learners could have unlimited access to this resource and gain the benefit of being life coached.

5.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The research was limited to one independent school in Gauteng Province and five female learners aged 16-18 years of age. A qualitative case study approach was used due to the constraints of time and availability of the life coach. Additional limitations included, the

specific time of the year in which the life coaching process was conducted, the use of one female life coach and that only four life coaching sessions were held per learner.

The study was limited to only female high school students at one school in Benoni. The small sample size is also a limitation as generalised conclusions applicable to a larger demographic could not be drawn.

As an inexperienced interviewer, the interviews could have been conducted more effectively by asking more in-depth questions to gain greater details and by knowing the best questions to ask from responses given to gain deeper insights from each learner. The research was also limited by own experience, abilities, bias and assumptions that were addressed but could still limit the findings of this research.

5.7 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research was to identify how life coaching can influence female high school learners at an independent school in Gauteng Province. The aims included:

- defining life coaching relevant to a school context;
- investigating learner's understanding of life coaching before being coached;
- determining learner's overall perception of life coaching after being coached;
- investigating how has the learner changed, if at all, through the life coaching experience process.

The study revealed the following:

- Life coaching is a process entailing adapting, modifying and changing an individual's behaviour, thoughts and emotions in order to help them find solutions to problems they are experiencing, achieve goals to reach their fullest potential, learn and develop, and experience greater life success and satisfaction.
- Life coaching as a tool needs to be introduced to learners for them to learn about it and know that it is a tool that they can use in their lives.
- Life coaching is a valuable and beneficial process that has many benefits for female high school learners including reduced stress levels, improved academic performance, more positive mindset, increased self-confidence, new perspectives,

increased confidence in own ability to overcome challenges as well as increased motivation in working towards achieving goals.

- Life coaching is an effective tool that can help learners change in self-confidence and in confidence in their own ability to handle challenges in their lives.

Moving forward it would be good to see life coaching being implemented into learners' lives and schools giving more high school learners access to this valuable tool so that they too can experience the many benefits found from this study. This beneficial tool needs to be accessible for the learners in our country in order to help them overcome challenges and in doing so, help them to solve the challenges our country and our world face. If our learners are more confident in themselves and their abilities, if they are better able to set and achieve goals and if they can cultivate positive and successful mindsets, they will be more successful in life, contribute more to the world around them and experience greater levels of happiness and satisfaction. Berger stated that:

Coaching is an ideal pathway for maximizing adolescent well-being for a variety of reasons. First, adolescents who are turned off by the stigma of traditional therapy are increasingly attracted to coaching. Where “therapy as usual” often focuses on healing dysfunction and suffering, coaching appears to be a more appealing option because it focuses on leveraging strengths as opposed to diagnosing weaknesses. Second, the coach can act as an objective listener, supporter and accountability buddy (cf.par.2.1).

We continue to demand more of our young learners today than ever before, and we are preparing them for a world that is changing rapidly and a world that we do not know ourselves completely. In order to help prepare them properly so that they survive, thrive, and make this world more effective, we need to give them all the tools they need. This includes equipping them with a life coach who can help them in any area of their lives, from smaller personal areas to larger areas of contribution. With life coaching, we could better equip more of our learners to succeed and add exponential value to society.

More research needs to be done to determine how best life coaching can be implemented into a learner's life and how best it can be used by learners for them to gain the most benefit from it. This research will prove invaluable if we can give our learners a tool that offers them many benefits, helps them overcome challenges and problems and helps them to realise their full potential.

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LIST OF ANNEXURES

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Annexure B: Permission from the school principal

Annexure C: Letter requesting parental consent for minors to participate in in the research project

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Annexure A: Interview guide



INTERVIEW GUIDE

This interview guide will be used in a one-on-one setting. A tape recorder will be used to record the conversation, and handwritten notes will be taken as well. The interview will be approximately 60 minutes in duration.

PRE-COACHING INTERVIEW

1. What is your understanding of life coaching (LC)?
2. Explain any LC experiences you have had or experienced?
3. Describe the level of support you have in your life when dealing with any challenges?
4. What are the biggest problems or challenges you are dealing with in your life right now?
5. On a scale of 1 to 10, how prepared do you feel to tackle life's challenges? Why?
6. Why do you want to participate in this project?
7. What do you expect to gain from LC?
8. What issues would you like the LC to cover?
9. Is there anything I have not asked that you would like to share?

POST-COACHING INTERVIEW

1. Questions based on the individual journal entries will be asked.
2. Describe your overall experience of life coaching (LC).
3. What were the highlights of LC for you?
4. What were the low points of LC for you?
5. How did the LC meet/not meet your expectations?
6. What issue/challenge would you have liked us to cover that we did not?
7. Is there anything I did not ask that you would like to share?
8. How effective or ineffective did you find coaching in helping you achieve your goals and make decisions?

Annexure B: Permission from the school principal



DATE:

Woodlands International College

Principal

190 Leith Road

Bartlett AH

Boksburg

1462

011 894 5161 and malecc@woodlandscollege.co.za

Dear Mr C Van Niekerk

REQUESTING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT THE SCHOOL

I hereby request permission to conduct research at Woodlands International College.

The title of my research is: **Life coaching for female high school students: a case study**

I, Candice Preston, am doing research under the supervision of Professor Venitha Pillay in the Department of Education in Leadership and Management at the University of South Africa. The research towards a Master's degree. The title of my study is: Life Coaching for female high school students: a case study. I am seeking your permission to conduct this study at your college.

The aim of the study is to determine the influence of life coaching on a typical female high school student in South Africa. The objectives of this study are to investigate the students' perceptions of the life coaching process and to understand and identify how the students may have changed during the coaching process.

Your school has been selected because it is an independent school based in close proximity to both the researcher and the volunteer life coach. The life coach and myself and colleagues who attended the same certification training.

The study will entail inviting female high school schools in grade 10 or 11 during the 2019 school year to apply to participate in the research. Five participants will be selected. The participants will be interviewed for 60 minutes each, off school premises, both before and after the process of life coaching begins. Suitable times will be set up with each of the participants in a safe and neutral setting. Participants will be life coached by a certified life coach in their own time, either face-to-face or telephonically depending on what they prefer. Each participant will be coached for a total of four life coaching sessions lasting 45-60 minutes each every second week over two months. During this time, the participants will need to complete an electronic journal entry after each session.

The benefits of this study are that students will be introduced to the process of life coaching where they will be facilitated in settings goals, take action towards achieving set goals, determining their personal values and developing a positive mindset.

Potential risks are that the participants are minors and that they will be divulging personal information. However, participants are able to withdraw at any time and can refrain from answering questions they do not feel comfortable answering.

There will be no reimbursement or any incentives for participation in the research.

The feedback procedure will entail each participant been given a transcript of the interviews and a copy of their journal entries to look through as well as a copy of the complete research. Once finalised, the participants will have electronic access to the completed study.

Information will be handled sensitively to prevent participants from being identifiable in the research. No personal and individual information that could potentially identify the students will be used. Additionally, the name of the school and the geographic location will not be included. Other relevant and not unique contextual factors will be used.

Yours sincerely

Candice Preston

Master of Education in Leadership and Management student

Annexure C: Letter requesting parental consent for minors to participate in the research project



Dear Parent

Your daughter is invited to participate in a study entitled **Life coaching for female high school students: a case study.**

I am undertaking this study as part of my Master's research at the University of South Africa. The purpose of the study is to determine the influence of life coaching on female high school students, and the possible benefits of the study include exposure to the process of life coaching which may facilitate the student in setting goals, taking action towards achieving set goals, determining and understanding their values and developing a positive mindset. I expect to have four other children participating in the study. The value of this study is that your child will have the opportunity to experience being life coached by a certified life coach who can help your child to set goals, assess their values and empower them in making critical life decisions. As the researcher, I will not be conducting the life coaching myself but will be outsourcing to Georgina Laros, who is a certified and experienced life coach.

