



# THE STARTUP GUIDE to Coaching Leaders



**by Steve Addison**  
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ADRIAN IS MY MENTOR IN  
BACKYARD RENNOVATIONS.  
HE'S THE GUY I WAS GOING  
TO PAY TO BUILD ME A  
COURTYARD AND GARDEN.

## Adrian

“I’m not going to build it Steve.  
You are.”

## Steve

“I don’t know how to.”

## Adrian

“I’ll teach you.”

Maybe he took this approach because he knew how limited my budget was. I like to think it’s because Adrian loves his trade so much he wants to spread the joy.

For the next nine months I spent every spare moment of my life digging, pouring cement, carting rock, moving soil, laying bricks and planting out. Now I have a beautiful paved courtyard and garden with dry-stone walls built out of Castlemaine rock. We saved some money. But even better, I did it. With some help from Adrian.



THINK ABOUT THE PEOPLE  
IN YOUR LIFE WHO HAVE  
HELPED YOU SUCCEED.  
WHO ARE YOUR ADRIANS?

## What did they do? How did they make you feel?

When I ask those questions these are the responses I get:

“They made me feel valued.”

“They helped me take responsibility.”

“They believed in me.”

“They listened.”

“They challenged me to be my best.”

“They saw what I could become and helped me get there.”

The tragedy is there are not enough Adrians to go around.

We all feel the lack of truly empowering relationships in our lives. But that won't change a thing. My challenge to you is to become an empowering coach to the people that God has placed in your life. Be grateful for the people who have invested in you. Learn from their example and go and do likewise.



WHAT IS AN  
EMPOWERING COACH?  
THE BEST IMAGE I CAN  
THINK OF IS A MIDWIFE.

There is no way the midwife is having that baby. She's not the one pregnant. Her job is to help the mother give birth. She's there. She's involved but the spotlight is not on her. It's on the mother.

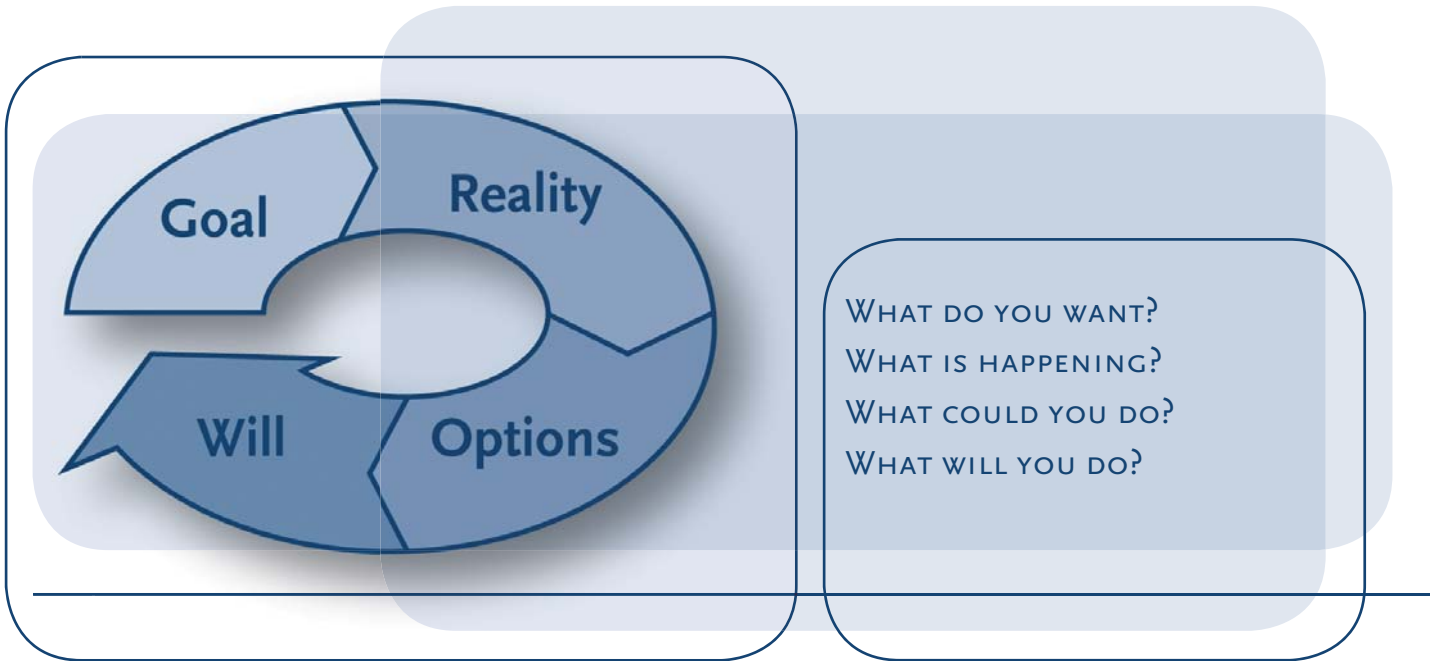
It's not about taking control. It's not about leaving someone to their own devices. It's about being powerfully present, helping someone else give birth. That's what an empowering coach does.

