

## Coaching vs. Therapy

Dr. Lee Smith, Coach, wrote this in 6/96 (please credit if sharing)

### Basic Differences Between Therapy and Coaching Professional Approaches

#### Who They Work With...

Therapists work with people who are diagnosable.

- \* The fit into DSM IV categories.
- \* They are dealing with dysfunctions that are quantifiable like depression, anxiety, dissociation, addictions, etc.
- \* People dealing with old pain, old issues, or current traumas in their lives.
- \* People who are having difficulty functioning.

Coaches work with...

- \* People who are healthy and happy with their lives and there is no diagnosable mental state or disease.
- \* People who are designing their future based on having a strong personal foundation.
- \* People who want to double their income, have more joy in life, get the most out of business and life pursuits, etc.

#### Approach...

Therapists do:

- \* Mandatory face-to-face sessions.
- \* Usually does not give advice. Does not tell the patient what to do.
- \* Helps the patient resolve old pain and cut through old defenses (coping mechanisms)
- \* Helps patient correct cognitive distortions.
- \* Teaches how to be less reactive by changing behaviors.
- \* Helps with Empowerment.
- \* Listens and reflects.

Coach's Approach:

- \* Meetings usually conducted by phone, sometimes in the office, or on the internet.
- \* Advice giving is in many forms, one of making large requests for having dramatic advancements in life with coach not attached to outcome of requests.
- \* At the same time Coach is careful not to give advice outside of their own expertise. Refers out for therapy needs.
- \* Helps the client learn new skills and tools for building and growing business, career, life.
- \* Helps client get clear on value (what is important) and matches future goals and outcomes to those values.
- \* Encourages and requests proactive behavior.
- \* Helps with Empowerment.
- \* Listens, reflects, and problem solves. Does not allow for large amounts of negative time.

#### The Relationship

Therapist:

\* Therapist- patient relationship is an alliance totally related to the knowledge of the patient's issues. The growth of the therapist is not an issue.

\* Patient is not allowed to know the personal particulars of the therapist

\* Strong boundaries involving stated legal and ethical limits and guidelines.

\* The therapist is required to handle patient emergencies.

\* Therapist may carry pager.

The Coach:

\* An equal partnership-

\* Coach may share some personal information.

\* Coach puts self second, while operating as a business partner. Many times coach experiences personal growth simultaneously with client.

\* Coach and client share information while the Coach is guiding the client toward understanding and growth.

\* Awareness of stated boundaries. High level of ethics in place.

\* No emergencies. No pager needed.