If you allow your child to participate, I shall request her to

- Take part in an interview both before and after the life coaching experience.
- Be life coached by a certified life for four life coaching sessions. Each session will need to be scheduled once every two weeks over a period of two months. Each session will be 45-60 minutes in duration and can be conducted face-to-face or telephonically depending on suitability. The life coaching sessions will be conducted individually with each participant. Sessions will be individualised and may be directed by the participant but will loosely follow the above topics. The participants will be asked not to disclose their involvement in the research to anyone and not to discuss their life coaching with each other in order to maintain the integrity of the collected data.

The life coaching sessions will cover:

- Session 1: Goal setting, Session 2: Values, Session 3: Beliefs, Session 4: Conclusion
- Complete journal entries in the comfort of their own homes, without the researcher present, using Google Forms after each life coaching session.

Interviews will need to be audio-recorded to ensure accurate transcription. By signing this consent form, you grant the researcher permission to use the audio recording in this research. Recordings will be treated as confidential and sensitive.

Personal information, including the student's own thoughts, experiences and views, will be collected in this research. Participants will remain anonymous and unidentifiable in writing up of this data. Participants will also have the opportunity to provide data in the privacy and comfort of their homes, with no researcher present, through journaling and written responses to interview questions. Her responses will not be linked to her name or your name or the school's name in any written or verbal report based on this study. This report will be used for research purposes only.

The risks involved in the study include the participants being minors and divulging personal information in life coaching sessions and interviews. Your child is able to refrain from answering any questions where she may feel uncomfortable. Your child may receive numerous benefits from participating in the study including the benefits of the life coaching process where your child will be facilitated in setting goals, taking action towards achieving set goals, determining and understanding their values and developing a positive mindset. Neither your child nor you will receive any type of payment for participating in this study.

Your child's participation in this study is voluntary. Your child may decline to participate or to withdraw from participation at any time. Withdrawal or refusal to participate will not affect her in any way. Similarly, you can agree to allow your child to be in the study now and change your mind later without any penalty.

The study will take place outside of regular school hours and at times that are suitable for you and your child.

In addition to your permission, your child must agree to participate in the study and you and your child will also be asked to sign the assent form, which accompanies this letter. If your child does not wish to participate in the study, she will not be included, and there will be no penalty. The information gathered from the study and your child's participation in the study will be stored securely on password-protected cloud storage for five years after the study. Thereafter, records will be erased.

If you have questions about this study, please ask me or my study supervisor, Prof Venitha Pillay, College of Education, University of South Africa. My contact number is 082-312-0784, and my email is 46399321@mylife.unisa.ac.za. The email of my supervisor is venithapillay@gmail.com. Permission for the study has already been given by the principal and the Ethics Committee of the College of Education, UNISA. **A copy is attached for your reference.**

You are making a decision about allowing your child to participate in this study. Your signature below indicates that you have read the information provided above and have decided to allow him or her to participate in the study. You may keep a copy of this letter.

Name of child:

Sincerely

_____	_____	
Parent/guardian's name (print)	Parent/guardian's signature:	Date:
_____	_____	
Researcher's name (print)	Researcher's signature	Date:

Annexure D: Letter requesting assent from learners in a secondary school to participate in research



Life coaching for female high school students: a case study.

Dear _____

Date _____

I, Candice Preston, am doing a study on life coaching as part of my studies at the University of South Africa. Your principal has given me permission to do this study in your school. I would like to invite you to be a very special part of my study. I am doing this study so that I can find ways to empower you as a high school student to reach your full potential and achieve more in your school career. This may help you and many other learners of your age in different schools.

This letter is to explain to you what I would like you to do. There may be some words you do not know in this letter. You may ask me or any other adult to explain any of these words that you do not know or understand. You may take a copy of this letter home to think about my invitation and talk to your parents about this before you decide if you want to be in this study.

I would like you to be life coached by a professional life coach for four life coaching sessions (45-60 minutes each). The life coach is a certified and experienced professional whose services have been outsourced for the purpose of this study. The sessions can be done face-to-face with the life coach or telephonically and these sessions will be set up by you and the life coach to fit into your schedule. Each session can be scheduled every second week. The entire life coaching process will take 2 months to complete. I would like to interview you before and after the life coaching experience. The interviews will be 60 minutes in duration. You would also need to complete a journal entry (via Google Forms) after each life coaching

session. I request permission to use the experiences you share through your journal entries in order to better understand your experience and perceptions of life coaching.

I will write a report on the study, but I will not use your name in the report or say anything that will let other people know who you are. Participation is voluntary, and you do not have to be part of this study if you don't want to take part. If you choose to be in the study, you may stop taking part at any time without penalty. You may tell me if you do not wish to answer any of my questions. No one will blame or criticise you.

The benefits of this study include the opportunity to experience life coaching free of charge and being facilitated in setting goals, taking action towards achieving set goals, determining and understanding your values and developing a positive mindset with a certified life coach.

Potential risks are that you will be divulging personal information to both the life coach and researcher. However, you are able to refrain from answering any question that makes you feel uncomfortable.

You will not be reimbursed or receive any incentives for your participation in the research.

If you decide to be part of my study, you will be asked to sign the form on the next page. If you have any other questions about this study, you can talk to me, or you can have your parent or another adult call me at 082-312-0784 or email me 46399321@mylife.unisa.ac.za. Do not sign the form until you have all your questions answered and understand what I would like you to do.

Researcher: Candice Preston

Phone number: 082-312-0784

Do not sign the written assent form if you have any questions. Ask your questions first and ensure that someone answers those questions.

WRITTEN ASSENT

I have read this letter, which asks me to be part of a study on life coaching. I have understood the information and I know what I will be asked to do. I am willing to be in the study.

Learner's name (print): Learner's signature: Date:

Witness's name (print) Witness's signature Date:

(The witness is over 18 years old and present when signed.)

Parent/guardian's name (print) Parent/guardian's signature: Date:

Researcher's name (print) Researcher's signature:
Date:

Annexure E: Journal Entries



JOURNAL ENTRIES

Journal entries will need to be completed via Google Forms. The Google Forms will be emailed to each participant to be completed as soon after each life coaching session as possible. These will return to the researcher upon submission. Each journal entry will contain the following questions as a guide for the participants:

1. What did you learn in the session?
2. How could you use this going forward?
3. What went well?
4. What did not go as well?
5. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being not confident and 10 being exceptionally confident), how confident do you feel that you have the skills to overcome any challenges and achieve your goals?

Annexure F: Application form



APPLICATION FORM TO SELECT SAMPLE

1. What is your age?
2. Have you ever been formally diagnosed with a psychological disorder?
3. Are you currently undergoing any medical treatment for the abovementioned diagnosis?
4. Describe your level of activity in extra-murals at the school. (None, light, moderate, extensive)
5. Describe your social life.
6. What are the biggest challenges you are facing right now, and how do you plan on tackling them?

Annexure G: Life coach's confidentiality agreement



Masters Research at University of South Africa – How life coaching influences female high school students

Date:

I (name)

I confirm that I have volunteered to provide life coaching for the above study. I confirm that I shall not share in any way any part of the life coaching sessions conducted for the above study and the information to which I have access, in my capacity as the life coach.

Information shared in the life coaching session between me as the life coach, and the students who are being coached will also remain confidential.

Signature of life coach

Annexure H: UNISA Ethics clearance



UNISA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date: 2019/04/17

Ref: **2019/04/17/46399321/03/MC**

Dear Ms Preston

Name: Ms C Preston

Student no: 46399321

Decision: Ethics Approval from
2019/04/17 to 2022/04/17

Researcher(s): Name: Ms C Preston
E-mail address: 46399321@mylife.unisa.ac.za
Telephone: +27 82 312 0784

Supervisor(s): Name: Prof RJ Botha
E-mail address: botharj@unisa.ac.za
Telephone: +27 824116361

Title of research:

Life coaching for female high school students: a case study

Qualification: M. Ed in Educational Management and Leadership

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Ethics approval is granted for the period 2019/04/14 to 2022/04/17.

