



Manifesto Musings

The guilt edge

For all our **my manifesto** experiences we use a coaching approach to support you draw out the content to create your personal manifesto. At the centre of the coaching approach is the question. Perhaps the most powerful question of them all is AWE – And what else? At first glance, this might seem to be a throw-away question, *Uh-hu, the coach can't think of anything else to say*, but it is anything but that.

Let's remind ourselves of the context: you are in the coaching session (online or in person) and have been deeply pondering a question that the coach has asked you, and the question it is not just small talk. It is personal and requires great vulnerability from you AND generosity of spirit to share your answer. You have achieved all that and just as the coach appears to be moving on from that question, they ask, *And what else?* In other words, is there any thing else that you may wish to add. This requires you to drill again into the mine you have dug, but to dig more deeply.

Why would the coach do this? Because on many occasions, you don't always come up with your best answer first. That answer may arise after you have been excavating for some time. Maybe it was buried deeply.

Or, you were not aware that you really felt *x* when you said *y*. It is only after you heard yourself say the one, that the other demanded to be your answer. Raising your awareness is, as pioneering coach Sir John Whitmore identified, the purpose of coaching.

At the very least, the question forestalls the coach adding something of their own. Why is this important? It is so tempting for the coach to become the mentor, the advisor telling the coachee what *they* think. This potentially sabotages the coaching process; rather than have *your* answers reflecting *your* life, you have the coach's.

In the personal manifesto experiences we offer, we use the term *co-create*. Even so, it is important for the integrity of the process that the coach mostly asks questions and synthesises and summarises your answers to test their understanding. However, beyond that, in our **my manifesto** service, the coach seeks to amplify your words to extend and uplift your statements. These amplifications are always suggestions only, for you to accept or not. The intention is not to replace but to elevate, even ennoble your words as enrichments to the way you see yourself and your life. This stretch is the guilt edge to the experience, what we call co-creation. We want you to shine.