

Coaching Skills 2023 Follow-up Notes- Tree of Life and Hope Diagnosis

Hope Diagnosis

In this final session, we briefly covered a new framework: hope diagnosis. Here, I wanted to build on our previous approach to frameworks. So, first, there is just coaching (using coaching skills such as asking questions). Then, frameworks are used to inform coaching (such as using the vocabulary associated with motivation theories to ask questions about motivation). Here, with hope diagnosis, we have gone to a third level. We are being informed by a framework, but that framework is also providing us fairly clear direction about what is going on, how variables are related, and guiding our coaching more specifically (such as choosing to brainstorm when you see a pathway thinking problem).

Tree of Life Activity

Here, we emphasized opportunities within a coaching session to use activities to help the client explore. Typically, these require informed consent/permission from the client. We focused on a large activity—the tree of life. I hope you practice facilitating this to learn how to do it. We have provided additional resources on this activity.

General Thoughts on Coaching

1. Coaching is engaging people in self-directed learning. Sure, there are many definitions of what coaching is and a number of overlapping ideas about how it works. Everyone agrees on some essentials. It is a conversational technology. It relies heavily on the relationship. It is a safe, reflective space. Ultimately, coaching is "facilitative." This means that We are not mentors or expert consultants. We believe in our clients' potential and help them gain self-awareness, plan, and make progress toward the goals they care about.

2. Coaching is process-oriented. Many coaches help clients solve problems. Fair enough. That is helpful. But coaching is most transformational when you focus on process over outcome. The outcome, simply put, is the client's responsibility. Coaches do well to focus on the process. The coaching process and the client's processes. A question like "How would you think that through?" is distinct from "What do you think?" Just as "How will you go about doing this?" asks for something slightly different than "What will you do?" Those "what" questions can also be good, occasionally, but not exclusively.

3. You know what to do, maybe not when to do it. You know dozens of coaching skills and many frameworks. You are smart and understand them conceptually. This course was about introducing

you to coaching and its skills and frameworks. I wanted you to build a specific vocabulary and understand each of these skills and frameworks. You have accomplished that. Next, you will be working on how to employ these skills. You have already started that process by practicing and receiving feedback. That is what the 100 hours of practice is for that the ICF mandates. To nail down the "how do I do this?" Thereafter, you will focus somewhat more on the "when." When should I or should I not employ X skill? As you practice, you will get better and better at this. If you attended all the class meetings and practice sessions, you probably had 1.5 hours of practice from those. And, if you coached a half hour a week with a partner, you picked up another 3 hours of practice that way. 4.5 hours of practice, and you have learned SO much. Imagine what it will be like when you have 45 hours of practice!

4. Every client is an individual. My intake sessions are standard. I use them to build trust, educate clients about coaching, and establish norms for our work together. Beyond that, each client is unique. I do not offer a standard assessment to every single client. I have to answer why this particular assessment seems helpful for this client in this situation. Similarly, I use more humor with some clients, and more challenge with others. With one - - I write all the notes and take responsibility for the learning capture. With others - - I would never do such a thing. Part of your facilitative job is figuring out how best to serve the person before you rather than just doing your standard thing.