*The **medium risk** application was reviewed by the Ethics Review Committee on 2019/04/14 in compliance with the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.*

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.
2. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the UNISA College of Education Ethics Review Committee.



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3. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
4. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing.
5. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.
6. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data requires additional ethics clearance.
7. No field work activities may continue after the expiry date **2022/04/17**. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Note:

The reference number **2019/04/17/46399321/03/MC** should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.

Kind regards,



Prof AT Motlhabane
CHAIRPERSON: CEDU RERC
motlhat@unisa.ac.za



Prof PM Sebate
ACTING EXECUTIVE DEAN
Sebatpm@unisa.ac.za

Approved - decision template – updated 16 Feb 2017

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Annexure I: Pre-Coaching Interview Transcriptions

Pre Coaching Interview P1

Researcher: All right. So. This is interview 1 with P1 Knell. Pre-coaching interviews. So the first question is, what is your understanding of life coaching?

P1: It is basically to help you get through things that you need to get like through like if you have an issue with something and they will help you deal with it and find solutions to your issue with you.

Researcher: Okay. What sort of issues are you thinking?

P1: If you have an issue with your schoolwork like not like you don't understand it, but if you have like time management issues then they will help you figure out a way of fixing that. Or maybe like family issues. So they could help you with conflict or that type of thing.

Researcher: Have you ever been life coached before or had any like coaching experience?

P1: Not really.

Researcher: Not really?

P1: I went to a psychologist a few years ago just to help me get through what I was going through. She just taught me techniques of making myself comfortable where I am basically.

Researcher: Okay. And how did you find that experience?

P1: It was good. It helped me a lot.

Researcher: So, in terms of dealing with challenges or issues that you currently face. What level of support do you currently have?

P1: My Mom is my biggest support, and then my dad supports sometimes, but he doesn't live with us. He lives in Durban. My Aunt and Uncle also support. Mainly my aunt but my Mom is the just main person.

Researcher: In support, what does she offer you?

P1: She offers me help with homework. A person to talk to like if my friend leaves me or if I have a fight with my friend she will give me advice as to what would be a good idea to follow with or she is just always there basically.

Researcher: So, what are the biggest problems or challenges that you are currently dealing with?

P1: Currently, my best friend left the school. We have been friends for nine years this year, and it was have always been in the same grade, and we are very close. So she left the school and with her not being there, I am very shy. I don't speak up when I have to, and she usually likes; if I have a question, she will ask it for me. But that was the main issue. But then finding new friends as well. And trying to fit in with that group of friends and then the second thing is my cousin tried to commit suicide a few months ago, last month or the month before, and it has just been kind of not right with the whole part of the family on that side.

Researcher: I can understand that. When you are talking about making new friends and that, what is the biggest thing holding you back from making new friends right now?

P1: Possibly that I am so shy because then it is hard to get to know me. I can talk one on one but as soon as I am in a big group than I can talk as much.

Researcher: And in terms of your cousin, how have you tried to deal with that?

P1: I've talked to my Mom about it a lot and then she agrees with some things I have said about it but other than that there is not much that I can really do about it.

Researcher: And how do you view that? How did you experience that?

P1: It is very upsetting because like how much stuff she has put her mom through as well because she is not very nice to her mom because she is kind of like just another thing that she has done to hurt her mom. But then again she probably is dealing with a lot because it can be kind of hard because she is not very. Like she has issues. So she also goes to a

special school. So it's hard to understand what she is going through as well because she doesn't tell the truth either. It is kind of like you don't know the full story, but you can see what she is doing.

Researcher: Adding one thing on top of the other. Are you close to your cousin?

P1: No because she is younger than me, and I can't stand her sometimes because she needs to have everybody's attention.

Researcher: Any other issues or challenges that you are currently facing?

P1: Possibly the amount of school work I have because I need to, well I don't need to get good grades, but I really want to get really high marks so that I can get to where I want to be after school.

Researcher: Do you have a clear idea or are you still thinking about what you want to do?

P1: I have a few ideas, but it is one idea and then moving from one idea to the next idea.

Researcher: In terms of knowing yourself and being able to deal with your emotions, do you think that you are good at that? Or how do you deal with your emotions?

P1: I mainly talk with people I trust if it's about my emotions if it's really bad but if it's something that is just a little bit irritating I will keep it to myself because I don't want to upset other people.

Researcher: And do you know yourself, or do you feel like you are unsure?

P1: I think that I know myself most of the time but sometimes.

Researcher: Sometimes, no? In what type of scenario?

P1: Like if something happens, I will be like 'did I really just do that?' 'I can't think of anything.'

Researcher: On a scale of 1 to 10, how confident are you in yourself in dealing with challenges in your life right now? 10 being that I am very confident and 1 being no, I cannot handle anything.

P1: Probably a six.

Researcher: A 6. Why do you say that?

P1: Because sometimes everything can be too much and you want to put it out and not deal with it, and other times everything will be okay and great.

Researcher: Are there certain areas in your life you feel more overwhelmed and other areas where you can tackle those challenges better?

P1: At school, I am more overwhelmed, and at home, I can tackle it better.

Researcher: You are saying a six. So where are you good with being able to deal with challenges?

P1: I don't understand the question.

Researcher: What do you do well or how, when a challenge or issue comes up? What do you do well in yourself to deal with it? You mentioned that you talk to people. Is there anything else you do that is good or bad?

P1: I overthink a lot of things, and I will make the situation worse by thinking about it because I will think about all the possible things that could go wrong or everything that somebody else could think about.

Researcher: Why did you want to participate in this project, in the research?

P1: I thought it could be a great chance to discover more things and try to figure out if its worth- how to do more things if that makes sense. And also having somebody else guides me. It seemed like a really good idea.

Researcher: Awesome. In terms of more things? What do you mean?

P1: Possibly build my confidence and to help me discover more things that I don't know.

Researcher: About yourself or in general?

P1: Both.

Researcher: Are there any particular things, you have already mentioned a few but let's go through them. What are the issues that you would really like the life coach to work with you on?

P1: Mainly motivation because I find that I want to do something and I will get into it, but then eventually I will be like no because it gets boring or I don't want to do it anymore. Possibly goal setting as well, but that is also the same as motivation like I get bored with what I have to do.

Researcher: You spoke about friends early?

P1: I think that if I am able to build my confidence more, I will be less shy and then it will help me make friends.

Researcher: Any other issues?

P1: No.

Researcher: Great. What are your expectations, and what do you hope to gain after this coaching experience?

P1: Possibly to become more open and be able to tell somebody that I want to be friends, well maybe not tell somebody, but be able to gain the confidence, and I can't think of the word, but to just be able to do something that I want to do without doubting myself.

Researcher: If you had to rate your confidence, using a scale of 1 to 10. How confident would you say you are in yourself?

P1: It depends on the days, but sometimes it can be like a seven and other days it can be a two or a three.

Researcher: Any particular situations you are in when you feel more or less confident?

P1: I know that when I have to talk to people like to go and tell them something I can't do that because I am scared that I will bother them or say something wrong. Stuff like that.

Researcher: In terms of school, how confident are you in school? In terms of your school career?

P1: Possibly, on the number scale, a six or seven.

Pre Coaching Interview P2

Researcher: Interview 2 pre-coaching interviews with P2. What is your understanding of life coaching?

P2: Life coaching by my understanding is someone that will give you advice on how to tackle some situations in your life in a better way.

Researcher: Have you had any life coaching experience before?

P2: No.

Researcher: Describe the current level of support that you have when you are dealing with challenges in your life.

P2: The support I have is normally my parents who will help me and give me advice on how to tackle it in a better way, but sometimes they don't get it the school things so then I also go to my friends and they give me options to do it in a better way and what to do and help me get through it.

