

Coaching e-Book

This information is to acquaint a person with the concept of Christian Coaching.

Biblical Coaching Relationship

Jethro and Moses

Scripture: Exodus 18:1-27

Reflection Questions (patterned after Mentoring information)

1. In the Scripture passage, how did Moses receive Jethro? Did Moses show respect? Did these men demonstrate a good, healthy relationship? Describe a healthy coaching relationship.
2. Jethro is a resource God used to develop Moses' leadership and administration skills. What did Jethro observe? What question did Jethro ask to gain information from Moses? What is a question a coach might ask someone to gather information?
3. What do you observe about the relationship between Jethro and Moses? What are some coaching clues that can be identified from this relationship?
4. It seems that Moses was open to the conversation and received Jethro's lead to discover new paths in leadership and administration. Is challenging someone using powerful thought-provoking questions a part of coaching? If so, how can a coach use this skill wisely?
5. In the passage, Jethro gave God the praise for what was developing in the life of Moses and the people. Is it important for a coach to affirm? If so, what are some ways a coach might express affirmation to a person?
6. Think about "active listening" and "moving to solution" as part of the coaching process. How was Jethro an "active listener?" How did he lead Moses to "solution?" Because a coach is not a "telling" person in the relationship, what questions might Jethro have used to help Moses reach the desired solution on his own without telling him what to do?

If you are ready to investigate the possibility of becoming a Coach at Brentwood Baptist, continue to the next section.

What is Christian Coaching? What is a Christian Coach?

Christian Coaching

Coaching has been defined in many books authored by practicing coaches. Here are a few definitions to help understand “coaching” in today’s culture.

“Coaching helps people take responsibility and act to maximize their won potential. It is practicing the disciplines of believing in people in order to empower them to change.” —*Tony Stolfus, founder of Christian Coaching Center, coaches mission leaders in Asia and Africa.*

“Coaching brings out the best in a person as he or she grows, improves, and deepens a relationship with Christ. Coaching, thus, helps a person be their full potential for Christ. It is a focused Christ-centered relationship that cultivates a person’s sustained growth and action.” —*Linda Miller, Master Certified Coach with International Coach Federation.*

“Christian coaching focuses on promoting discover. It utilizes the power of the Holy Spirit in that discovery process by helping a person focus on the untapped potential within him or her and moving to determine a strategy. Thus, a coach guides a person to discover that potential and what needs to be accomplished.” —*Jane Creswell, Master Certified Coach with International Coach Federation, founder of IBM Coaches Network.*

“Coaching is moving a person to draw his or her own resources of experience...helping the person learn instead of teaching him or her. It is the art and practice of enabling individuals to move from where they are, to where God wants them to be.” —*Gary R. Collins, Christian Coach and licensed clinical psychologist, cofounder of American Association of Christian Counselors.*

Christian Coach

“A coach is someone trained and devoted to guiding others into increased competence, commitment and confidence.” —*Gary Collins, Christian Coaching 2nd Ed.*

How is coaching different from mentoring?

To understand what a coach is, it is helpful to distinguish a coach from a mentor.

A Christian mentor guides from one’s personal experience or sharing of experience in a specific area of interest or expertise. A Mentor will develop skills and instill wisdom based on the mentor’s life experiences. Mentoring is a God-given relationship in which one growing Christian encourages and equips another believer to reach potential as a disciple of Christ.

A Christian coach moves a person to draw from his or her own resources of experiences—helping the person learn instead of teaching them. A coach will draw out of a person what God has put in him or her. Coaching is the art and practice of enabling individuals to move from where they are, to where God wants them to be in the Christian journey.

A Christian coach helps a person focus on the untapped potential with them, and guides him or her to discover that potential and what needs to be done to move forward. — *Jane Creswell, Christ-Centered Coaching*

Samples of Dialog for Mentor and Coach Roles

Notice how each role speaks in conversation with a person. Which role do you identify with best?

Mentor

- I have always wanted to do that, too.
- Let's do it together!
- What are some special things you like to do?
- I like your idea, but, here is another way.
- Let me share a way I did this action.
- I do not think that will work. Let me explain.
- Here's how I overcame that obstacle.
- Why would you want to do something like this?
- Is this really important to you? What about...
- Can you realistically do that? I couldn't.

