

12 Simple Coaching Techniques

#	Coaching Technique	Usage	Example
1	Silence	The role of a coach is to help the client find their own solutions, not to give them your advice. When the coach experience a desire to share advice, just shut your mouth and count to sixty in SILENCE. Eventually, the client will say something to fill the gap. [Wait for the client to speak your thoughts]
2	Hold Up the Mirror	Sometimes the client (or the coach) gets too wrapped up in details of the story that they fail to notice a switch in the client's (or their own) tone of voice, demeanor and/or energy levels. Respectfully, HOLD UP THE MIRROR to the client to help them see what the coach is seeing. <u>Any time</u> the coach makes an inference, be sure to check-in with the client to confirm your inference is accurate.	"I sense you are feeling X right now. Is that correct?" "I just noticed that the mood changed from X to Y. Is that correct?"
3	Gather Alternatives	Most situations in life are not black-and-white. It is only our thinking that creates these false dichotomies. When the client's thoughts are dominated by either-or thinking, work with the client to GATHER ALTERNATIVES that will spur creative thinking and diminish power of the false dichotomies. If the client is at a complete loss, the coach <u>can</u> choose to prime the client's own brainstorming process by offering starter ideas.	"What are all the options - no matter how crazy - that might apply to this situation?"
4	Magic Wish	When all the client can see are the constraints associated with an issue, it is hard for the client to develop creative alternatives. In these scenarios, offer them a MAGIC WISH that will magically bring forth their perfect solution. This is a good technique to help the client bring to life their ideal reality with words, images and emotions.	"A wizard granted your wish last night and fixed the issue while you were sleeping. What is new? What is different? What has changed? How do you feel?"

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5	Pessimize	Occasionally, clients become fixated by fear of a terrible outcome that it dominates all their thoughts. PESSIMIZE with the client to discuss the probability (and impact) of the worst case scenario. Then, explore the more likely scenarios and how the client might respond in those situations. This is an excellent technique to demonstrate to the client their resilience and problem-solving skills.	"What is the <u>worst</u> thing that could happen?"
6	List the Steps	When the client is considering a big change, the gap between the current reality to the future state might seem really far. Apply this technique with the client to help them craft a step-by-step plan that shows how the client can reach their goals. If identifying the first step is the biggest challenge for the client, GATHER ALTERNATIVES to begin the journey.	"Tell me, step-by-step, how you might address this issue. [pause] What is step #1?"
7	Hold the Flame	Change is hard and sometimes the client might experience multiple setbacks before reaching their goals. When client is frustrated and feels like giving up, the coach can HOLD THE FLAME to be the client's #1 cheerleader and remind them of their agency.	"This problem can be solved and I know you have the capabilities within you now to resolve it." [Silence]
8	Second Opinion	Sometimes the client needs help stepping outside of the situation to consider alternative interpretations of events. Ask the client to image how their actions and words might appear on a (video)tape to a disinterested, objective outsider. SECOND OPINION is good technique for to help clients consider alternative interpretations of impactful events.	"What would an objective, neutral, third party say about this situation and your role in it?"

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9	So What?	This slightly provocative technique is designed to push clients out of their comfort zone in order to articulate the true reasons why they care deeply about an issue. Toss out the phrase, "SO WHAT?", about three times to get to the deeper meaning of a topic. Use this technique only when the coach and client have established rapport and trust, otherwise it comes off as flippant and disrespectful.	"So what?" [Pause to allow the client to explain their reasons why.]
10	Shrink It Down	Big (and dramatic) changes can feel overwhelming and induce paralysis within the client. This technique helps the client reduce the change to something more manageable, tangible and attainable. When the client brings this change to life, SHRINK IT DOWN offers a sense of accomplishment which supports future change.	"What is the smallest thing you can do right now that will make an impact?"
11	Powerful Questions	Certain questions spur dialogue, creativity and forward momentum and other questions induce the opposite effect. A POWERFUL QUESTION is any open ended question that cannot be answered with a simple "yes" or "no" response. The coach knows they have found the right question because it will stimulate reflection within the client and reveal previous unseen options.	"What is holding you back?" "How does that make you feel?" "What is it we are not seeing?" "What does that cost you?" "Who cares about this?"
12	Challenge Thought Patterns	CHALLENGE THOUGHT PATTERNS is about disrupting the status quo of the client's thinking to help them grow and expand as a person. It is important for the coach to hold a safe space for the client as they explore the implications of the coach's provocations. This is another technique to be used only after the coach have establish rapport and trust with the client.	"What if that did not work?" "What if what you think to be true, turns out not to be true at all?" "Why not think differently about that?"