Researcher: Do you have a big or small group of friends?

P2: A big group

Researcher: When you say that your parents don't understand the school stuff. What sort of stuff do you mean?

P2: Like with the stress levels because in their time they never got a lot of homework and the work wasn't as hard. Like with the IEB it is harder, and there is more stress on me especially because I am in grade 11 so it is hard for them, but they try to understand, but it is not always the same. It is better to get advice from someone who has also experienced the same thing at the same time as you.

Researcher: Understandable. What is the biggest challenge, obstacle, problem or issue that you are currently dealing with?

P2: That is mostly with my studies especially with Science because it is really hard and you have to get a certain amount to pass, and I want to become a doctor so I know I have to get above everything just to do better in it.

Researcher: Any other challenges?

P2: Also, with my weight loss. That is a bit of a struggle, and I know I am getting there slowly, but I know it takes time.

Researcher: Just those two?

P2: Yeah.

Researcher: What are you currently doing for your schoolwork?

P2: I go for extra lessons on Fridays for two hours and then today I also go for extra maths for an hour.

Researcher: So you are already taking steps there. And your weight loss because you are already losing weight?

P2: Ja, two times a week, I do a gym session, and I just eat healthy and that.

Researcher: On a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being I cannot handle challenges and 10 being I can take on any challenge how well do you think you take on challenges?

P2: I think I am a five. Like it has to depend on the challenge for me to see how I am going to do it.

Researcher: What challenges are you really good at dealing with and which ones are you not?

P2: Challenges I am really good at dealing with is the logical type of thinking because you have all your facts right there, so it is easy to just get through it. But, the non-logical one I struggle with because you have to start taking other people's opinions.

Researcher: More emotional?

P2: Yeah.

Researcher: Why did you want to participate in this research?

P2: I felt like it would be a good impact on me also with the life coaching thing it will give me a different perspective on things and in a way it will give me new points of how to do things in certain manners and will really be beneficial for me.

Researcher: Doing new things, anything in particular?

P2: I am going to start doing horse riding, so that is also new. That is about it.

Researcher: What do you hope to gain from life coaching?

P2: What I hope to gain is better and easier ways to tackle situations that I never think about doing before.

Researcher: For example?

P2: I am not sure about an example I am open to any advice that she will give to me.

Researcher: Really great. Apart from your weight loss, taking on new challenges and improving your academics, is there anything else in particular that you want the life coach to help you with?

P2: No, that is about it.

Researcher: On a scale, again from 1 to 10, how confident are you in yourself and your abilities?

P2: I am not really that confident, so maybe a three.

Researcher: Why would you say that?

P2: Because certain things I like to stay in my comfort zone and I don't really go out and that in a way affects my confidence because I am scared I am going to do something that embarrasses me and then it will be stuck in my mind what happened and then it decreases my confidence level quite a lot.

Researcher: Are there any areas in your life where you feel more confident in than others?

P2: No, it is always the same.

Pre Coaching Interview P3

Researcher: Interview 3 with P3 Steenkamp pre-coaching interview. P3, what is your understanding of life coaching?

P3: You help the person with decision-making and goal setting and the way you have to look at life. I'm not sure.

Researcher: Have you ever experienced life coaching before?

P3: No. Is it similar to a therapist?

Researcher: It is, and it isn't. It is a therapy session, but it is not looking back but looking forward in your life. It is focused on you and what you want to achieve. It is a type of therapy.

P3: So it's like motivation?

Researcher: Yes. And decision—making like you said and it is guided by you. You dictate what happens in those sessions, which you will see as you go through it. What is the level of support you currently have when you deal with challenges in your life?

P3: Support?

Researcher: Like who supports you?

P3: My Mom basically. I only live with her because the rest of my family is in Bloemfontein. My Mom and I are the whole time together. She is my pillar of strength.

Researcher: What kind of support does she offer you if you are going through tough times?

P3: She gives me advice, and she is there emotionally. She can always see when I am upset, but when I am upset, I don't keep it in. I tell her immediately and then she tells me how to move forward and how to get through it.

Researcher: What is the biggest problems or challenges that you are currently dealing with in your life?

P3: The move and the changes and the school work because it is a different school. You are on one syllabus, and then you move to another syllabus, and grade 11 is very difficult. It is a lot of stress and hard work.

Researcher: Definitely. Within that move any specific areas that you battled with more than others?

P3: Schoolwork.

Researcher: In what way?

P3: In some subjects where I went from grade 9 to grade 10 in the new school, it was totally different because something I've learnt in grade 8 they learnt in grade 6 because I was on CAPS and they were on IEB, and it is a totally different syllabus, and you miss this whole gap, and you have to jump to something else. So it is a lot of catch up work, and it puts me under a lot of stress.

Researcher: I can imagine. Is there anything that you are doing to catch it up yet?

P3: I go to a tutor to catch up everything that I haven't done and then every day after I've learnt something then I go home, and I summarise that and I make sure that I know that and that helps me cope with it because then I know that I do know what happened in today's lesson in school.

Researcher: Any other challenges that you are dealing with?

P3: I am struggling with the decision to make for my future with what to study and how to decide what I want to do.

Researcher: Understandable being in grade 11. On a scale of 1 to 10, how confident are you in dealing with your challenges, with 1 being I can't deal with it and 10 being I got this?

P3: I would say like a four.

Researcher: Why do you say a four?

P3: Because I don't at the end of the day that I don't know how to deal with the challenges because I get so frustrated because I can't do something or I don't get it right, and then I get frustrated, and I get upset, and then I can't cope with it.

Researcher: So why do you want to participate in this research?

P3: I want to see if it maybe helps me in a way.

Researcher: Helps with all these challenges and that sort of thing. And what do you hope to get out of it at the end of it?

P3: I want to be positive in my mind about the future. I don't want to be stuck in today the whole time.

Researcher: Other than dealing with the move and that or including the move, what other things would you like the life coach to cover with you?

P3: I don't know.

Researcher: What would you like help with?

P3: Motivation and looking at something from a different perspective so you don't only see the challenges but you also see the opportunities because that is what I also struggle with. I only see the bad and not the good.

Researcher: Any particular situation? Do you have an example?

P3: When I am in a situation with conflict I don't really know how to handle it, and I walk away and let it build and build and build instead of working it out and knowing how to work it out.

Researcher: How confident are you in yourself and your abilities on a scale of 1 to 10?

P3: Not very well. I would say a five or six.

Researcher: Okay, why would you say that?

P3: I am not a very confident person. I am very scared. I am very to myself. But I am also a very talkative person. So then sometimes I talk, and I talk, and I feel that I shouldn't have said that.

Researcher: Are there any areas in your life where you feel more confident than others?

P3: When I am with people that I know, and then I have all the confidence in the world. But then at school and stuff like that, I don't have any confidence.

Researcher: When you say at school, socially and academically?

P3: Academically, but also socially.

Researcher: Do you do any extra murals?

P3: At my old school I used to and then I do hockey at Woodlands.

Researcher: And how confident are you in that?

P3: I am very good at hockey. I enjoy so I know that I can do it, so I don't really have a problem with my sport.

Pre Coaching Interview P4

Researcher: It is interview 4 with P4 pre-coaching interviews. So what is your understanding of life coaching?

P4: I actually don't know, but I think they help you with life or I don't know.

Researcher: So you have never had any life coaching experience?

P4: No.

Researcher: But it is a way of helping?

P4: Yeah, guiding you through life or something like that.

Researcher: Currently, in your life, what level of support do you have when you are going through a challenge or anything like that?

P4: Well my parents are always there for me, and I am also very religious, so when I go through anything I just pray to God, and I just ask for help, and I also speak to my parents or my gran because I am very close to my gran and she is always there for me.

Researcher: Just talking, what other kinds of support do they provide for you?

P4: They just pray. I don't know.