Sounds great. But what am I supposed to do? How do I make it happen? I'm glad you asked. The good news is you just need to know how to ask four simple questions.

The even better news is that you'll spend the rest of your life mastering them. Here they are.

1. **What do you want?**
2. **What is happening?**
3. **What could you do?**
4. **What will you do?**

As you can see it's not complicated. But I assure you if you implement this simple model of coaching it will change lives and one of them will be yours.



## **GOAL**

What do you want?

## **REALITY**

What is happening?

## **OPTIONS**

What could you do?

## **WILL**

What will you do?



Goal

## 1. GOAL WHAT DO YOU WANT?

The difference between coaching and direct supervision is that the coaching process is driven by the leader not the coach. If you don't like where the leader is going, don't coach that leader. Right up front you need to help the person you're coaching work out where they want to go. What's the outcome they want from the coaching relationship. Then you decide if you want to help them get there.

Here's a paradigm you may find helpful from Bobby Clinton. God's agenda in every leader's life is to shape them in:

1. **What they do: Ministry formation**
2. **Who they are: Character and spiritual formation**

The coach's role is to help the leader discern God's agenda in both realms of their development and to decide if they will go along with it.

The best coaching in the world can't change a leader who doesn't want to grow. Share the paradigm and ask them, "What do you want?" Then listen before deciding if you'll commit to coach this person.



Goal

HERE ARE SOME MORE  
QUESTIONS THAT WILL HELP  
DRAW THE LEADER OUT:

**“What does success look like to you?”**

**“Where do you want to be in 3 years time?”**

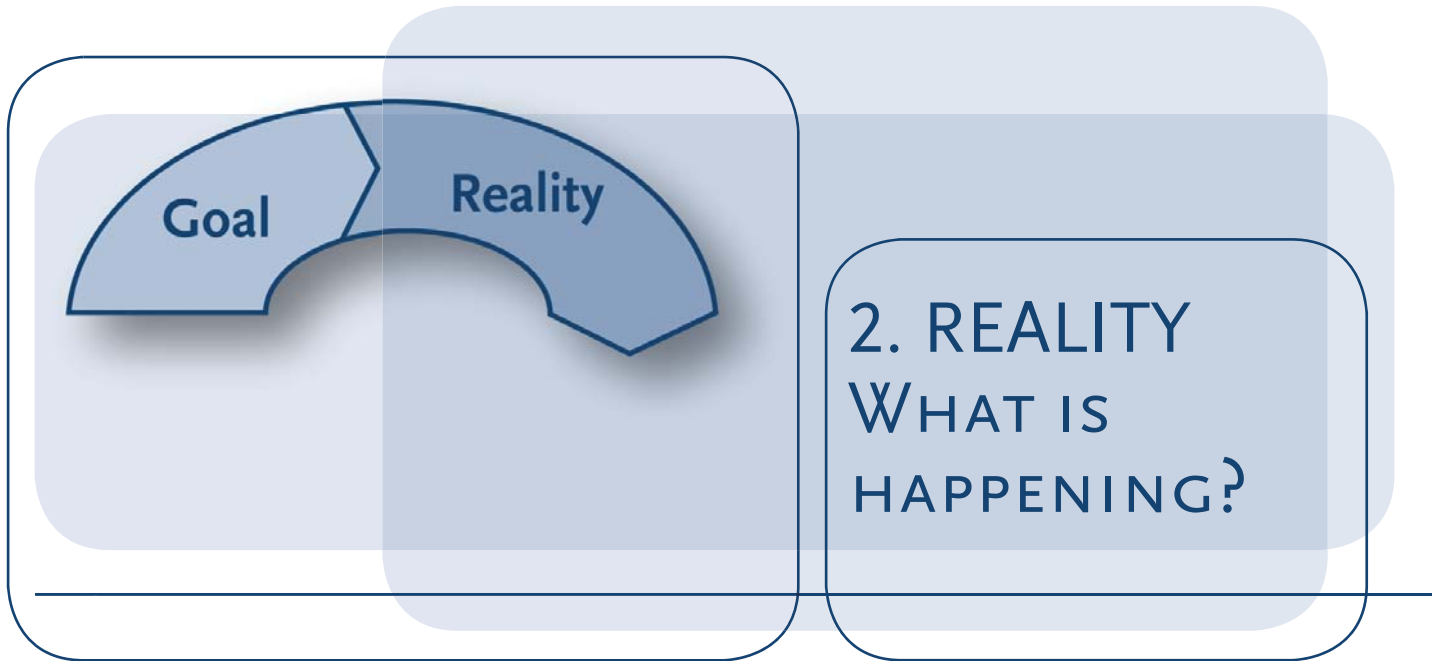
**“What do you live for?”**

**“What are you trying to achieve?”**

**“What outcomes do you want from the coaching relationship?”**

The truth is you don't start every coaching appointment with “What do you want?” Before you sit down you know the overall goal of the coaching relationship. But you don't know today's goal. In order to find out you need to jump ahead and then come back.

## You start each appointment with Reality.



I was passing through Sydney airport a couple of years ago and set up a face to face appointment with a church planter I'd been coaching over the phone. I started with "How are things?" For the next twenty minutes he just talked. I didn't need to ask another question. As I sat there in the airport lounge I began to wonder, "Am I really achieving anything here? He's just talking!"

A split second later, the guy stops in mid sentence, looks me in the eye and says, "Man it's good to talk to someone!"

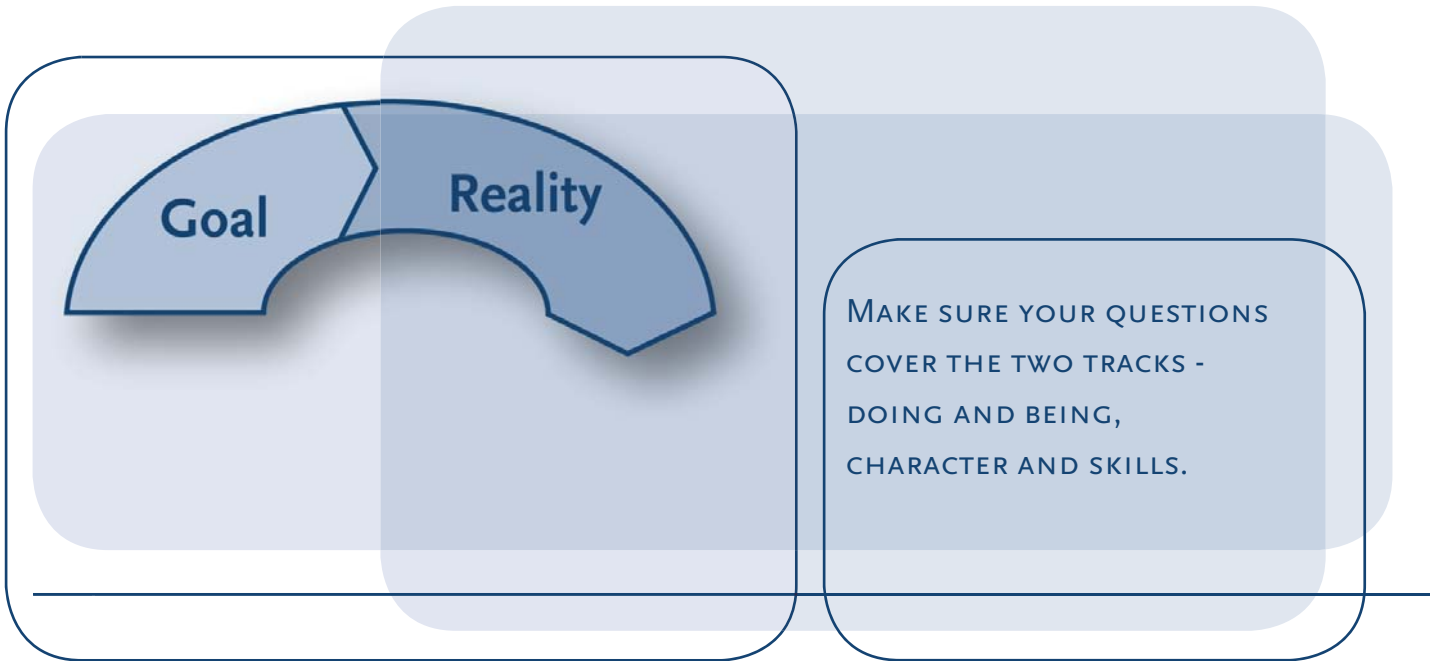
That's Reality for you. If you just ask, "How are things?" and close your mouth and listen with your heart you'll be amazed at what happens next.





PROVERBS  
17:28

Even a fool is thought wise if he keeps silent, and discerning if he holds his tongue.



