

DEFINITION OF CHRISTIAN COACHING

For the purposes of defining professional coaching, we have adopted the following ICF definition.

Coaching is partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential.

In Christianity, we shift from a humanistic philosophy to one based on God's presence dwelling in us and through us. The centerpiece of *Christian* coaching is the client's awareness of where God is leading a person. Therefore, the expression of faith can at times be as important as the skill of coaching itself. With this perspective in mind, we support the following definitions for *Christian* Coaching.

Official CCNII Definition of Christian Coaching

Christian coaching is an approach to the practice of professional coaching--whether focused on personal or professional growth--that integrates the biblical worldview when working with clients to recognize their potential and effect personal change. Whereas the biblical worldview is given priority over existing theories of human nature, motivation, personal change, growth and development as well as frame the perspectives by which coaching is offered.

Working Definition (elevator speech definition)

Christian coaching is a professional relationship focused on empowering a person or group to effect change, create new awareness, move into action and step into abundant Christian life in business and in personal areas.

Christian Coach

A Christian coach uses the skills of professional coaching to enable clients to affect change, create new awareness, and move into action, while keeping in mind the bigger picture of humanity as taught by a biblical worldview. Since clientele vary in their walks of life or perspectives on faith, the coach chooses frameworks that best suit the client's agenda. The biblical perspective remains the lens from which the coach views the client, but the integration of that perspective is sensitively adapted to the individuality of the client.

COACHING AS IT RELATES TO THE BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW

KEY DISTINCTIONS IN CHRISTIAN COACHING

The primary distinction in Christian coaching is based in the precept that God seeks active involvement in the lives of humans.

Christian coaching is being able to:

- ... invite the Holy Spirit into the conversation in a three-way partnership,
- ... let the Holy Spirit guide the coaching conversation,
- ... directly ask questions pertaining to the integration of faith,
- ... encourage the client to consider God's will and plan,
- ... allow the expression of the client's faith to grow,
- ... challenge the client to view life from a biblical perspective,
- ... create awareness, design actions and formulate solutions using scriptural references,
- ... encourage the client's transformation more into the image of Christ.

COACHING CONCEPTS & BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW

It is our position that the coach brings their belief system into all areas of life. We may not overtly express our beliefs while coaching, but they frame the questions we ask, what we notice or focus our attention on, how we treat the client, what interventions/assessments we might use, etc.

Below is not so much a CCNI Statement of Faith, but more a list of distinctions delineating some of the basic perspective differences between Christian and "secular" coaching.

1. The **human condition** was radically altered by Adam and Eve's sin in the Garden of Eden. The earth fell under a curse. We became subject to physical death. What was once "very good" became defiled and subject to error, disease, decay and eventual death (Gen. 3:6) (Rom. 5:12-19).
2. **Human nature** became morally corrupt. Man became alienated from intimate relationship with God. The authority that man held over the earth was lost. Our desire for personal authority is a God-given trait, but we lost the ability to reign with purity. Our sinful nature is passed on from generation to generation (Acts 1:8).
3. **Reconciliation** is necessary for a person to reach their God-given potential. This is only possible when we accept His death and resurrection as the atonement of our sin (Rom. 6:9-10).
4. **Knowing God** in an intimate personal relationship is the **greatest good** that can happen to a person. This makes it possible for a person to experience a full and abundant life and reach their God-given potential (Eph. 3:19, Hos. 4:6).