Researcher: Do you get advice from them, or are you just able to talk and tell them how you are feeling?

P4: Yeah I do get advice from them and everything, but I don't really have big challenges in my life but small little things like when we have family meetings then I can just ask them questions and ask them how do I face this challenge? How can I go through it? They give me advice.

Researcher: You said you are not dealing with challenges but currently, what is the biggest issues you are dealing with?

P4: Well, like when I was in primary, I was in top ten, but now that I am in high school, I am not in top ten anymore. There is that pressure on me because my parents are always like how come you were in top ten and all of a sudden you're not and I feel like that is a challenge I am trying to face because I want to overcome that challenge and go back to how I was back in primary. I don't really have a lot of challenges, honestly.

Researcher: Okay. When you say top ten, you mean academics?

P4: Yes, academics.

Researcher: And what primary school did you go to?

P4: I was at Ferrer Park Primary close to Sunward Park.

Researcher: So it was a public school, so you have changed curriculums?

P4: Yes.

Researcher: So academics is like the biggest challenge that you are dealing with? The main thing is that you don't have to have challenges to benefit from coaching or having that experience. So, on a scale of 1 to 10, how well do you deal with any challenges that come into your life? 1 being I can't deal with them and 10 being you kill them.

P4: Maybe like a six.

Researcher: Why do you say a six?

P4: Because when I am faced with the challenge I don't panic, and I'm not like ugh I can't deal with this. I try go through it, and I try to overcome that challenge. I try my best.

Researcher: Good. Why did you want to participate in this research?

P4: I just wanted to experience life coaching because I've never done it. I just wanted to experience it and know what life coaching is all about because one of my friends did it, and she told me she had a good experience so I also wanted to try to see how it can help me and how it could benefit me.

Researcher: So what are your expectations, or what do you want to get out of it?

P4: I am just expecting. I feel like in life coaching I can say anything and whatever and I can say things that I can't say to my parents because there are certain things I won't tell my parents because I am scared like sometimes they strict so some of the stuff I can't say so I feel like if I come to life coaching and I ask for advice it will be better so I would get the advice I need.

Researcher: Any other expectations?

P4: Just guiding me through life, I guess.

Researcher: Anything in particular that you want the life coach to help you deal with or go over with you?

P4: No. I thought you come here and just. At first, I thought you come here when you are going through a rough time and challenges, but then my Mom's like it doesn't really have to be about that you can just come. I don't really have anything.

Pre Coaching Interview P5

Researcher: Pre-coaching interview number five with P5. What is your understanding of life coaching?

P5: It is someone that helps you find your correct path and how you can have an almost better life. Someone that can help you to be the best and manage everything in your life at that point.

Researcher: Have you ever had a life coaching experience before?

P5: No.

Researcher: Currently, what level of support do you have when dealing with a challenge or trying to better yourself?

P5: It depends what kind of challenges but I would say that I am very good with it and try and deal with it myself because I don't like to rely on people. So I do try and bottle a lot of things up so support wouldn't really be like a lot because I don't like to open up to a lot of people.

Researcher: And your family and that?

P5: My Mom is very supportive, but it is in certain areas. She likes to leave me to do everything on my own, so I am not baby-ed in a sort of way.

Researcher: So what areas would she support you in?

P5: School, she is very supportive in school, obviously because she wants me to do well. Friends, if I have like a major, major fight, then she will obviously step in, but she says like if

it's more than I have to sort it out by myself and learn and everything. We also fight a lot, and even though we do fight, she is still supportive about that. And my dad, my dad and I aren't very close, so the support on his side is mostly from sports because he is very sporty, so like sports and then academics.

Researcher: What are the biggest problems or challenges that you are currently facing?

P5: I would say that I am really battling to balance everything out because I have a lot going on especially with the year that I am having so I just want to be able to balance everything out.

Researcher: When you talk about balance, what do you mean?

P5: I want to balance like family-time, school, studying and social life and still being active and I want to be equal because at the moment I feel like if I am doing school I'm doing too much school and then not enough of anything else, so I want to be able to balance it out.

Researcher: Any other challenges?

P5: At the moment, my social life at school is very odd because all of my friends have left the school. Socialising at school is also very hard because my school is really really small and it is difficult to just make new friends because you know basically everyone.

Researcher: Is that all. Any other?

P5: That will probably be it.

Researcher: On a scale of 1 to 10, how prepared do you feel to deal with the challenges in your life? 1 being you are not prepared and 10 being you can handle anything.

P5: I would say about like maybe an eight because certain things I can definitely deal with it and other things I definitely can't deal with it but most of the time I do deal with it.

Researcher: What specific area are you good at dealing with it, and where do you see that you are not?

P5: Not would be if I am very stressed because I am very bad at dealing with stress and pressure. Like if I am under pressure, I just break. But if it is something like school wise, then I am very good at getting through all of it like if I have a lot of things to do even though I am pressured, I will have my break down, but then I will still like get through it and get everything done. And then like social life, I am very good at managing everything, so I do try and push through that.

Researcher: Good. In terms of your confidence, how confident are you in your abilities, again on a scale of 1 to 10?

P5: I would say probably 8 maybe like a 7. It is a bit lower. My self-confidence is quite low, especially if I get nervous then I am just very self-conscious and then I don't want to do anything, and I don't want to understand anything, so I block everything out.

Researcher: Why did you want to be part of this research?

P5: I thought it was very interesting and my Mom said that she was considering going to a life coach, and she never did, and she said that if it can help you find a balance or to help you in any way at the moment then it would be very cool that I could learn from it and it is an experience, and it would be very cool.

Researcher: You mentioned a few things. What do you expect to gain from the coaching?

P5: I kind of just want to be able to balance everything out and kind of be. I would like a more positive life so if I can try and find a more positive mindset through it even if it doesn't really work it is still something I can do, and hopefully, it does help.

Researcher: Any other issues, other than the balance, that you would like to deal with in life coaching?

P5: My family situation is quite bad, so if I could try and change that and my understanding of that. My Mom and I have quite a lot of fights, so for that to be more calm. I would like to change a few things.

Annexure J: Post Coaching interview Transcriptions

Post Coaching Interview P1

Researcher: Describe your overall experience of life coaching.

P1: I actually really enjoyed it because I found that with certain things it helped me so with my self-confidence it helped me grow a little bit because she gave me techniques to use when I felt insecure. And also with my maths, she also gave me ways to improve, not with the maths physically, but ways to go about improving it. So, going and spending an hour more once a week or two hours more or finding five minutes spare just to work on something. So I also found everything that she gave me I did try to put to use, and I enjoyed learning about everything.

Researcher: So, what were the highpoints for you?

P1: It's going to sound really silly but being able to go somewhere by myself and not needing somebody to come with me. When I was away because I went away during mid-term, my aunt asked me to go and get keys, and usually, I would've asked for somebody to come with me and then I went by myself, I could do it by myself.

Researcher: And any low points?

P1: Possibly getting my math test back and realising I didn't do as well as I thought I did after putting so much more effort in.

Researcher: And in terms of the process of coaching, was there anything you felt wasn't as effective or could've been done better?

P1: No.

Researcher: How did the life coaching meeting your expectations or not meet your expectations?

P1: I think it did meet my expectations because I knew what to kind of expect but I didn't know exactly what would happen. So I found that it actually did help and I have my, I've seen improvements in myself over the past few weeks.

Researcher: What type of improvements?

P1: Well, obviously, I am more confident, so I am able to start conversations with people like my big groups of friends. I am closer with them now. And I am going out with them more, and I am more comfortable in that group. And then also my math's. They amount of effort and organisation for that.

Researcher: How effective or ineffective did you find the coaching in terms of setting and achieving your goals and making decisions?

P1: I'm not sure how to answer.

Researcher: Did you set goals that you then worked towards?