## You can ask

**“What can you celebrate?”**

**“How are things at home?”**

**“How’s the team going?”**

**“How are you and God doing?”**

**“What are you learning about your role?”**

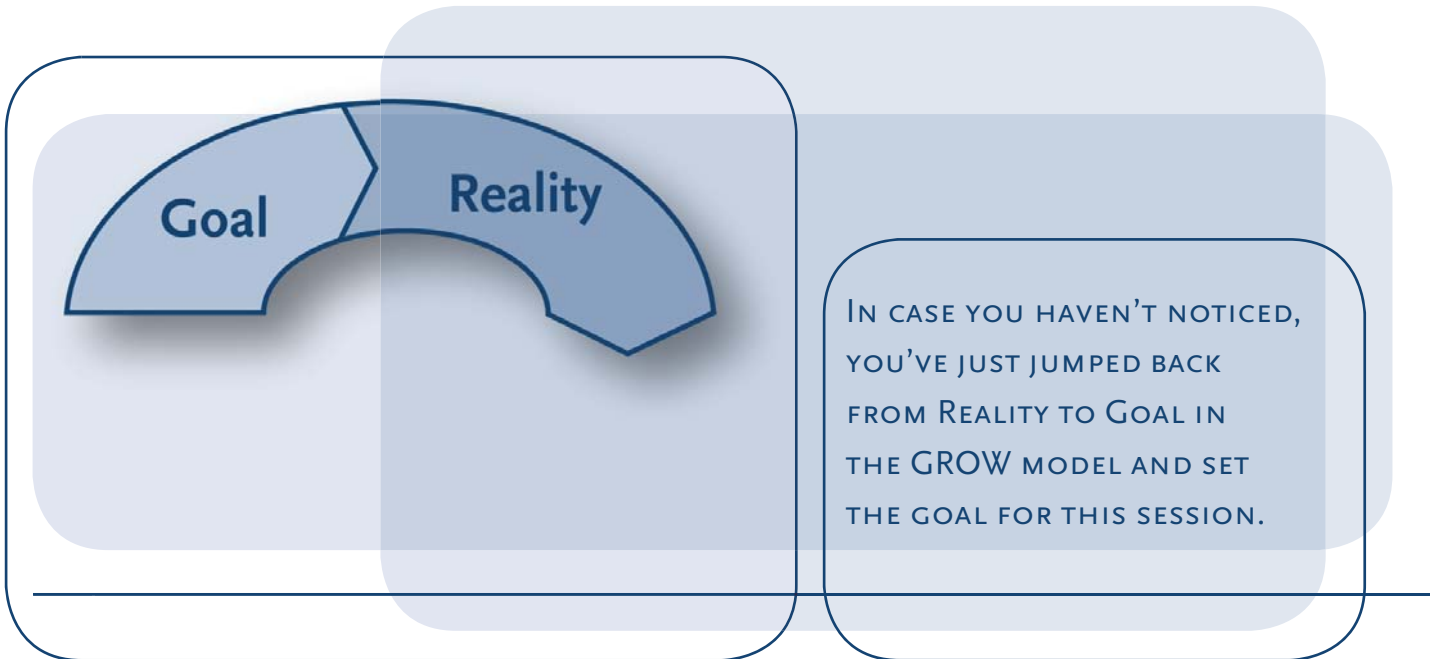
**“How have you been challenged lately?”**

It’s ok to jump around a bit before going deep into one issue.

Sooner or later that one thing becomes evident and you ask,

**“Would you like to talk about that today?”** (Back to Goal)

If it isn't clear ask, **“What would you like to talk about today?”** (Goal)



## GROW is rather like a washing machine agitator.

The circle rotates back and forth, back and forth.

Now it's back to Reality. But this time you dig deep.

Reality questions:

