

Be a Coach, Not a Cult Leader

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To be a great coach, you have to love people's freedom more than you love being their guru.

When you get your kicks from being seen as the great and glorious guru, you become the kind of leader who instructs people in a way that makes them more dependent on your guidance.

When you get your kicks from helping a person wake up to the possibility of their own brilliance, you become the kind of leader who inspires people in a way that makes them less reliant on you, more trusting of their inner judgment, and always open to learning from new people.

This is the fundamental difference between a coach and a cult leader.

A cult leader wants people to obsess over his or her greatness. A coach wants people to overcome the obstacles that hinder them from unearthing their own greatness. A cult leader says "follow me, obey my teachings, and don't question my ways." A coach says "follow your priorities, trust your potential, and never stop questioning the way things are."

A cult leader says "I will make your life beautiful and amazing." A coach says "I will challenge you to take charge of your own life." A cult leader says "here are my instructions." A coach asks "what are your plans?" A cult leader says "you need me to be happy and succeed." A coach says "I am only useful to you when my knowledge is a servant to your goals."

A cult leader says "don't leave me or I will shame you or guilt-trip you. A coach says "go wherever you need to go, do whatever you need to do, and be whoever you need to be." A cult leader says "be loyal to me." A coach says "be true to yourself."

If you want to be a cult leader, keep reminding everyone of the special access you have to some esoteric source of knowledge. And whenever people talk about their own possibilities, always bring the conversation back around to your own greatness.

If you want to be a coach, however, never let a single soul enter your presence without you making an effort to encourage them, empower them and genuinely connect with them. And whenever people talk about how great *you* are, always use it as a segue to bring the conversation back around to their own possibilities.

P.S. If you really want to be a cult leader, please find a coach who can help you overcome your need to be superior to others. And if you can't find a good coach, then at least try to find a good definition of "greatness."

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