P1: Kind of. My overall was to improve my math's mark by 5% and then my confidence and that mostly what we worked on and then we worked on little pieces like if I felt insecure about something, then we worked on that. So I didn't really set major goals except for the maths.

Researcher: And how effective was it in addressing those?

P1: I think it was mostly effective except I don't know what happened in my math's test, but I did find that with the CASS assessments that we did I did improve in those but then with the math test I didn't. I'm not sure.

Researcher: On a scale of 1 to 10, how confident do you feel in yourself and your abilities?

P1: About an 8.

Researcher: Okay, why do you say an 8?

P1: Because I don't know. I'm happier. I'm able just to do things I want to do, and I feel better now if that makes sense.

Researcher: On a scale of 1 to 10, how prepared do you feel to deal with challenges that come up in your life?

P1: Also, an 8 because I have the techniques and stuff to deal with it.

Researcher: Techniques gained through the coaching specifically?

P1: Yes.

Researcher: How have you changed through the process?

P1: Before I was a lot more shy than I am now, but obviously it's helped improve that and then also one of the things we did work on is sticking up my hand in class because that is also to do with self-confidence, so I feel like that's also improved because I do that now. I am not sure if that answered the question?

Researcher: Yes, any other ways you feel you've changed?

P1: No.

Researcher: If you had to describe to somebody else what life coaching is, and what the benefits are, what would you say?

P1: I'd say it's somebody to talk to that you can kind of get different ideas of ways of doing something and kind of going from where you are now to where you want to be, and I think that that's the main benefit is to build yourself more and become better.

Researcher: How best do you think life coaching can work in a student's life?

P1: I think if you were to do it, it would help because you'd learn how to properly organise things and have different ideas of how you would do something or organise. With what we did we drew a little mind map with the subjects and then broke the subjects down to see

everything that you have to do and that helped me because it showed me what I needed to get to and which point I needed to complete or do. I feel like it does; it would be better to have that in your life because it just helps a lot.

Researcher: And do you think, did you enjoy having it in your spare time, or do you think it is something you should have at school as well?

P1: Yes... I think if it was offered at school, it would be a good idea but also having it in my spare time it was also good.

Researcher: And you did all of yours face-to-face?

P1: Yes.

Researcher: And you enjoyed that?

P1: Yes.

Researcher: I read through your journal entries and it spoke a lot about the anxiety, so how did coaching help you deal with anxiety?

P1: Well, she kind of gave me a few tips like breathing exercises to do when I feel very anxious or in situations when I can't get out and also meditation. She gave me tips for that. I feel like with the breathing exercises and the tips, and she also told me that I also have to start doing like intention type thing like when you say 'today will be a good day' type thing. So I feel like those are helping a lot because I don't feel as anxious and when I do, I do those exercises.

Researcher: So would you want to continue with coaching?

P1: Yes.

Post Coaching Interview P2

Researcher: Post coaching interview with P2. Describe what the life coaching experience was like for you.

P2: It was really great. It gave me a new way of how to handle my life, which is less stress and everything. So with the experience I saw how much the life coaching session how made my life easier before I even done it because before I always use to postpone or just have a bundle of stress but with the life coaching it takes my whole stress off and I think that most people should really go for it because the tips she gave me was really helpful and really worked for me.

Researcher: Tips, in terms of?

P2: With my goals to achieve my marks she told me to do a vision board where I study so that when I always look up I know what I am going for and that again motivates me into doing it.

Researcher: What were the highlights for you?

P2: The highlights for me are in getting all these tips because with these tips, they make my life easier with achieving my goals like I said with the vision board. Also not only that she gave a new way to look at things like that I mustn't see it in a stressful way always. I must see a way to overcome them. It really helps me know. I know I will carry on using these tips until I don't know when but they will always be with me.

Researcher: That is great to hear. So what you are saying is that it is helping your mindset and the way you are thinking?

P2: Yes, it really does.

Researcher: Any low points?

P2: There wasn't low points in this whole session; I feel like it was mainly high points with me.

Researcher: How did the life coaching meet your expectations?

P2: I had two goals. One of them was with the weight so she would tell me that I mustn't snack after dinner and we use to compromise either walking or skipping, and with that, I had to message her every Wednesday because that was when we had our sessions to tell her if I had done it. Also, with the gym sessions and it really helped. We set for two weeks that I should lose 2 kilos, but in the first week I only lost 1, but in the second time we were able to achieve that. So it really helped like having her there to message her to telling her that I have done this. It keeps me going forward.

Researcher: Are there any ways that it didn't live up to your expectations?

P2: No, there was no ways.

Researcher: So you are saying that it did help you in terms of setting your goals and achieving them. So, on a scale of 1 to 10, how prepared do you feel to deal with challenges in your life?

P2: I feel a 10 now.

Researcher: That is awesome. Why? What has changed?

P2: I can't really explain it, but going through this experience it has helped me overcome all those levels that I needed to get through. We just got through it all.

Researcher: Again, on a scale of 1 to 10, how confident do you feel in yourself?

P2: Now it's a 9.

Researcher: That is so great to hear. Yes?

P2: It feels much better now also. I feel like I can do anything with all of this new knowledge.

Researcher: And more confident in yourself and your abilities?

P2: Yes, much more.

Researcher: Would you want to continue with life coaching?

P2: I would definitely see it as an option because having it with you, you always learn new things to get over your struggles.

Researcher: And how did you find, did you manage to fit it in time-wise?

P2: Yes, we managed to fit it in time-wise. It was only one time when we had a little mishap but other than that we always kept our schedule.

Researcher: Did you do any face-to-face, or was it all over the phone?

P2: They were all over the phone.

Researcher: And was that convenient?

P2: Yeah, it was convenient for me because to get someone to drop me off is a bit hard so having the phone call was easy for me also I could do it anytime.

Researcher: With life coaching, do you think it works better in your spare time, or do you think it would be something that could help you if it was at school, during school time?

P2: I think it is a bit of both. In your spare time, you really need it, but also at school you have more stress and that. Having it during that it really helped and would really help us overcome all our stress and that.

Researcher: Looking at your journal entry in your first one, you said that it helps you feel more motivated. Do you want to explain that a bit more?

P2: The way I said it feels motivated like I always have to report my achievements to her, and it makes me want to do it even more so that she will be more proud of me and that keeps me going to do my best as possible.

Researcher: Someone holding you accountable?

P2: Yeah.

Researcher: Here again, you spoke about the motivation and positive feelings. What sort of feelings did you experience?

P2: Like happiness and this joy that I got through what I wanted to do and I also, in a way, made her proud of my achievements. That gives you a sense of relief and happiness, and you know that I got to what I wanted to. You just feel excitement.

Researcher: That is really great to hear. So if you had to explain to somebody else what life coaching is and what the benefits are, what would you say?

P2: I would tell them that life coaching is a new way that they help you to overcome your struggles to achieve your goals and the benefits of it is that it gives you easier and more achievable ways of doing things. Those unachievable ways are up there. With it, it is in your boundary and works for you, not against you.

Researcher: So would you recommend it to others?

P2: I would definitely recommend it.

Researcher: In terms of your age, do you think it would have been something you would have wanted to do earlier or do you think now is better?

P2: I think that now it was the perfect time for me because I am in grade 11 and the stress is really high but with having this life coach now and right before exams it really helped with me with all my stress, and it was the perfect time to do it.

Researcher: Were there any ways it could have been better for you? Anyway, the experience could have been better for you? The coaching?

P2: No, I found everything was the perfect way and fitted with how I would want it to be. I found it just right.

Post Coaching Interview P3

Researcher: Describe your overall experience of life coaching.

P3: When I went into it I didn't think I was going to get much out of it, but after the first session I got the necessary strategies and everything to help me with my studies and ever since I have done the life coaching my marks have improved, so I think it helped me a lot.

Researcher: What sort of strategies?

