



Interview with Nutrition Coach, Khieanne Dawson

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Every day, health coaches support their clients and patients in making lasting life changes. I had the pleasure of interviewing one such health coach who has been coaching since 2019.

Meet Khieanne Dawson from New York. Read about her life experiences and how faith fuels her role as the health coach she is today.

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What motivated you to become a health coach?

Over 34 years ago, at the age of 12, I was diagnosed with rheumatic fever, which involved a heart murmur and edema in my arms and legs. My doctor told me that I had to take monthly penicillin shots for the rest of my life in order to prevent damage to my heart valves. I did this for six years until the Lord revealed to me that I needed to make a change to improve my health.

What brought about this realization for change was meeting some people who were very knowledgeable about living a healthy lifestyle, and I began learning how I could be healthier if I changed certain lifestyle and nutrition habits. I began eating whole plant-based foods instead of animal foods, and saw my health improve dramatically. I watched my skin clear up and felt my energy improve as time went on. After about two months, the edema was completely gone, and I had lost 10 pounds of excess fluid, which was from the chronic inflammation. Best of all, one year later, after visiting my cardiologist, there was no sign of a heart murmur, which was very pronounced before the diet change!

This was the beginning of a 28-year journey, which has added years to my life and life to my years. The diet change propelled me to make other changes to improve my mental and spiritual health. I thank God every day for this blessing, and so in 2016, I

decided to start a health coaching training program. The Lord called me to share with others what He had shared with me to improve my overall health, and the journey continues. My mission is to inspire others to live the abundant life they were designed to live and educate them on how to nourish their minds, bodies, and souls.

What kind of certification do you currently have?

I have a certificate as an Integrative Nutrition Health Coach through the Institute for Integrative Nutrition. At the time I decided to pursue this career, I was between jobs and decided to pray earnestly about the next step God wanted me to take. I said, "Lord, I want to make a difference in the lives of others. I don't want to just have a job for job's sake." A past co-worker had shared with me that he had done this program and encouraged me to look into it. I began investigating, and what followed was a series of providential events that told me without a shadow of a doubt that this was the path God was leading me to.

What is your current coaching specialty?

Nutrition coaching. I coach clients using my signature program, The 90-Day Whole Body Transformation Program. I especially work with

Adventist women ages 35-75. My overall framework is based on the 8 Laws of Health as given to us through the Spirit of Prophecy.

How long have you been a health coach?

I've been a health coach for 7 years. I completed my training in the Fall of 2017 and registered my practice in the Spring of 2018 while I worked for another company and started putting things together to launch. I started doing health events in the beginning of 2019 and actively [started] coaching in the Fall of 2019. That Fall, I was impressed to start coaching full-time in January 2020, which is what I did.

What surprised you about health coaching?

There are a few things that surprised me. Firstly, I didn't realize how much personal development I would have experienced. I learned a lot more about myself than before and saw areas that I needed to work on. Understanding why I choose the things I choose, good or bad, helps me better understand my clients. Secondly, I was able to be a better wife and mother, to learn better communication and relational skills, to improve my understanding of human nature and mindset, all contributing to being more present with my loved ones and using productive conflict resolution tools. Thirdly, on the

back end, I had to learn a lot about running and managing my practice. I had to get comfortable being "uncomfortably" out of my comfort zone to where it now has become the norm. It doesn't feel as foreboding as it once did. Praise God for growth and His strength and power He has given me to persevere!

What are you hoping to accomplish in your coaching career?

I'm hoping to accomplish my mission of equipping individuals with tools to fuse food, faith, and fortitude for optimal health and wholeness. At the end of my life, I would like to know that I made a difference in my family members' lives and the world. I would like to know that my work was impactful and many lives were transformed as they walked closer with the Lord and lived the abundant life He promised: physically, mentally, and spiritually.

What do you know now that you wish you knew early in your coaching career?

I wish I knew earlier how to execute plans to have a good life/work balance. I now know that I must carefully plan, schedule on my calendar, and prioritize family time and not allow work or other volunteer commitments to bleed out into

family time. Time with family is very precious and is my second priority [with] the first being my relationship with God.

What are some things you enjoy as a health coach?

I enjoy seeing the light go on in the eyes of my clients when I've walked alongside them and assisted them to reach a breakthrough and get unstuck in their health journey. It makes my work very rewarding to watch them progress and thrive. I especially love it when they'll go to their doctor for a check-up and they're told all their numbers look great when they weren't before. I especially remember a client who was in her 70s, tell[ing] me that her doctor told her that her blood work looked like a baby's. She said, and I'm paraphrasing, I know that someday I will pass away, but I'm very grateful for all you've taught me to help me improve my quality of life while I'm alive.

What are some challenges you experience while being a health coach?

There are times when I see a client is having a difficult time being consistent in implementing their action plan to reach their goals. I've learned that I cannot want the best health for

my client more than they want it for themselves. For them to get the desired results, they have to put in the time and the work to accomplish their health and lifestyle goals. They've got to be willing to push past the discomfort of change and consistently walk in the right direction. This is why when talking to prospective clients, I find out how ready they are to do the hard work of transforming their health. For success to happen, the right mindset must be there before starting the program. Notwithstanding, when they get to a place where they're not consistent, I pray first then ask questions to help them uncover the root cause, and we work together to get them unstuck.

How have you used coaching in ministry?

I've had various ministry roles over the years and some currently [including] Health Ministry Director, Women's Ministry Director, Music Coordinator, Community Services member, and being a member of my Conference Executive and Personnel Committees. I have also gone on international mission trips and ministered in my community, among other roles. My coaching skills have come in handy in every role, especially being an active listener. It has enhanced my leadership skills tremendously as well as helped me to effectively minister to those in need.

What are three things you'd like to share with potential coaches?

1. Don't be intimidated by feelings of imposter syndrome. No one knows everything so whatever you don't know, you can research and get back to your clients if they ask you a question you cannot answer. Seek the Lord in every decision you make and walk in His confidence when He reveals to you your action plan.
2. If you have your own practice, you get to create your own schedule, so make time for personal worship time with God, family, rest, and recreation to balance out the hours of coaching that can drain your energy. Also, avoid scheduling sessions back-to-back to have some cushion time in between. As much as you love what you're doing, it's important to make time to decompress and recharge your batteries so you can keep showing up for your clients and giving them your best. As a wife, I help my husband in various ways, being a support and working together to achieve the goals of our family. As a mother of four with children ranging from ages 27 to 3, my role shows itself in different ways based on my adult children's and my toddler's needs. I've learned to be more present and supportive and show them how to practice

good self-care while also making a difference in the lives of others. If you have a family, it's super important to make space for family time and other important things outside of your occupation.

3. Know your worth! Scripture tells us in Luke 10:7 that "the labourer is worthy of his hire." Don't sell yourself short and undercharge. Your services are worth being paid for. It's good to offer some things for free, and you also get to use good discretion in charging a fair rate for your work. Seek the Lord in this as well.



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