Peak Experience Exercise

This exercise aims to identify those moments when you are absolutely at your best, when you are "in the zone". It is useful in identifying values for clients and can be used to help clients who are trying to make big choices around e.g. where they are going with their career, whether to change hours/retire/seek promotion etc.

What is it?

Peak experiences are when:

- You are not conscious of time passing because it is going so quickly and you are so absorbed.
- You are aware that you are doing the thing you were born to do.
- It is easy and effortless.
- There is core enjoyment present and just thinking about it now creates a warm feeling.
- Everything is going well; you know it will be successful.
- There is a kind of joyousness and fun in the activity; it is serious but playful.
- There is no self-doubt present.
- You are using all of your learned and innate skills and abilities.

How to identify peak experience

1. Think about a time in your life when some of the above conditions were present. It may apply to a particular few hours or to a whole period/project. Try to identify three or four strong candidates, at least one from your professional life and at least one from your personal life.

2. Describe to your coach what was going on for each example – tell the story:

   - Who was there?
   - What does that mean for you?
   - What was your part in what happened?
   - What was special about that?
   - What makes it so important?
   - What feelings do you associate with the experience?

3. The coach writes down all the key words/phrases that come up when you are telling your story – **without editing them in any way.**

4. Repeat for a second experience

5. Review the words together with you highlighting the top ten words/phrases for you.

6. Rank the ten words/phrases from one to ten in order of importance for you.

7. Use the top five "values" to assess the options that you are trying to choose between in terms of career crossroads or whatever issue you are working on. Which choice ticks the most boxes in terms of the values that you have identified?