**“Can you describe what you’re facing?”**

**“What is going on around this issue?”**

**“What else is going on?”**

**“Can you draw me a picture of the issue?”**

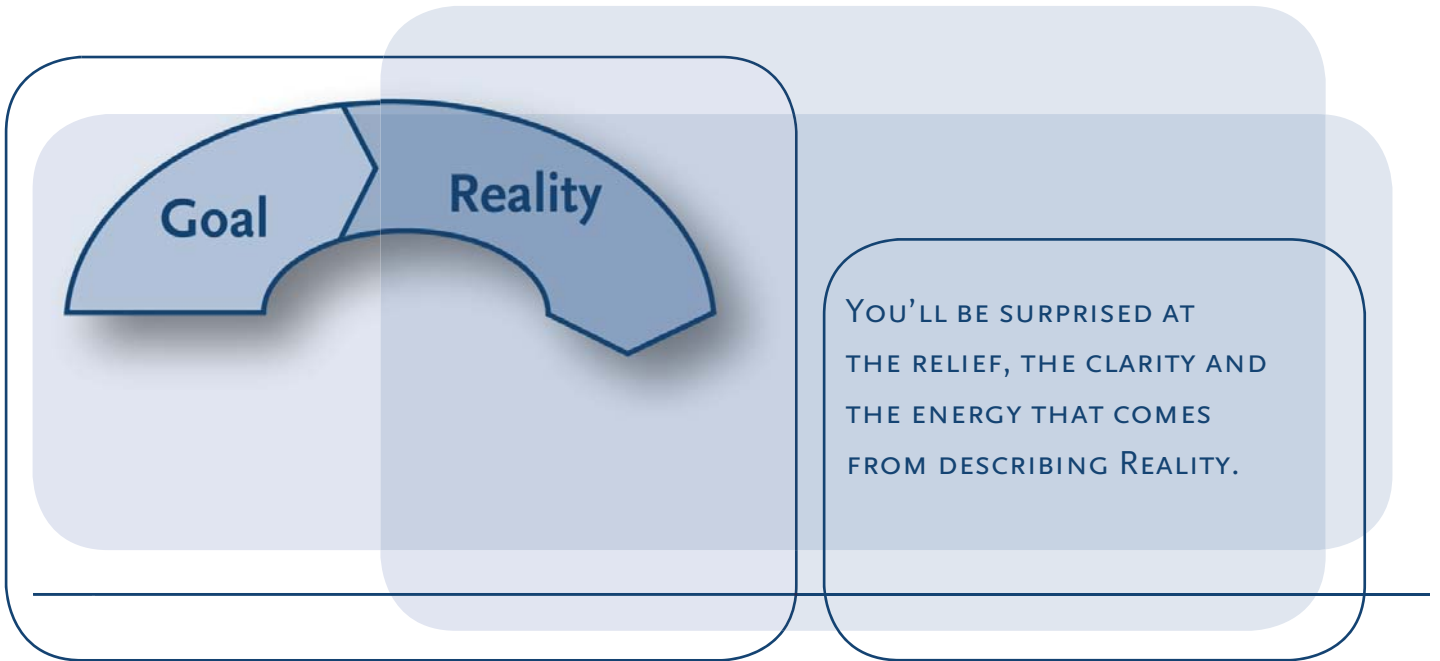
**“How are you doing in this?”**

**“What’s at the heart of this issue?”**

**“What’s going well?”**

**“What are you learning?”**

**“What are you reluctant to face in this issue?”**



## This is the most important phase of the coaching session. Remember, you're the midwife.

It's not your responsibility to understand their reality for them. It's your responsibility to help them understand their reality for themselves.

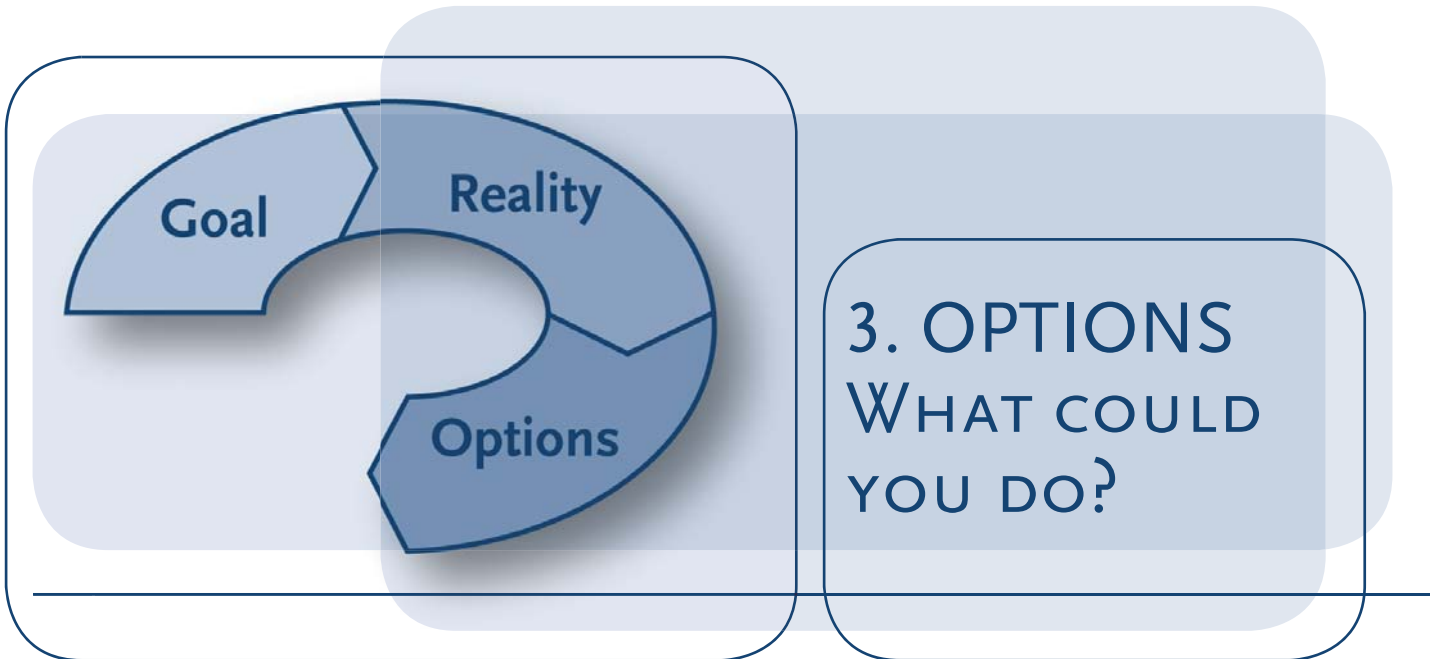
You are raising their Awareness of the issue so they can take Responsibility for what they need to do.

