

## Lesson 38 - Evolution within Coaching

Sometimes you will coach a client once or twice, and sometimes you will coach a client over a period of weeks, months, or years. All coaching relationships are potentially rewarding, no matter their duration. In this lesson we will look at the dynamics of evolution within the coaching process, whether you are coaching for one session or over a period of time.

Regarding longer-term coaching, there are many different ways you can structure your meetings. Some coaches offer 4-, 6-, 8-, or 10-session packages. I have used several different models: (1) Meeting clients once a month for one hour over a 6-month or 12-month term; (2) Meeting clients once a week for 15 minutes over a 10-week term and (3) Meeting clients once every other week for 30 minutes over a 10-week term. I have also met some clients only once or twice, and some clients schedule whenever they see fit. You can meet with your clients in whatever way works for you. There is no one way to do it.

In general, the coaching relationship starts out as problem-solving (by the client's choice). The client presents specific issues or situations in her life that are not working, and she asks the coach for support to help her resolve or improve these situations. The client might also state a specific goal he would like to attain. Issues and goals generally fall into five categories: (1) money and prosperity; (2) relationships (romantic, family, and friendship); (3) career; (4) physical health; and (5) spirituality, inner peace, and well-being.

As a coach, I listen carefully and try to identify the area in which the client is experiencing the most stress or where the greatest passion is moving. Usually one sector stands out more than the others. When I sense that area I point it out to the client and suggest that we focus on that situation first.

After the client has expressed his feelings, I employ active listening to demonstrate that I understand his concerns. Sometimes there is a short back-and-forth dialogue until the client affirms that we are in agreement on his concern or goal. Then I affirm that we are seeking to make progress toward that achievement or resolution.

At some point I invite the client to become aware of any fears, resistance, or negative beliefs that may be fueling the situation. Usually there are internal blocks that thwart progress—otherwise the client would likely not have brought the issue up. This is a crucial point in the coaching process, as we move from the appearance that the issues are caused by external sources, to the true playing field where internal beliefs, fears, and expectations are creating the client's experience.

When the client honestly expresses his inner beliefs and feelings, I acknowledge and reinforce him profusely. This is a major step toward resolution and progress. When the client is willing to accept responsibility for his part in creating the situation, we are over a crucial hump and door to real movement is open. Most clients are willing to do this, immediately or eventually.

Some clients are more stubborn, resistant, or intent on being right about designating someone else or some external situation as the source of their problem. Such clients require more time and persistence. At first I am gentle and I keep suggesting reframes on the situation so the client recognizes she has both power and options. If the issue persists, I will be more direct and identify the belief system I believe is holding the client back. If the client is open to accept the belief system I have outlined, I suggest angles and actions that may be more empowering. Even better, I seek to draw forth reframes or options from the client. Most clients have an *aha!* during the course of coaching. Some have an *aha!* in their own timing, perhaps months or years later. Some never “get it” or they find small pieces of the puzzle during the course of your relationship with them. Just do your best to affirm and support the client, and leave the rest up to them and the universe. In the Big Picture, everyone learns and grows eventually.

At some point the client will begin to recognize the relationship between her thoughts, feelings, and attitudes, and the results she is generating. She is open to accepting responsibility for her experience. This is a major turning point in the coaching relationship, for the client is now empowered by self-awareness and recognizes the creative power she owns. Ultimately this is your real gift to the client. Rather than giving her an answer or having her elicit a short-term answer, you have helped her connect with the source of all answers.

After one or several sessions, the client begins to reap the rewards of the coaching and the insights he has gained. At this point the client will bring you positive reports of attitudinal changes, healing, and tangible results. Such moments deliver deep reward to both you and the client. Acknowledge and reinforce the client strongly for putting the principles into action. Always give credit to the client for the results he has created. You have participated as coach, but ultimately the responsibility for progress lies with the client.

As time and sessions pass, the original presenting problems are either handled, or significant progress is made, or the client lightens up in her attitude toward them (another form of healing). At some point you will notice that your coaching sessions with this client are less about issues to be resolved, and you are spending more time speaking about wins, successes, and new creative, expansive strategies. Or you might help the client apply personal growth/metaphysical principles to whatever situation has come up for her during that week or month. You might find yourself feeling less like a coach and more like someone having stimulating conversations with a friend about how life works and how to keep growing joyfully. You may hear statements like, “I have no issues to discuss this week, but I just want to talk about the cool things that have been happening.” At that point you can count your coaching relationship as a success.

Some clients will move on at that point, but stay in touch once in a while to say hello or report further progress. Others may want to schedule with you occasionally in case a particular situation arises about which he wants some coaching. Other clients may continue with you on a regular basis, just to discuss whatever is up with them that week or month. The relationship will continue not so much as a problem-solving venue, but because your client values your presence and support and wants to maintain that energy in her life. You may never hear from some clients again, but that does not mean they do not value your coaching. They may be busy, or they may not be strong communicators, or they may simply be getting on with their life.

Every coaching relationship is unique, but all should display some kind of progress or evolution over time. If you find yourself going over the same issues for a long time with a particular client without apparent growth, the client may have more investment in his problems than the answers, and I would suggest not continuing. Most clients, however, will display progress over time, and you will grow with them. You will find rich reward in sharing the client's journey past initial apparent limitations into greater freedom and mastery. And your life will be better for having connected with them, briefly or for a season of your lives.

***Affirm:***

**My coaching clients grow and evolve through our coaching relationship.  
Together we expand to greater awareness and clarity.  
I feel deeply rewarded to participate in my clients' positive evolution.**