5. Relationship with God, through Jesus Christ, begins an **inward transformation process** that reshapes internal thought processes and external behaviors (2 Cor. 3:18).
6. Christians have an **eternal perspective** that shapes their attitudes and choices in the present life (2 Cor. 5:17).
7. **Human potential is limited.** Potential exists because we are created in God's image. Through dependence on God, there is a higher potential that exceeds all efforts at self-actualization. (Jer. 29:11, Jn. 15:4-6, Rom. 12:2).
8. Psychological approaches to **human development** have merit and bring a greater understanding to the different stages of human growth and change.
 - a. The biblical perspective provides a transcendent foundation for personal development and the inward transformation process (2 Cor. 3:18).
 - b. Emphasis is placed on the inward spiritual development as catalyst to external or outward development (Mt. 13:23, Gal. 5:22).
 - c. Inner transformation is a process which begins by the renewal of our minds through the Word of God. Renewal is a process initiated by the Holy Spirit and in which we actively participate and cooperate (Rom. 12:2).
9. **Hope** cannot reside solely in the client or in the coaching process.
 - a. Deference to the Spirit of God is necessary in order to fully realize the potential of hope in any given situation (Jer. 17:9).
 - b. Hope has to be based in God and his promise to work in the life of the client (Phil. 1:6).
 - c. It is this greater hope that changes us, and consequently our world (1 Pet. 1:3).
10. **Relativism** tolerates all views on morality. It is the individual who determines what is right and what is wrong. If we follow the logic of relativism, then "evil" could essentially be classified as "good."
 - a. Scripture teaches absolutism; a moral right and wrong by which we are to gauge our thoughts, attitudes and actions (Jn. 17:17).
 - b. Scripture warns against mixing good and evil (Is. 5:20).
 - c. God will judge everyone on the basis of His absolute, eternal, unchangeable law regardless of one's position on relativism (Ecc. 12:13, 14; 2 Cor. 5:10).
 - d. Despite the clear moral boundaries set by scripture; Christians are commanded not to judge the intentions of another (Jam. 4:12, Mt. 7:1-2).
11. The Christian is called to a life of **holiness**. This means living by God's standards first and foremost. God does not call us to be perfect, but to be distinct from the world (1 Pet. 1:13-16, Lev. 19:2).
12. **Values** stem from personal beliefs. They are shaped by society as well as personal experience. They are the ideals, virtues, and expressions we deem important. We assign value to everything. We often filter our choices based on our values.
 - a. Christianity imposes its value system upon the believer (Mt. 6:33). The imposition is not a dictatorial one; but one based on the concept of covenant. God is active in lives of his children.

- b. As we prioritize our role in the kingdom, often forsaking our own priorities, God has promised to provide for us and lead us effectively through choices and opportunities.
- 13. God *provides* all our **needs** according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:19). He also *gives* us our **wants** as we delight ourselves in Him (Ps. 37:4).
- 14. **Goal-setting** is the process of setting one's mind and heart on a desired future outcome. In Christian coaching, this entails also focusing on the "upward call of God" in our lives (Phil. 3:13-14, Pr. 16:9).
- 15. People with an **internal locus of control** believe that *they* are responsible for the outcomes they experience. Those with an **external locus of control** feel that outside forces are responsible for these outcomes. In Christian coaching, we encourage the external control of God to become the internal control of the believer (Jn. 10:10).
- 16. **Responsibility** and self-governance is a right, privilege and expectation of mature individuals. We are stewards of our lives. We are responsible and accountable to God for the decisions and choices we make.
 - a. Self-control is a discipline of Christian faith.
 - b. Self-control is a fruit of the Holy Spirit.
 - c. Accountable relationships support decisions and choices (Jn. 13:35, Eph. 5:21).
- 17. Our **motivation** for growth and change works in tandem with our call to become Christ-like. The **success** of our change has the potential to expand God's reign, rule and influence (Kingdom) and leads to a spiritual inheritance.
 - a. Becoming more Christ-like is being shaped and molded by the Holy Spirit into his image (embodiment and demonstration of the character of Jesus) Gal 2:20.
 - b. Walking in a manner worthy of the calling of God expands His influence, reign, rule and fame (1 Thess. 2:11-13; Mt. 5:15-17; Eph. 2:10).
 - c. We are created by God for the work he has planned for us (Eph. 2:10).
 - d. We have been instructed in specific behavior which demonstrates our Christ-like distinction (Micah 6:8).
 - e. We serve the Lord knowing we will receive a greater inheritance and reward (Col 3:24; 1 Pet 1:3-5).
- 18. In Christian coaching we understand that respect and **impression of self** are based not on personal accomplishment or goal attainment, but on the value of life because we have been created in the image of God. Impression of self is based on scripture and what we understand as God's view of his created people. Personal esteem is not built on the approval of man, but for the approval of God (1 Thess. 2:4, 2 Ti. 2:15).