To help the leader take Responsibility it's time to move on to the next phase of the coaching session—Options.



GREAT  
COACHING

Awareness and Responsibility  
Reflect and Refocus  
Grace and Truth



The definition of insanity? Continuing to do what we have always done and expecting different results.

In the Options phase you want to help the leader think differently.

You want them to maximize their choices and improve the quality of those choices. How do you do that?

## You ask good questions.

**“What could you do to change the situation?”**

**“What else could you do?”**

**“What else?”**

**“What possibilities for action do you see? Even the ‘unrealistic’ ones.”**

**“If you did something different what would it be?”**

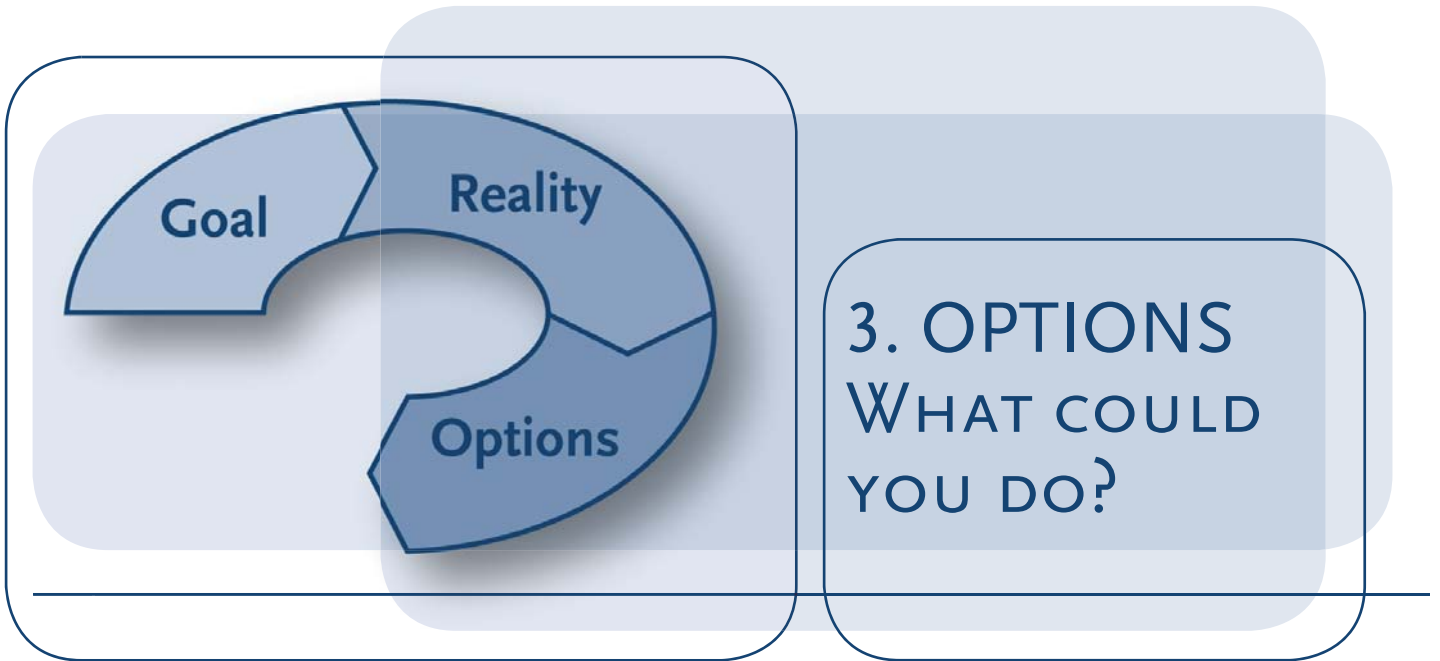
**“If there were no restrictions, what would you like to do?”**

