

Differences Between Psychotherapy and Coaching

Coaching	Therapy
Views both parties as naturally creative, resourceful and whole.	More apt to view clients from a medical model.
Does not diagnose or treat.	Diagnoses and treats.
Trained to work with functioning clients.	Trained to work with major mental illness.
Works with clients that are able to form an alliance and have common goals.	Works with clients with entrenched problems.
Co-Active® model.	Therapist the “expert.”
Coach and clients on a peer basis.	Hierarchical difference between therapist and clients.
Alliance designed by coach and client together.	Treatment plan largely designed by therapist.
Focus on evolving and manifesting potential.	Focus on healing and understanding.
Emphasis on present and future.	Emphasis on past and present.
Action and being oriented.	Insight oriented.
Solution oriented.	Problem oriented.
Explore actions and behaviors that manifest high self-esteem.	Explore genesis of behaviors that create low self esteem.
Regard and coach negative self-beliefs as Saboteurs (temporary obstacles).	Analyze and treat origins and historical roots of negative self-beliefs.
Coach and client ask: “What’s next/what now?”	Therapist and client ask: “Why and from where?”
Works mainly with external issues.	Works mainly with internal issues.
Discourages transference as inappropriate.	Encourages transference as a therapy tool.
Accountability and “homework” between sessions held as important.	Accountability less commonly expected.
Contact between sessions for accountability and “wins” expected.	Contact between sessions for crisis and difficulties only.
Uses coaching skills.	Uses therapy techniques.

Below are some guidelines to let you know when you should look for a therapist first.

Guidelines for Referral to Therapy

- The client has an active mental illness (depression, acute anxiety, etc.)
- The client has a substance abuse problem
- The client is in a situation characterized by emotional or physical abuse or threats of abuse*
- The client has mentioned thoughts of suicide or attempted suicide*
- The coach feels as if (s)he is coaching outside his/her limit of competency
- The client shows no movement

I have had several clients throughout the years that had worked with a therapist prior to starting sessions with me. These clients had already healed from their traumas and were ready to move forward with coaching sessions.

Other times, I had clients who were working with a therapist at the same time they were working with me.

If you aren't sure about who you should contact, book a [30-minute session](#) with me and I would be happy to guide you to the best path for your growth and transformation.

This document was taken from [coactive.com](#). I changed a bit for clarity to my website's visitors.