

FAQ:  
Foundation  
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Qualification

## Foundation

*The quality of our ability to address problems will determine the quality of the life we live.*

Eric Russell is a beloved personal coach who's been called a "wise elder." For over 40 years, he's guided and mentored clients from around the world through troubling circumstances and uncertain life situations. He doesn't believe that you make lemonade when life gives you lemons. However, he does believe that when you get knocked down by life, it's better to stay down for a little bit, so you can better see the messes that need to be cleaned up.

In many cultures, challenging circumstances are considered to be necessary instruction, preparation, and initiation for what's coming next, and an important time to be accompanied by mentors who guide. This is how author and healer Sobonfu Somé, of Burkina Faso's Dagara or Dagaaba people, describes the Dagara adult initiation ritual and their philosophical framework for understanding life's challenges.

*"What you start to realize is that major challenges that you have gone through in your life are initiation forms. Those initiation forms are there to help you follow the next course in life, and if you do not follow those courses something in you dies."*

What's essential to know is that life's difficulties and problems are the technology used to prepare us for the next and subsequent phases of our lives. Each next phase requires the learning gained from the challenges previously resolved.

## Approach

*Theory of change*

- A. We grow better by adapting to circumstances that require adopting new resources. The difficulties encountered in life's challenging circumstances offer the most accessible opportunities to become better resourced and therefore, the chance to change for the better. Difficulty is a technology. A technology is simply a means to accomplish a task, using specialized processes, methods, or knowledge. Difficulty is just that, a means to accomplish the task of acquiring the resources needed to continue progress forward.
- B. Resolving problems is a daily task. In fact it's how we navigate every moment of life. We're continuously confronted by problems (questions) that need solutions (answers) that we act on. Typically, they're mundane and without real consequence (e.g. jeans or khakis?). However, we also face problems that if resolved poorly carry significant consequence (e.g.

speeding to avoid being late). Living is a succession of solving problems, ones we've already resolved and acted on, ones we've yet to encounter, some easy, some hard, some of no consequence and others that will shape our lives.

- C. By solving the inevitable, difficult and challenging circumstances that we experience we're freed to continue progress through life and better prepared to respond to an unknown future. Challenges are therefore an initiation process that prepares us to accept the invitation into next the phase of life.
- D. Replacing the way of living that contributed to challenging circumstances with a framework, strategies and practices to skillfully be in, move through, and effectively resolve challenging and adverse circumstances.

## Qualification

### *"A wise Elder"*

More than 40 years of worldwide coaching experience matters. His work focuses on addressing difficulty in life and establishing well-being. He works with individuals and within organizations. Additionally, over his long career helping clients address their life emergencies Eric has honed and developed expertise as a crisis interventionist.

Eric isn't new to the industry nor attempting to establish himself, find a niche or develop expertise because he's accomplished all of that and more. He is a veteran coach, not someone early in their practice trying to figure it out. As a Master Coach Eric meets the 5 foundational qualifiers: Length of time in practice; Quality of coaching skill and client results; Education and training; Sharing expertise; and complimentary life experiences.

- With over 40 years in practice worldwide, longevity is one of the critical factors that contribute to how Eric has distinguished himself as an expert coach.
- Client's achieving the results they want (see testimonials) provide clear evidence of the excellence, value, and effectiveness of his work. It is quality that only coaches with his level of expertise can consistently deliver.
- Beyond coaching certification, Eric's coaching is significantly informed by his academic studies at Brown University where he earned a BA in Organizational Behavior (the study of human growth, development, behavior and being in systems). It is the academic coursework excellent coaching requires: behavioral psychology; sociology; statistics; history; societal change; organizational and systems design; learning theory; ethics and morality; religion and belief; critical reasoning and decision making; management and leadership; and philosophy, culture and ideology. He continues to expand his knowledge through ongoing professional development, extensive reading, and working in collaboration with other high-level coaches.
- All coaches need practical training in coaching which is best operationalized through apprenticeship or mentoring. It's how coaching skills are developed, and coaching competence begins. Eric was apprenticed by a master coach and educator while in college (where his actual coaching practicum began). Post college Eric continued that mentoring relationship for 10 years, during which he founded his own solo practice.

- Eric's often called upon to share his knowledge and expertise. Recent highlights include: TEDx Talk at University of Paderborn Germany (2021); featured as a speaker and workshop leader for National Education Association NH (2019 – 2022), National Association of Fundraising Professionals (2021); Huddol (2020 – 2021).
- His life experience includes: roles as a senior officer in financial services industry, development professional, chairman and nonprofit board memberships, faith community leader (retired), past adjunct faculty member, business owner, former school board member, and more. He's a father and grandfather, son, brother, musician and performer, author, athlete, and coffee lover.

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