**“What haven’t you considered?”**

**“Which options interest you?”**

**“What are the pros and cons of your options?”** (Back to Reality)

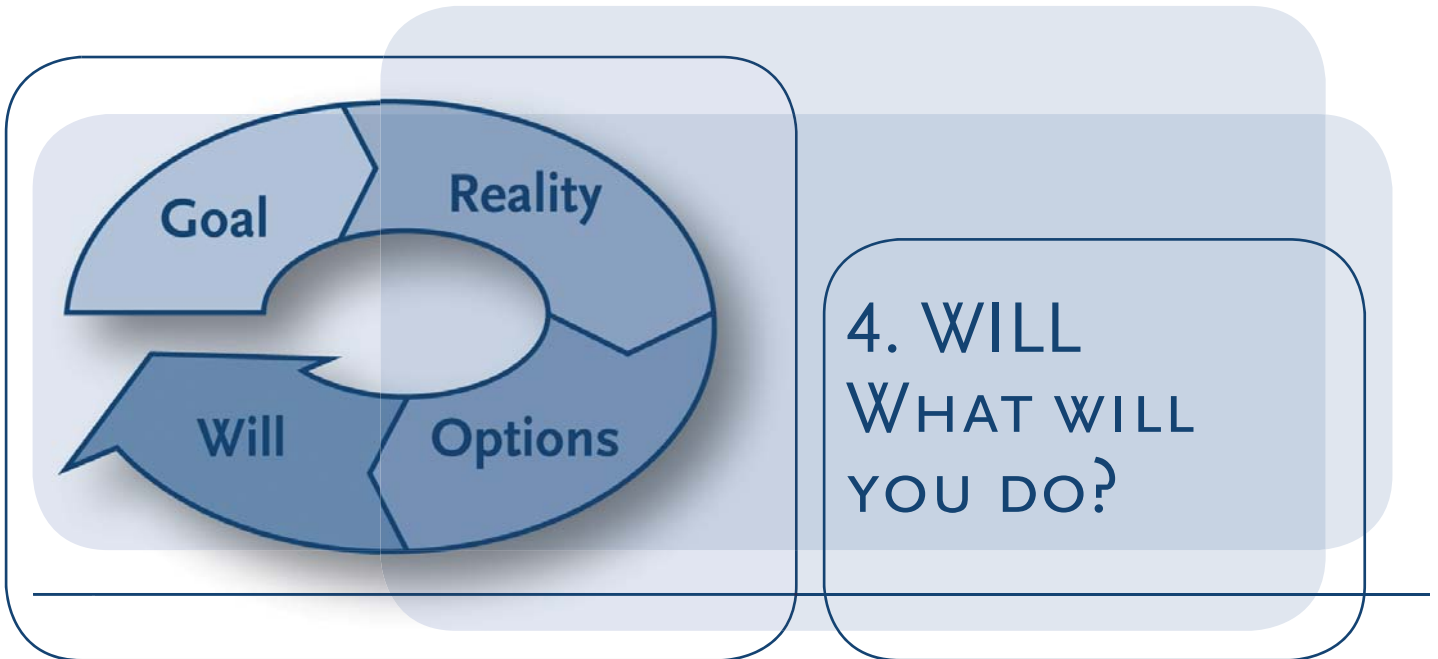
**“Which options will help you achieve your goal?”** (Back to Goal)



Only when the leader runs out of options and you get tired of asking, “What else?” do you offer your suggestions.

Even better, send them away to search out more options before your next coaching appointment.

Write the options down as you go so you can both look at them before evaluating and moving to the final phase—Will.



It's time to hold the leader's feet to the fire and make sure they commit to action.

How? By asking good questions of course.

**"How will you follow through on the best option?"**

**"Who else needs to be involved?"**

**"What obstacles will you face?"**

**"What support do you need?" "How will you get it?"**

**"On a scale of 1-10 how likely are you to implement?"** If they say "6" tell them there's no way it will get done. If they say "8" ask them why it's not a "10" or what will it take to get to "10".