Coach

- How would you go about doing this thing right now?
- What will be your first step to accomplish this?
- What would make this special for you today?
- I want to affirm you in the path you have selected.
- What will it take to make this happen for you?
- If this plan fails, what will you learn?
- When you faced that obstacle in the past, how did you overcome it?
- How have similar situations in the past affected you? How have you responded?
- What makes this important to you now? Where do you think God wants you to be? How can you get there?
- How would your life change if you took that on right now?



How do I know if I am a coach candidate?

To help you determine if you have what it takes to become a coach, use this simple assessment. Be honest in your responses. Read each statement and respond as objectively as possible.

| | Not Quite True | Already True |
|---|----------------|--------------|
| 1. I have been listening intently, asking pointed questions and encouraging others as a preferred way | | |
| 2. I always respond this way...it extends beyond work life. I often do it in addition to my current job, sometimes even instead of performing well in my current job. | | |
| 3. I can see the benefit of and enjoy having structured conversations in order for others to take effective intentional action. | | |
| 4. I am inclined to make fine distinctions in language to clarify meaning. | | |
| 5. I naturally put my own agenda aside in deference to the person I am talking to at the moment. | | |
| 6. I naturally see patterns in behavior that others don't see. | | |
| 7. I recognize and can share trends that result in others being more effective. | | |
| 8. I naturally value and prefer to invest in people and relationships rather than in equipment, tasks or projects. | | |
| 9. I have a keen awareness for underlying strengths, or what is not said, and for possibilities that are not yet realized. | | |
| 10. I have a natural fascination for human interaction and am a student of human behavior (this might include reading, seminars, etc. and is not limited to formal education or degrees). | | |

Review your responses. There should be more “Already True” responses if you are ready to be trained as a coach. If there are more “Not Quite True” responses, you probably need to rethink becoming a coach and investigate the possibility of being a mentor at Brentwood Baptist.

If you are ready to continue learning about becoming a coach at Brentwood Baptist, move to the next activity.

Establish Foundational Christian Coach Competencies/Life Skills

Review each of the four competencies/life skills. These foundational statements about the skills and approaches are used with today's coach relationships. The examples in this review are types of activities a coach might use in a coaching relationship. After reviewing, respond to the four questions located at the end of the statements. This exercise will help determine if you are ready to be trained as a coach at Brentwood Baptist. The training offered for coaches at Brentwood Baptist will help develop your skills through understanding and role play exercises.

Establishing the Foundation for the Christian Coaching Relationship

- A Christian coach will need to be able to give clear description of the role (coach).
- A Christian coach will need to be able to identify when another support professional is needed.
- A Christian coach will need to be able to clearly state type of interaction and provide a guideline and covenant for the coaching relationship.

Creating the Christian Coaching Relationship

- A Christian coach will need to be able to create a safe, supportive environment that will produce mutual respect and trust. This happens by: showing genuine concern for the person's welfare and respecting the person's perceptions, learning style, personal being; championing new behaviors and actions; and asking permission to discuss sensitive, new areas.
- A Christian coach will need the ability to be present and flexible during sessions. This happens by: trusting one's inner knowing (being led by the Holy Spirit); taking risks; choosing most effective actions and solutions; using humor effectively; and demonstrating confidence in working with strong emotions.

Communicating Effectively in the Christian Coaching Relationship

- A Christian coach engages in active listening by: attending to the person's agenda, not the coach's agenda; hearing the person's concerns, goals, values and beliefs; distinguishing between words, tone of voice and body language; mirroring back what the person says; building on the person's ideas and suggestions; and allowing the person to vent or clear the situation without judgment or attachment in order to move to next steps.
- A Christian coach develops the ability to ask powerful, provoking questions to evoke discovery, insight, commitment or action, creating clarity, possibility or new learning, moving the person forward to what is desired.
- A Christian coach has a positive impact on the relationship by using clear, articulate and direct questions or questions that reframe perspectives.
- A Christian coach uses language that is appropriate and respectful of the person.

