**Who are you? How to find out who you really are (without being defined by your career).**

Who are you? This is one of the first questions I ask every new client and the incredible thing is, most cannot answer it. Many of us rely on our work to define our sense of ourselves, but I ask clients to think about who they are outside of that.

You might be a CEO, an entrepreneur, an executive, an office worker or a creative artist, but while this is what you do, at the end of the day it’s not who you are. Parent, employee, boss, landlord, partner, husband, wife, investor, client, friend, sister, uncle, business owner, soccer coach, coffee aficionado . . . These are all examples of the many different hats we wear in our everyday lives. But these are roles we play, rather than who we are at our very core.

Finding out exactly who you are away from all these tasks and roles is liberating and offers insight into whether you’re on track, or perhaps way off it. The question is actually less, ‘Who am I?’, and more, ‘Who am I without my job, partner, career, home, car, hobbies, kids and family?’

At your current stage of life you have had a tapestry of valuable life experiences. Some will have been great, some good, others okay and no doubt some will have been bad, but each one has shaped who you are today. Together they provide you with all the information you need to tell you who you are and who you want to be.

Take a quick look at how you got to this point in your life, without getting caught up in the emotion of past experiences. Simply write down the experiences that have shaped you the most as a person.

Every action we take is preceded by a question, whether we know it or not. It could be as simple as: ‘Do I want to do this?’ Yet often we’re completely unaware of the questions we ask ourselves or how they shape our lives.

Learning to tune in to these questions is one of the most powerful ways to start finding the insight, inspiration and authenticity to live the life you really want. It cuts through the fog and overload in your mind to give clarity and simplify the picture of who you are and what you are trying to achieve. It also builds your self-esteem and confidence as you discover that many of the answers you are seeking lie within.

These questions will help you get started on the process of clearly defining who you are. Take time to consider each question fully and honestly, as they provide the framework to establish your values.

Who/what is most important to you?

Who/what are you inspired by and why?

What makes you smile or brings you sheer delight?

When have felt you were at your best, most passionate and alive?

What are your natural gifts and abilities?

What do you like about yourself?

What mistakes have you learnt from?

What hardships have you overcome?

What are you afraid of?

How do you want to be remembered by your friends and family?

What do you really want for your future?

Who do you need permission from to start taking responsibility?

What are you choosing to do?

What areas of your life do you most want to move forward in?

(Extract taken from *The Life Plan,* by Shannah Kennedy. Head over to [bookdepository.com](https://www.bookdepository.com/Life-Plan-Shannah-Kennedy/9780670078301) to order your copy or get in touch with Shannah [here](https://shannahkennedy.com/contact/) to find out about executive coaching options.