

This document was given to me by my coach Sam House in 2001. He did not claim to be the author. I suspect it is a compellation of a number of edits made by several coaches over time.

WHAT IS CO-ACTIVE COACHING?

Coaching is a professional relationship that enhances your ability to learn, make changes, and achieve desired goals. Your coach helps you become clear about what you want to accomplish, set specific goals, make an effective action plan, stay focused, and eliminate obstacles. In a coaching relationship, you and your coach prioritize, plan, analyze, troubleshoot, and brainstorm. Your coach provides structure, feedback, perspective, skill-building techniques, and smart questions. Together, you evaluate options, make decisions, track your progress, and celebrate your achievements.

Coaching is not consulting, although it can be consultative. Traditional consulting offers answers and expertise. Coaching facilitates discovery by assisting you to find your own unique answers. Your coach provides his own expertise whenever it is useful, but never does things for you. The primary role of your coach is to listen, question, observe, pinpoint, re-frame, and articulate what's so. The plans you make are your own. Your coach is there for you. The coaching relationship is focused on you and your agenda for your life or your work, and your coach's opinions are yours for the asking.

Coaching is not teaching, although it can be educational. While teaching can fade, coaching reinforces learned concepts and skills until they become second nature. Your coach often provides skills training in the "need-to-know" moment that formal teaching misses. He also helps you discover how much you already know. You learn more by discovering answers than by hearing them. Your coach knows that you know more about what you want than he does. Your coach is on the path of discovery with you.

Coaching is not therapy, although it can be therapeutic. The focus of coaching is on taking a hard look at what a fulfilling life looks like, and then identifying specific plans, actions steps, and ways of thinking that will move you toward achieving your desired goals. Coaching is focused both on who you want to be in life and then on taking action; it is not designed to creating healing; and yet, an outcome of coaching can be that healing takes place. Coaching looks at the future, not the past. Why you are the way you are doesn't matter. What matters is how you want to be and what is involved in you becoming how you want to be.

Coaching unlocks a person's potential to maximize his or her own performance.

The structure of coaching is flexible. You and your coach custom-design a coaching arrangement that meets your individual needs and schedule. The basic design consists of an initial session to create a coaching strategy and regular on-going coaching sessions (in person or by phone). Coaching sessions are usually weekly, lasting from a half-hour to an hour. You and your coach define the length and frequency that best supports you. Sessions may be focused on one specific challenge you are facing, or on a much broader set of personal or professional issues. Coaching relationships generally last from three months to a year or more. The nature of your goals and the changes you wish to make will determine the length of time that makes the most sense for you.