

The Trouble With Advice

Why seeking answers is the beginning of the problem, not the solution.

The moment you go looking for someone else to solve your problem, you have already started failing.

Not because advice-givers are wrong — most mean well — but because seeking advice displaces the one thing that creates change: your own responsibility for the outcome.

Tony · FitFiliate · 2025

Everyone finds themselves, at some point, simply not where they expected to be.

"Just a little guidance would be nice." If I do not like where I am, and I know someone who was once here and is now somewhere better, I should ask them how they did it. So begins the quest for answers.

This is where the failure starts.

Advice, however well-intentioned, most often falls on deaf ears. The danger is not in the giving of advice — it is in the seeking of it. The moment you believe someone else holds the code to your solution, you have abdicated the responsibility.

What Abdication Actually Does

First, it creates an identity of incapability. It stops personal momentum, critical thinking, and development, and concludes that someone else can save you.

Second, it places responsibility onto the advice-giver. "They will help me." That belief puts the power in the helper and the responsibility with them. Your solution is now their problem.

You know this from the floor of your gym. The person who walks in asking for help. You are gladly willing. Almost immediately they do not do what you told them. Then the email arrives: "This isn't working for me, I need to try something else."

The problem with advice is it assumes the receiver is incapable of solving their own problem. That is almost never true. If you created the problem, you are capable — and responsible — for solving it.

The Advice Industry Problem

More advice is available now than at any point in human history. There is a course, a guru, and a funnel for virtually any problem you can name.

This has done something counterproductive. It has made advice simultaneously more accessible and less useful. Because access to information was almost never the actual problem.

The real question — the one the advice industry never asks — is: why, with all the information available to you, are you still in this situation? That question is behavioral. Behavioral problems do not respond to more information. They require understanding the root of why the information has not been acted on.

The Difference Between Advice and Coaching

Advice is training. Teaching. Telling. Done well, it requires the other person to learn. But in the absence of behavioral understanding, it rarely lands.

Coaching is different. Coaching asks: what is the barrier? Why is the known solution not being applied? What needs to shift — not in the information, but in the person — for action to become possible?

Courses and gurus selling information are not accountable to your result. They are accountable to the dissemination. When it does not work, they have testimonials proving it worked for someone else. It scales easily, requires minimal relationship, and reliably fails the person who needed more than a PDF.

Coaching does not scale easily. It is relational work. It requires staying with someone from beginning to end — understanding barriers and removing them.

What to do instead

Step back from the search for answers. Look instead at the root of the behavior. Ask not what you need to do to get out of this — ask why you are in it.

Advice is like winning the lottery. You receive the money without acquiring the skills to manage it. Like every lottery winner, you are likely to lose it.

Business is an infinite game. The goal is to keep playing. Seek a coach, not answers.