

## ADHD Coaching

*What is it?  
Does it really work?*

## Just What is "ADHD Coaching"?

- ✓ It's AWESOME!
- ✓ Coaching is "Partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential" - ICF
- ✓ ADHD Coaching is "a designed partnership that combines coaching skills with knowledge of Attention Deficit Disorder, a neurobiologic condition. The coaching process enhances quality of life, improves performance and supports growth and change." - IAAC
- ✓ "The purpose of ADHD Coaching is to provide support, structure and accountability. Coach and client collaboratively explore strengths, talents, tools and new learning to increase self-awareness and personal empowerment. Together they design strategies and actions and monitor progress by creating accountability in line with goals and aspirations."

## Just What is Coaching??

- ▶ Coaching is a partnership, but the client is in charge. Coaches aren't there to nag. We're there for support, to ask questions that get people thinking about whether certain strategies work." (Michelle Novarti, PhD)
- ▶ Coaching involves working with the Whole Person—Not the Disorder!!
- ▶ Coaches monitor progress and fine tune strategies until results are seen.
- ▶ Coaching is a tool, a resource.
- ▶ The ultimate goal of coaching is to change how a person perceives their self, and ultimately, teach them to be their own coach.

## What does a Coach do?

- ▶ Coaches are trained to listen, to observe, and to customize their approach to each individual client's need.
  1. LISTEN
  2. OBSERVE
  3. ADDRESS INDIVIDUAL CLIENT'S NEED
- ▶ Coaches should elicit solutions and strategies from the client.
- ▶ Coach's job is to PROVIDE SUPPORT, STRUCTURE, & ACCOUNTABILITY to ENHANCE the skills, resources, and creativity that the client ALREADY HAS.

## What else do they do???

- ❖ Assumption: We believe that the client is naturally creative and resourceful.
- ❖ Thus, we provide support, structure, and accountability that involves more frequent contact than in general life coaching.
  - ❖ Example:
    - ❖ Life coaching might have a weekly or bi-weekly check-in.
    - ❖ ADHD coaching has at least a bi-weekly check-in but daily or multiple-times-a-day check-ins are more typical (10-20 text messages a day are not unusual, depending on the current coaching objective.)
- ❖ Important to Remember: The Coach does NOT control the plan.
- ❖ The Coach supports and monitors the success of the plan.

## But I thought it was ...

- ✓ Academic Tutoring
- ✓ Cognitive Behavioral Therapy - does not address psychological-emotional problems found DSM
- ✓ Life Coaching
- ✓ A Cure
  - ✓ Coaches are not there to "fix" a person because they are not *broken* (Dee Crane, President, IAAC)
- ✓ A Hoax

*Let's Take a Brief Pause to...*

*Look at ADHD and  
Executive Function*

### *Executive Function (EF) & ADHD*

- Executive Functioning is thought to reside in the Prefrontal Cortex and functions as a "control center" for cognitive processes.
- Best conceptualized as "the efficiency with which individuals go about acquiring knowledge, as well as, how well problems can be solved". - Goldstein, S., Naglieri, J.A., Princiotta, D. & Otero, T.M. (2013). Handbook of Executive Functioning, Chapter 1, Springer Publishers.

### *EF & ADHD*

• Nine areas most commonly involved in EF & ADHD:

1. Attention
2. Emotion Regulation
3. Flexibility
4. Inhibitory control
5. Initiation
6. Organization
7. Planning
8. Self-monitoring
9. Working memory

### *What We Know About Treating ADHD*

Research has suggested these to be ineffective

1. Long-term psychotherapy
2. Special Diets
3. Vitamins and Supplements
4. Chiropractic treatment
5. Play therapy

Useful & Effective:

1. ADHD Education
2. Medication
3. Skills training for ADHD individuals, their families and professionals
4. The positive benefits of exercise
5. Mindfulness Training

### *EF & ADHD*

ADHD/ADD

- ✓ According to leading expert Edward A. Hallowell, "ADD/ADHD refer to a syndrome found in both children and adults characterized by distractibility, impulsivity and restlessness or hyperactivity."
- ◇ Is it a disability or a disorder?
  - Both or Neither - depends on who you ask!
- ✓ I prefer "Trait" b/c it can be a huge ASSET in one's life when properly managed. (E.A. Hallowell)

*Now... Back to Coaching*

## *Coaching At A Glance*

- ▶ Life Management!
  1. Time Management
  2. Prioritization
  3. Procrastination
  4. Memory Issues that Impact Daily Life
  5. Reality check (realistic view of a task or situation)

## *ADHD Coaching Services (Common)*

- Education for the client and family about the science of ADHD and evidence-based treatment options
- Discuss medication and medication management
- Teach compensatory skills for EF deficits
- Provide support for both the client and their family during challenges and successes!