P3: Just methods, studying methods, so ways to lift the stress off of me. So, for example, she helped me with ways to take the stress off tomorrow. With study periods where I don't over complicate everything and things that will help me study without actually studying, going over my notes when I'm standing in a queue at a shop or when I'm in the car.

Researcher: What was the high point for you of the coaching experience?

P3: That I got a balance between my personal life and my school life.

Researcher: What does balance mean to you?

P3: I made time for my studies so at night I wouldn't have to study when I'm with my mom that I could study in the day and then after my mom goes and sleeps then I know I have study now before I sleep, but then I get enough time to sleep as well, and I put the important things. There is this diagram she helped me with, the four quadrants of time, and that helped me a lot because then I put everything that I need into them, the important section and the not important section, the least important section and the non-existent section. So I know what I have to do today and what I have to do tomorrow, so stress is just better overall.

Researcher: Were there any low points for you?

P3: There were some things that didn't work for me, but then we spoke about it and then we went onto something new that did work for me.

Researcher: What didn't work? What do you mean by that?

P3: She said to me, set your intention in the morning. Sometimes I couldn't look at myself in the mirror and say to myself 'P3 you are going to have a good day' so she said to me make a point of it when you in the bath to just say to yourself, you don't have to look at yourself in the mirror, just say to yourself 'I'm going to have a good day, I am not going to be so stressed about this test', I'm going to be good in this test today". She said to me, instead of looking at yourself in the mirror and putting stress on yourself to say it to yourself. Just, when you're in the bath in the morning, say it to yourself. That's an example.

Researcher: Any other low points.

P3: Not really.

Researcher: Did the life coaching meet your expectations? From what you were expecting going in?

P3: No. It's nothing like what I expected. Nothing.

Researcher: In what way?

P3: I expected life coaching to be more like a therapist, and it is not that at all. You tell them what your problem is and they give you strategies they don't tell you what to do they give you strategies to overcome it and you do it yourself, and then you report back and say did it work, did it not work.

Researcher: What goals did you set, and how did they go? Did you even set goals in the process?

P3: The only goal we set was to balance my personal life and my school life.

Researcher: And how did that go?

P3: Very well. That was the main thing in every session and mostly about studies, my studying. So my study periods and strategies and things like that to help me study better and remember my things.

Researcher: On a scale of 1 to 10, how prepared do you feel to deal with challenges that come up in your life?

P3: I would say about an 8.

Researcher: Why do you say an 8?

P3: I'm not on 10 because I don't believe I can be on a 10, no one can actually be on a 10. But, why I say an 8 is because I can at least try and that is what life coaching also taught me. You can always try even though you don't see the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow just carry on walking and then you'll see it.

Researcher: On a scale of 1 to 10, how confident do you feel in yourself and your abilities?

P3: About a 7.

Researcher: Why a 7?

P3: Because there will always be doubts but like I say I know I've studied now and when exams come I can just revise it, so I don't have so much stress on my shoulders, so I just revise my work because I know that I know my work.

Researcher: So, if you had to describe life coaching to somebody else, what would you say?

P3: I would say you need to know what your challenges are because life coaching isn't you talk to someone and they help you through it. It is you talk to someone, and they give you ways to get through it. I know I am saying the same things over and over, but that is the way I see it. She gave me so many ways of overcoming the things, we focused, on school, so she gave me ways of overcoming a problem when I have at school, just forget about it, set a new intention and carry on.

Researcher: Would you want to continue with life coaching?

P3: My mom says I should, and I would like to.

Researcher: So even though your mom says you should, you would like to?

P3: I would like to.

Researcher: How do you think life coaching fits best into your life or a student's life in general?

P3: You need that person from the outside that doesn't know you personally and also doesn't know anything about you to listen to what you are struggling with and give you an opinion and just talk to you.

Researcher: Did you do all of yours over the phone, or did you do some face-to-face?

P3: We did it over the phone.

Researcher: And how did you find that?

P3: I found it fine because we still spoke to one another, so it wasn't really a problem for me.

Researcher: Do you feel that the coaching worked nicely because it was in your spare time, or do you think it would be something that you would like to have when you are at school?

P3: I would say, spare time.

Researcher: How have you changed through the process?

P3: My mom says I've become nicer because I'm not so stressed. I'm a very stressed person with my studies. I study 24/7, and since I've started with the life coaching I've put the time in for my personal life, and that's what I wanted to do so for me I did achieve the goal I wanted to achieve when I started.

Researcher: What could have improved the experience for you?

P3: What could have improved?

Researcher: What could have made the life coaching process better?

P3: I think if it was longer and we could've set more goals, but we could only set that one goal because it was a repeat every second week so we went over everything and since the first session we carried on with everything from the first session, and we developed more and more. So I think it would've been better over a longer period.

Researcher: I read through your journal entries as well, and I noticed you said there was a significant jump, in the last question, in the first session you said you were a five and in the second session you were a seven. Is there anything in particular, other than what you have mentioned that helped increase that confidence?

P3: I don't know. I think it was just after the first session, I was determined, and everything was going well because I stuck to what was said in the first session.

Researcher: Just more specifically, in terms of your stress levels, you spoke about strategies and those things that helped you, anything else. Anything in particular that stands out that helped you a lot with managing your stress levels? Any particular strategy?

P3: I would say my study sessions and every morning when I got up, Georgie said I must put a picture of someone that I admire somewhere that I can see it and every morning when I opened my eyes, as soon as I get up that picture is looking at me so I think that gave me motivation every day and that is one thing that I liked the most of what she said to me that would help me because they had been helping me a lot because when I look at my mental.

Post Coaching Interview P4

Researcher: Firstly, would you describe your overall experience of life coaching.

P4: It was really amazing actually. I learnt a lot for my first experience, and I would consider doing it again, and it was really nice. I really enjoyed it. I learnt quite a lot. It helped me throughout actually, and she gave me some advice, and I have used that throughout.

Researcher: What sort of things did you learn?

P4: I learnt time management and how to motivate myself. Tell myself to study. I procrastinate a lot, so she was telling me when I study, I must always tell myself, give myself a reward after I study. So if I study, I can go watch my favourite programme, and I am not very fond of reading. I don't really like reading, but she really showed me different ways so I could enjoy reading so it was really good and I finished my book by the way.

Researcher: What book were you reading?

P4: I was reading, 'Before I fall'.

Researcher: And you enjoyed it?

P4: I loved it.

Researcher: What were the highlights for you?

P4: Everything you know. The more experience and she really said a lot. I am able to apply what she said, and I will also apply it in the future, and I think I am ready to achieve my goals. I have achieved my goals already, so that's really good.

Researcher: Any low points? Anything didn't go as you expected?

P4: No. Everything went well.

Researcher: How did the experience meet your expectations, in terms of life coaching?

P4: I don't know how to answer this question.

Researcher: Going into it from what you knew, did it give you everything you were expecting?

P4: Yes, it did. It did meet my expectations because some of the stuff she explained I did in grade 7 when we had a lady to come in and she taught us about time management but right now I did it in more depth.

Researcher: And what did you enjoy most about the actual sessions?

P4: She just helped me a lot, and we clicked. It wasn't like I didn't want to do this again. I was actually looking forward to giving her my feedback and how I've progressed throughout the week.

Researcher: So, did you enjoy just the conversations or having someone to hold you accountable?

P4: Just everything. The conversation and having someone to actually help me achieve my goals and show me how I could achieve those goals and guiding me on how I could achieve my goals.

Researcher: On a scale of 1 to 10, how prepared do you feel to tackle life's challenges?

P4: Like a seven.

Researcher: Why a seven?

P4: That's good. I have improved from before, and I have become better and I am more confident right now, and things are becoming easier. I don't have a lot of stress on me. I'm more calm.

Researcher: And did life coaching help you with the stress?

P4: I wasn't that stressed, but it helped. Going forward, I won't be very stressed. I won't be as stressed. I would be more calm.

Researcher: And why? What's changed that you would be calmer?