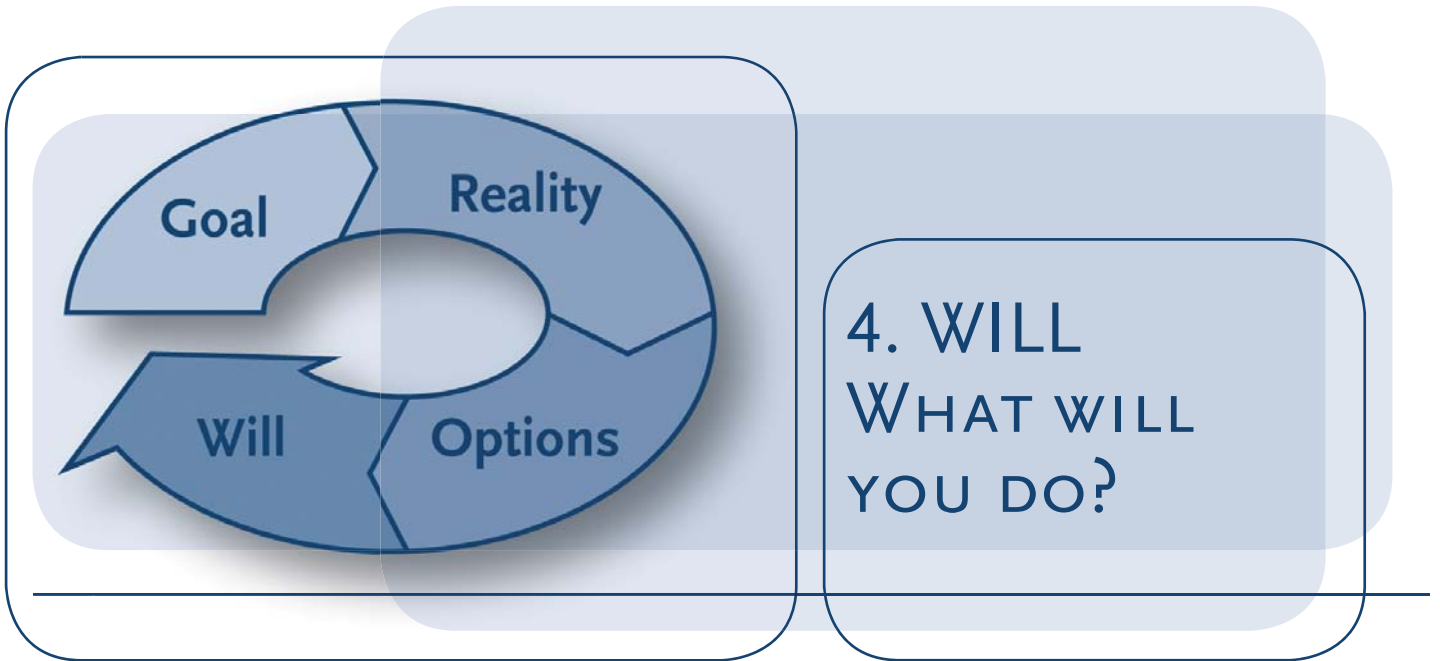
**"What do you need to drop in order to get this done?"**

**"What will get done before our next appointment?"**

**"What needs to go into your calendar?"**

**"When do you want to meet next?"**





Help the leader circle back to ensure it's the best Option, tested by Reality that matches their Goal. If you don't like what they have chosen, feel free to tell them but back their judgement whenever you can. And the next time you meet you get to ask "How did it go?" and "What are you learning from your successes and from your mistakes?"

## Never forget: you're the midwife not the mother.

GROW is only a technique to get you started on the journey of becoming an empowering coach. Along the way you're going to need more than technique. You are going to need a change of heart that only the life of Christ in you can provide.

Go on that journey and I guarantee one day leaders you coach will stand up in front of others and say, "This person has changed my life." And you'll wonder, as I do, how did I do that?

# EXTRAS

MY DEFINITION  
OF COACHING

5 QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN  
YOU'RE STUCK

## My definition of coaching

The relational process of co-operating with the Holy Spirit that unlocks a person's God-given potential so that they become more like Christ and make their unique contribution to the Kingdom.

## 5 questions to ask when you're stuck

**"I'm stuck. I don't know what to do with you. Can you help me?"**

**"Imagine yourself at the other side of this issue. How did you get there?"**

**"Can you draw it for me?"**

**"If you did know the answer, what would it be?"**

**"On a scale of one to ten, how important is this issue to you?"**



## WHO IS THIS GUY?

Steve Addison is a life-long student of movements that renew and expand the Christian faith. His calling is to empower godly leaders who multiply healthy churches, everywhere.

Visit Steve's blog at [www.steveaddison.net](http://www.steveaddison.net) for his latest insights.



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