## *ADHD Coaching services (Less common but often necessary)*

- Consult with school staff/teachers
- Facilitate academic course selection/registration process
- Recommend academic success strategies
- Recommend for a gap year (time off) or employment
- Community referrals for additional needs of the family
- Consultation with therapists working on co-morbid conditions
- Consultation with medical providers
- Help with development of 504 plan or IEP - Disability Services

## *Differences: coaching High school students vs. college students*

- Parental Involvement
- Referrals
- Collaborations
- Advocacy
- Skills & Strategies
- Personal Issues
- Independence

## *Coaching Process*

How Do You Get Started???

## *Prescreening for Coaching Readiness*

- ▶ What will it take for the client to WANT to be coached?

## Prescreening...

- ▶ Usually done with a phone call or brief meeting with client
- ▶ Allows the coach and client to determine if coaching is the right choice for the individual
- ▶ Allows the coach and client to determine if the coach is the right person to partner with in the coaching process
- ▶ Outline what Coaching is and is not
- ▶ Discuss paperwork
- ▶ Discuss cost
- ▶ Outline expectations of the coaching relationship
- ▶ Determine what the client's expectations are (if a minor, what the parent's expectations are only after learning what the client is looking for)

## Readiness Evaluation

- ✓ IQ versus EQ
  - What's the difference?
- ✓ ADHD EQ is typically 2-4 years delayed
- ✓ IQ ≠ EQ
- ♦ Parent's readiness cannot be substitute for client's readiness!

## Initial Intake Process

- ▶ Usually a 1-2 hour process (depends on the client's ability to focus)
- Discuss ADHD & Executive Functions for client (& family, if present)
- Review educational and psychological assessments, IEP, Learning Style Inventory, Systems Checklist, etc
- Gathers a history of the family and young person (if forms have not been completed ahead of time)
- Listens and asks questions
- Creates a list of strengths and concerns
- Identifies preliminary goals for ADHD coaching THIS semester & overall (Coaching Goals form)
- Sign Coaching Contract

## Coaching Process: Second Meeting

- ADHD Education
- Review & discuss Learning Styles Inventory, Systems Checklist collected at Intake session
- Work through Strategies for Success form and Values Clarification form
- Begin developing SMART goals and objectives for subsequent sessions (Personal Coaching Agreement)
  - 1 week
  - 1 month
  - 3 months
  - Semester
- Discuss role of parent/involvement
- Set up communication plan (email/text/call schedule) & next session

## Coaching Process: Future Sessions

- Subsequent sessions are 30-minutes or 1-hour and tailored to the individual needs
- Parents may check in with coach, separately, if client has permitted them to do so, or if they are financially responsible (within reason, per the client's level of comfort)
- Mid-term review at session 6 or month 3 (depending on package)
  - Personal Coaching Agreement is reviewed and revised, as necessary

## Coaching Sessions: General Format

- Update from last meeting
- Check progress, grades, and organization
- Address concerns (missed assignments, procrastination, hygiene, waking up, eating, etc)
- Notice improvements - PRAISE them for progress in anything!
- Strategize problem solving
- Review things from last meeting and apply to this meetings goal/obj.
- Introduce new skills when warranted