P4: She told me if I feel stress or if I feel like there is a load of work on me, I should just take time to myself, and it will relieve the stress.

Researcher: On a scale of 1 to 10, how confident do you feel in yourself and your abilities?

P4: Seven.

Researcher: Seven as well?

P4: I think I could be more confident, but for now it is just a seven.

Researcher: Do you think with more coaching than confidence would improve?

P4: Probably, yes, it would.

Researcher: Would you want to continue with life coaching?

P4: Yes, I would. Not right now, but if I could, I would continue if I have any problems or if I want to achieve something else or if I need someone to talk to than I would consider life coaching.

Researcher: Do you think it is effective how it was every second week or do you think it should be every week or every now and then?

P4: I think it is effective that it is every second week because it gives you time. She will tell you that you should do this or that and it gives you time actually to work on what you have to work on. So it is better if it's every second week, not every week.

Researcher: Did you have any face-to-face sessions, or were they all over the phone?

P4: No, it was all over the phone.

Researcher: How did you find working over the phone?

P4: Good. It helped me. It was fine for me because going there is far and over the phone was fine. Nothing different. Everything was good.

Researcher: In terms of having a life coach, do you think that it works doing it in your spare time or do you think it would be nice to have a life coaching when you are at school, during school?

P4: Maybe during your spare time. When you say at school, do you mean like all the time?

Researcher: During school, so instead of doing it in your spare time, you would do it during school, as part of school.

P4: I don't know actually. But as part of school would also work because there are many challenges we face at school, you know. Between friends, teachers, schoolwork and always having a life coach there would be better because any time you're faced with a challenge it is there, and you can go there immediately.

Researcher: If you had to describe life coaching to somebody else and the benefits, what would you say?

P4: I would say you become a better person when you do life coaching, and it will help you grow and overcome challenges and achieve your goals.

Researcher: And how would you describe it? What is life coaching?

P4: Life coaching helps you with life. I can't describe it. It's there to help you like I said to become a better person and to achieve what you want to achieve in the future or fix your problems in life.

Researcher: I went through your journals. In terms of your benefits, you said it helps you achieve your goals, builds your confidence, anything else? Any other specific benefits that you feel you gained from this?

P4: No, it's just that it made me more confident and helped me achieve my goals.

Researcher: And what did you feel through the experience in terms of your emotions? How did you feel from before you started to now?

P4: I felt good. When I first started, I thought I hope this goes well; I was scared about what am I going to say, what is she even going to say but then throughout the process I felt good. I was like though 'okay this is good; actually, it's working'. I was more comfortable. It was good.

Post Coaching Interview P5

Researcher: Describe your overall experience of life coaching.

P5: It was very different from what I thought it would be because I thought that it would just help get through the small things when it was much bigger. It helped with finding smaller time gaps, and I feel like it's helped me a lot, especially with school and to manage myself. I feel that it has helped a lot. I just didn't think that would be the reason that it would do.

Researcher: So, it didn't have the same outcome as your expectations?

P5: Yeah, but I think I had a better outcome than what I was expecting.

Researcher: How so?

P5: Because I just thought it would be almost helping getting over things when it was like moving forward and helping improve things.

Researcher: So, what was the highlight for you?

P5: It would probably be like the small time management things because I really am not good with time management and it helped me with a few little tips that I can do now. So now I make little mind maps, and if I have five minutes on the way to school I pull up a mind map and then it sticks in my head because you don't understand how much the five minutes actually, what you can absorb in that five minutes.

Researcher: And any low lights, any low points?

P5: I don't think so, no. I really did enjoy it so I couldn't say there were any low lights.

Researcher: What goals did you set, and how did they go?

P5: I set a goal that I wanted to be more balanced, and I think that has, I did do that because I've been managing studying and still seeing my friends and family and health and all of that. So it has helped balance everything out which I am really pleased about.

Researcher: On a scale of 1 to 10, how prepared do you feel to deal with challenges that come up in your life?

P5: I think like an 8 or a 9 because it's the small things. She gave us stuff to do, like affirmations - in the morning you say like 'today is going to be a good day', and it has made me more positive, so I guess it's also helping if I do have something pop up in the future it will push me to get through it more.

Researcher: On a scale of 1 to 10, how confident do you feel in yourself and your abilities?

P5: That I would say a 9 because it has also improved that a lot.

Researcher: In what way is it a 9?

P5: I have become a lot more confident because she also said to us that if we do something and other people are always going to say 'well done' so you should do it yourself. It has made me a lot more self-confident, which is also very good.

Researcher: Would you want to continue with life coaching?

P5: I was actually speaking to her, and I said that I might come in for another few sessions if something does happen because I did enjoy it so much.

Researcher: How best do you feel that it fits in your schedule?

P5: I think that in the first few weeks, I think it was the first two or three weeks it fitted in perfectly and then in the last week I was busy studying and stuff, so that was a bit difficult,

but besides that it fitted in perfectly because she'd phone me and that is just a 45 minute phone call, so it really wasn't inconvenient.

Researcher: Did you do all your sessions over the phone, or did you do some face-to-face?

P5: I did two over the phone and two face-to-face.

Researcher: How did they differ?

P5: I don't know, I think face-to-face, I just enjoy sitting down and speaking to people, so I did enjoy that, but even the phone call was quick and convenient, so I think it was better that I did those for the last two because of studying.

Researcher: Do you think that it would benefit students if it was part of school?

P5: I actually think so because I feel like I didn't know any of it, like time management or any of the segments and I didn't know any of that stuff so I feel like if it was offered to the school a lot of people would know how to manage time so I think everyone could benefit from it.

Researcher: How do you feel you have changed through the process?

P5: To be honest I've been more determined to study, and I have had a lot more time, and I have been a lot more positive because of the applauding, not applauding yourself, saying 'well done'. That was one of my big things, just being a lot more positive and balanced and everything, which did help a lot.

Researcher: If you had to describe life coaching to somebody else, and what its benefits are, what would you say?

P5: I would just say that it could help get over certain things that you are going through and if you want to set a goal, then it could help you overcome that. It depends on how much time you have or how many sessions you go to, and it would help you be a lot more positive, and a few little small tips can really change, like small stuff that you didn't think about, if you did that than it could help a lot.

Researcher: And if you have to define it if someone said 'what is life coaching'?

P5: That is a tough one, I'd say, it's kind of like a not course, but it's going to someone, and then they give you small little tips to help you overcome something, so you have to do it yourself, but it's just them saying, because if I went to Georgie then she gives me a solution, but she asks me for the solution, so it's just someone who directs you, even though you know what to do, she just directs you to your goal.

Researcher: What could have improved the experience for you?

P5: I'm not too sure because I enjoyed it so much I couldn't say that anything could improve it.

Researcher: I read through your journals, thank you for that, here in your first session you said 'it would help you to re-evaluate how you deal and read certain situations' what did you mean by that?

P5: So in the first session I remember I was looking at a situation and then carrying on, like sweeping it under the carpet and then she said that I need to pull it out and break it down into the little sections and then focus on one at a time and then get through it instead of just sweeping it under the carpet I must actually deal with it and look deeper into it.

Researcher: What types of situations?

P5: I think in the first week I had an argument with my mom and I thought that I was right, because that it was I always think, and she just said take a step back and just think over what happened and think about what you could have said or should have said so I went back, and I did that, and I realised that wasn't very nice.

Researcher: Again, here you said 'it helps a lot with being more positive, helping with your moods and relationships with certain people', any people in particular?

P5: It was my mom because after my first session I spoke to my mom and I did better, and for now we have been perfectly fine, and it did help a lot, and that was who I meant.

Researcher: And what do you think has changed to improve that relationship?

P5: I think I just kind of, I've been more helpful, and she said I should, instead of just sitting in my room and doing nothing I should just make a cup of coffee, it was the balancing out of everything so just balancing it out and just giving that extra five minutes with my mom has helped a lot.