

Q. What is coaching?

A. Coaching is a **co-creative process** that generates **transformational conversations!**

Building rapport and *establishing trust* is of paramount importance. Coaching is a partnership and collaborative relationship.

The International Coach Federation (ICF) defines coaching as, "*partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential*".

Professionally qualified coaches are trained to listen, to observe, ask thought-provoking and challenging questions, provide honest feedback and from there to customize their approach to their clients specific needs.

Coaches support, challenge, and create an environment where you can share your thoughts in a safe, non-judgemental and strictly confidential place.

This process is incredibly life affirming and powerful. This guidance and process enables you, the client, to move towards a better understanding of yourself. As a result you will develop more confidence, identify further options in your life, think differently, try out new skills, and gain a much greater sense and awareness of self-worth.

In other words, you start understanding that you are much more than what you thought you were. A Coach helps you to identify those things that may be sticking points in your life – i.e. blind spots, beliefs and values that may be holding you back from experiencing who it is you really are - or are aspiring to be.

Q. How does coaching differ from consulting?

A. Professional coaching is a distinct service focusing on the client, who is regarded as creative, resourceful and whole. A coach may work with clients to determine goals, create outcomes and manage personal change while keeping the client accountable to his own *vision*. Consultants are retained to access specialized expertise.

The assumption is that a consultant diagnoses problems, tells the client what to do and how to do it and may implement solutions. Coaching works from the belief and knowing that the client is already functional and in fact capable of accessing their own inner abilities and talents to transform their lives. In other words coaching is interested in transforming functional people to exceptional people. So in a nutshell, *consulting then is about advising people*.

Q. How is coaching different from mentoring?

A. A mentor is a guide, a teacher, a guru, a trusted confidante perhaps who *directs and teaches you and provides you with the information you seek or are required to have*. The mentor is seen as the expert, the holder of knowledge so to speak.

The relationship is again different to that of the consultant or the counsellor or therapist. The coach sees you as the expert, you as the resourceful person and sees you as your source of wisdom and information.

Q. How is coaching different from counselling and therapy?

A. Counselling and therapy may address past or present issues that are occurring in your life. Counselling and therapy may focus on healing pain, dysfunction and conflict within an individual or within relationships.

Coaching is based on the now - in the present. It is progressive, forward-moving, and future-focused. Coaching views clients as functional, creative, resourceful, and whole individuals exploring what is possible for them in their life as they aspire to transform their life and get more out of it.

In simple terms, therapy and counselling is more aligned to get dysfunctional people to a state of being functional. In direct comparison, coaching is taking functional people towards being exceptional people.

Q. How do I determine if coaching is the right approach for me?

A. Coaching is an effective way to jump-start your personal, spiritual and professional development. Being open to the learning process is the first step in your personal journey towards your best expression of yourself.

Whether it's adapting to change, identifying your next career step or addressing performance challenges. This experience leads to a more positive and clearer sense of direction and appreciation of who it is that you are. You will live with a greater awareness and appreciation of those areas you need to further develop and manage, and those areas you have totally transformed in your life.

Q. How can I be prepared and ready to start the coaching partnership?

A. The coaching partnership requires a commitment to the process. You will need to invest your time into this experience, and have a genuine willingness to work and co-create with a coach with a can do attitude and mindset. Be prepared to challenge your pre-conceived ideas about yourself and your life - and be open to change.