## Coaching Demonstration

- ▶ You Tube video with Sarah D. Wright, PhD

## Case Study

- ▶ Student is a third semester Freshman who is on academic warning. He and his father meet with the coach with only 7 weeks left in the semester. He needs to make at least a 2.2 GPA to remain in college. At the first meeting, the student is very reluctant to discuss coaching. Coach gives father and son the paperwork and encourages them to talk about it over Fall Break. Two weeks later, the student contacts Coach and says he's "willing to give it a try." (Student's voice/intonation indicate to Coach that he is very reluctant to do this but he is desperate and is willing to do "whatever" to stay in school.) We meet and develop a short-term Personal Coaching Plan for the next 5 weeks. We meet weekly for one hour. During this time, we discuss assignments missed and if/how he can make them up, what is currently due, and how he plans to study for finals. The student meets with all of his professors and learns that it is possible to complete the semester on a positive note if he works to get all assignments completed and does well on finals. (He has not done any of his Math homework and is behind on assignments in all other classes.) We develop a plan to help him achieve these results. At the end of the semester, he calls Coach and says his grades improved but he didn't bring up his GPA enough to remain in college. He tells Coach that he sees the value of coaching and wants to continue when the new semester starts. We discuss his options for the future and he decides that he wants to attend a Community College to bring up his grades and return to the 4 yr college. We develop a plan to enroll in the CC and look for an apartment since he won't be able to live in the dorm. Lo and behold!!! He is allowed to continue in the 4 yr college and meets with Coach weekly now. He said he sees how coaching is helping him by being accountable and helping him prioritize/plan each day and the week.

## Case Study 2

- ▶ Student asks for coaching (at mother's insistence) with 5 weeks left in the semester. He is a first semester freshman at a 4 yr college and his social skills are outstanding. However, he is pledging a fraternity and has gotten involved with SGA. He does not have time for academic work. He needs to maintain a 2.5 GPA to stay active in his fraternity and SGA. We developed a short term Personal Contract that addressed his academic needs balanced against his social "obligations." He passed the semester with the required GPA. Before he returned to school for the Spring semester, he saw his Dr. and began medication for ADHD. He has noticed an ability to focus better. He told Coach that he understands that coaching and the medication will help him stay organized and it also helps that he is accountable to someone besides his parents. Being accountable to his mother (i.e., "nagging") just made him mad and didn't do anything to help him stay on task. Coaching has bridged that gap. We've encountered problems with a regular meeting schedule due to his extensive social obligations and have addressed it somewhat by texting on a regular basis. We are going to find a time during the day that won't interfere with his evening activities.

## Resources: Books

- ▶ Sleeper-Triplett, J. *Empowering Youth with ADHD: Your Guide to Coaching Adolescents and Helping Adults for Coaches, Parents and Professionals*. 2010
- ▶ Whitworth, Kimsey-House, Sandahl. *Co-Active Coaching: Changing Business, Transforming Lives*. 2011 3<sup>rd</sup> edition
- ▶ Adams, Marilee. *Change Your Questions, Change Your Life*. 2004
- ▶ Brown, Thomas. *Attention Deficit Disorder: The Unfocused Mind in Children and Adults*. 2005
- ▶ Cooper-Kahn & Dietzel. *Late, Lost and Unprepared: A Parent's Guide to Helping Children with Executive Functioning*. 2008
- ▶ Quinn, Ratey, Maitland. *Coaching College Students with AD/HD*. 2000
- ▶ Ratey, Nancy. *The Disorganized Mind*. 2008
- ▶ Whitmore, John. *Coaching for Performance*. 2009 4<sup>th</sup> edition

## Resources: Organizations

- ▶ JST Coaching, LLC [www.jstcoach.com](http://www.jstcoach.com)
- ▶ International Coach Federation (ICF) [www.coachfederation.org](http://www.coachfederation.org)
- ▶ CHADD [www.chadd.org](http://www.chadd.org)
- ▶ ADHD Coaches Organization (ACO) [www.adhdcoaches.org](http://www.adhdcoaches.org)
- ▶ ADD Warehouse [www.addwarehouse.com](http://www.addwarehouse.com)
- ▶ ADVance [www.advance.com](http://www.advance.com)
- ▶ ADDitude Magazine [www.additudemag.com](http://www.additudemag.com)
- ▶ Attention Deficit Disorder Assoc (ADDA) [www.add.org](http://www.add.org)
- ▶ Edge Foundation [www.edgefoundation.org](http://www.edgefoundation.org)
- ▶ Messies Anonymous [www.messies.com](http://www.messies.com)
- ▶ National Assoc of Professional Organizers (NAPO) [www.napo.net](http://www.napo.net)
- ▶ Institute for Challenging Disorganization (ICD) [www.challengingdisorganization.org](http://www.challengingdisorganization.org)

## Q&A

Thanks for taking the time to discover this exciting way to enhance the lives of individuals with ADHD