Moving to Results in the Christian Coaching Relationship

- A Christian coach invokes inquiry for greater understanding awareness and clarity to help persons discover for themselves new thoughts, beliefs, perceptions and emotions that strengthen their ability to take action.
- A Christian coach inspires the person to shift viewpoints and find new possibilities for action.
- A Christian coach assists the person to define actions that will enable him or her to demonstrate, practice and deepen new learning.
- A Christian coach engages the person to explore alternative ideas and solutions, to evaluate options and to make related decisions.
- A Christian coach celebrates successes and capabilities for future growth.
- A Christian coach will challenge assumptions and perspectives to provoke new ideas that move toward action.
- A Christian coach assists the person in creating a plan of action with specific results that are attainable, measurable, and provides resources for learning.
- A Christian coach requests the person to identify actions that will move the person forward and toward goals.
- A Christian coach keeps the person on track by holding attention to the plan of action.
- A Christian coach will promote the person's self-discipline and holds the person accountable for what they say, what they are going to do, and for the results of an intended action or specific plan.

Review questions to apply understanding of the Foundational Christian Coach Skills

1. What are some key things to remember in establishing the foundation for a Christian coaching relationship?
2. What are two things to help you create a good Christian coaching relationship?
3. What ways will you need to develop to make your communication effective as a Christian coach?
4. What are some things to remember when moving a person being coached toward solutions or results?

Sample Questions for first Christian Coaching Session

Here are some sample questions that a coach might use at the first coaching meeting. You may want to develop your own questions to get better acquainted with the person.

- What would you like to share about your life to help me know you better?
- What is something memorable about yourself to help me remember you?
- What does success look like to you?
- What has been a high point in your life this past week?
- What do you feel are best strengths?
- Identify some major needs in your life.
- What is a driving passion in your life?
- If a burden could be removed from you today, what would it be?
- What is your greatest fear or challenge?
- How do you like to proceed in this coaching relationship?

Model for Christian Coaching Sessions

Whether you conduct the coaching session on the phone or in person, a Christian coach can use this simple model for the coaching session. Study this model. Notice the input and output skills. These will be developed in the coach training sessions. Notice how the hour-glass model for a coaching session has five parts: Goal, Exploration, Options, Evaluation, and Action. No time limit is determined for each of the five parts. One part may take longer than another. For example, it may take a lot of time to gather clarity through exploration of information. Determining the options and evaluating each option might take the most time in a coaching session. This model will be used in the training session and participants will develop each of the five parts.

Input Skills

Active Listening
Observing/Gathering Info
Insight from the Holy Spirit

Output Skills

Powerful Questions
Encourage
Deliver Concise Messages



1. Goal for Session

2. Exploration

3. Options/Solution

4. Evaluation/Steps

5. Action/Forward Motion

Sample Questions to ponder, looking at Hour-Glass Model

After reviewing the model, think about your responses to these questions. You may not have all the information you need to answer the questions now, but begin to think like a coach.

1. The person being coached brings the topic or goal he or she wants to discuss. What would be a possible question a coach would use to begin this discussion?
2. For gathering information to reach clarity, what are some types of questions might be used by a coach for exploration?
3. What if the person being coached cannot determine options? What might a coach ask?
4. How does a coach help the person being coach evaluate the options?
5. When the action is determined by the person being coached, how can the coach help the person become accountable?

Rules of Thumb for Establishing Boundaries in Christian Coaching

Here are some helpful rules for establishing boundaries when coaching a person who might need guidance beyond what a Christian coach can provide.

1. The person cries: frequently, intensely and uncontrollably.
2. The person describes suicidal feelings or actual suicide attempts.
3. The person expresses threats of harm to others or self.
4. The person returns over and over again to one relationship, typically with a parent, parent-figure or sibling.
5. The person shares one major fear which appears to dominate the person's life.
6. The person shares a life story which features a major trauma.
7. The person is unable to move on from one incident.
8. The person frequently resorts to "if only. . ."
9. The person has not acknowledged and worked through bereavement.
10. The person is unable to accept personal responsibility.
11. The person exhibits a denial of "reality."
12. The person describes symptoms of frequent mental dysfunction which intrude significantly into everyday life.
13. The person engages in substance abuse.
14. The person has other kinds of addictive behavior.
15. The person behaves in troubling ways with you.

Types of Christian Coaching Sessions

Below is a listing of possible types of Christian coaching sessions. This is not an exhaustive listing, but will show the possibilities of a session. Remember, the person brings the topic / goal of which he or she wishes to develop during the conversation. Which of these types might be uncomfortable for you? Which are comfortable?

