

Coach enjoys making a difference

By DENISE DEVEAU
for Metro Toronto

It took Sophie Cousins-Mathewson more than 25 years, but she finally found her true calling. As the president of Prism Group International, Cousins-Mathewson is one of a growing number of professionals known as business and/or life coaches. As a professional coach, Cousins-Mathewson does everything from helping people through personal transitions to working with businesses to help them find better ways to communicate.

Before becoming a profes-

sional coach, Cousins-Mathewson ran a maid service for 13 years. She found that while building a business was challenging and fun, what she loved most was connecting with people.

"I wanted to find an outlet to develop that," she adds.

When someone suggested coaching in 2001, Cousins-Mathewson started doing some research. She discovered at the time there were only six accredited coach training schools in the world. One of them was the Coaches Training Institute (CTI) based in California which ran courses in Toronto. She

has since taken additional Teleclass courses through Corporate Coach U to upgrade her skills.

Coaching has taken hold since those early days. The International Coach Federation's Tom Schulz says there are now 39 ICF accredited training schools worldwide. With more than 11,000 members the ICF, which has a GTA chapter, is the largest global organization dedicated to the coaching profession.

According to a 2006 survey by the International Coach Federation and PricewaterhouseCoopers, there are some 30,000 professional coaches



Sophie Cousins-Mathewson

worldwide. Sixty-nine per cent of these are women working full time and part time.

Given a choice, Cousins-Mathewson says she wouldn't trade her job in for anything. "I did this because I wanted to make a difference ... It's so neat that I can do that!"

For more on coaching visit www.gtacoaches.com.



Hi, I'm Sophie and I've made significant and bold changes in my life both personally and professionally. I consider myself fortunate in that I had the intuition that always drew me in the 'right next direction.' If I had the services of a professional certified coach, I would likely have made some of these changes sooner—particularly my last career transition. Given my history, genuine love for people, great intuition and now my professional coach training, I feel qualified and in integrity in **Life Transition Coaching**— 'I've walked the talk' in other words. In **Life Transition Coaching** we work with together to identify your unique abilities, strengths, weaknesses and passions; paint a vision that is right for you, develop an action plan; and then, you'll ready to act on the plan with continued support from me as your coach. If you are considering or in one of the following life transition phases, then life transition coaching is likely for you:

- **Career Transition**—within your current employment, to another form of employment, or to self-employment
- **Retirement or Semi-Retirement**—Painting a vision of the next phase of your life [couples welcome]
- **New Marital/Parental State**—whether you are contemplating marriage, find yourself an empty nester, or are now separated or divorced, your life as you know it is changing. We will work with you to help launch this new phase of life in a way that is right just for you.

"After a personal crisis, I found myself struggling to regain a clear, positive focus on life which required that I redefine myself and establish new awarenesses and goals. After several months of traditional counselling, I realized I needed to look ahead not back. I had read a newspaper article about Sophie's life skills coaching and felt sure that she would have the skills and strategies I required. I was not disappointed. Sophie consistently treated me with respect and sincerity. She showed empathy and concern and is a skilled, attentive listener. Sophie's extensive training allowed her to capably assess my needs and to suggest effective strategies to assist me in meeting the goals we had defined. Sophie is constantly building and broadening her expertise in the coaching field as she continues to take coaching courses. Sophie's enthusiasm, sense of commitment and dedication toward her chosen profession and her clients make her an admirable role model. As I look back over the past months I can easily see the advances in developing and attaining new goals that I achieved with Sophie's help. I would unreservedly recommend Sophie's coaching skills to anyone wishing to bring about fundamental change in their life." Darline J. Pomeroy

If you are considering or in a life transition phase, I invite you to contact me to set up a time to discuss your needs and how we might work together to help you identify where you want your life to go and how to successfully bridge that gap.



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