- Dreams/Desires
- New Life Experience
- Identifying the Right Problem to Solve
- Values
- Setting Goals
- Serving the Greater Good
- Calling/Significant Experiences
- Coping
- What's missing in my life?
- Habit Change
- Reframing Change
- Big Decision
- Difficult Conversations
- Being Successful
- Spiritual Soul Care / Spiritual Formation

After this review of Christian coaching, you are ready to move to the next section: learning activities.

Coaching Learning Activities

(Based on Active Listening, Powerful Questions, and Direct Communication)

The information in this section is based on the three most important skills for a Christian Coach. The training sessions provided will deepen your coaching skills, so that you will instinctively use them in conversations.

Active Listening

Active listening is being alert in the coaching conversation. A Christian coach makes a commitment to “give a person the gift of their presence”; high-quality time and attention.

There are four rules for Active Listening: Give undivided attention, avoid distractions, try not to think about what to say next, and don’t interrupt. Wait. To follow these rules, a Christian coach will be an Active Listener by:

- Listening to bring out the best in a person.
- Listening for passions.
- Listening for transformation toward effective solutions.
- Listening for underlying beliefs, assumptions and interpretations.
- Listening for addictive interpretations in order to help person move forward.
- Listening for “gaps” in reasoning.
- Listening for hasty conclusions.
- Listening for attitudes and behaviors that might lead to difficult situations.

As a Christian coach, a good question to ask is, “What am I listening to that really makes the conversation transformational for the person?” Try this question in the next conversation, “What am I really hearing?”

Powerful Questions

Using powerful questions is the ability to ask questions that reveal the information needed for maximum benefit to the coaching relationship, thus, helping the person think in different ways. Think of questions Jesus used in His ministry. Are these questions you might use as a Christian coach? Make a list.

Some general rules for powerful questions are:

- Do not ask “WHY” questions. These sometimes establish barriers/challenges.
- Do not ask “Yes and No” questions. These lead to “chasing rabbits” and will not necessarily stay with the focus for the coaching conversation.
- Do not review conversations/information. Let the person being coach do the reviewing only if it helps keep the focus.
- Do not ask a question for which you, as the coach, already know the answer.

Practice Using Powerful Questions

Rewrite the following questions to make more powerful for a coaching conversation.

How was your day today?

What made you do that?

What are you going to do next?

Why did you do that?

Have you done things like this before?

Let me review what you have said so far.

Direct Communication

Being a direct communicator means using language with the greatest positive impact in the coaching conversation. This means being clear, articulate and direct in sharing and providing feedback; reframing and articulating to help the person understand from another perspective what he/she wants or is uncertain about; clearly stating objectives, meeting agenda, purpose of techniques or exercises; using language appropriate and respectful; and using metaphor or analogy to help to illustrate a point or paint a verbal picture.

Identify the statements that best express excellence in the Christian coaching relationship. Not all the responses given by the coach are the best. Notice the sample coach's responses to describe these statements for the coaching session.

- Mind wanders (Oh, that reminds me...we need to talk about this.)
- Multitasking (I need to keep my phone on...)
- Clarity (Give me more information about...How does this relate to a previous situation?)
- Judging (Oh, I wouldn't do that...that labels you as...do you really want to do that?)
- Feedback from person (How does that make you feel?)
- Pre-occupation (Oh, I'm sorry...was thinking of what I need to do this afternoon.)
- Lead to discovery (Knowing how you reacted in past similar situations, how might you approach this in a different way?)

- Affirming person (You are really good at this skill. I am glad you have decided to use it.)
- Unclear comments (Oh, that's right. We were not discussing this....)
- Unrelated questions/comments (Right. That does not relate to what we are talking about. Sorry about that. Can you repeat what you just said?)

What's Next for the Christian Coach?

As you move toward becoming a Christian coach at Brentwood Baptist, consider participating in the next training session. Many of these skills will be deeply developed, and help move you toward actions and results. Helping a person develop a plan of action is crucial for the coaching relationship. As a coach, are you more of a tactical person or a strategic person? What if the person being coached is more tactical and you, as the coach, are more strategic? How do you work together to help them accomplish their goal? These topics are addressed in the training session. Contact the Adult Discipleship Mentoring Relationships office to sign up for the next training session: Melissa Hayes, mhayes@brentwoodbaptist.com or 615.324.6143.

Coaching Resources

Coaching Bibliography

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Other

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- Blink*, by Malcolm Gladwell.
- Brain-Based Learning*, by Eric Jensen.
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