

WHAT IS COACHING?

Coaching is a concept similar to counselling and mentoring. Coaching is a technique that focuses on the future whereby the agenda and goal is set by the individual. The coach helps to improve the likelihood of those goals being met through suggesting alternatives and motivating the individual. A coach is a non-judgmental individual and provides the patient with time and space to reflect and improve. Coaching also focuses on finding the answer, rather than focusing on the problem, through the use of skills, experience and being creative.

Coaching is a process that happens over time. Since it is a patient driven service, the patient will need to be dedicated, committed and willing to develop themselves.

Coaching is not a therapy, which is concerned with insight, it is an effective partnership between a professional coach and an individual to improve the quality of daily functioning. It is designed to guide and encourage people towards achievement and personal growth as well as to enable them to manage personal situations. The aim is to maximise strengths and provide realistic strategies to compensate for difficulties.

COACHING, COUNSELLING OR MENTORING?

Coaching focuses on the future, short term difficulties and goals are set by the individual. Counselling is a type of therapy that focuses on the past where the agenda is agreed by the individual and counsellor. Mentoring examines long term problems and teaches the individual what to do.

THE BASIC PRINCIPLES ASSOCIATED WITH COACHING

The basic principles in coaching are as follows:

- There is always a better approach
- There is no failure, only feedback
- Begin with small steps
- Flexibility leads to success
- Praise, compliment and acknowledge success

WHO NEEDS COACHING?

Anyone can benefit from coaching. It may be considered in conjunction with a holistic style management approach. It is not a replacement of other therapies, but will work well alongside them.

Together the patient and coach will assess the patients strengths and weaknesses and learn how to compensate for those weaknesses and develop personal styles to draw on the patients strengths.

People tend to seek the help of a coach to overcome difficulties such as disorganisation, poor self-esteem and low confidence.

ADHD AND COACHING

A coach or mentor should be a person who believes in the child with ADHD, has some understanding of the condition, and is able to meet either in person or by phone on a regular basis, at least weekly, to encourage and to help with planning and general progress.

Because children with ADHD tend very much to think in the 'here and now' and not plan ahead, one of the key roles of a coach is to structure, think ahead, organise and foreshadow forthcoming events, and to help think the child's way through them - to remember their PE kit and directions for football games etc.

The coach can also be very helpful in reminding, encouraging and helping the child to stay focused and on task.

During 'down' periods, encouragement can be very useful and help can be given in avoiding procrastination, providing help with organisation and trying to minimise negative, destructive thinking. All this can help encourage the child's self-esteem and promotes social skills.

Coaching for individuals with ADHD provides them with a clear understanding of how their condition impacts on their behaviour and motivation as well as providing regular monitoring of progress and constructive feedback. This can lead to increased awareness and competence generally. Additionally, individuals with ADHD can find coaching beneficial with social skills and behavioural management.

HOW OFTEN DOES COACHING TAKE PLACE?

We would suggest a regular meeting, at least weekly, with a regular time slot, for between 30-45 minutes. These are generally face to face but with telephone contact between sessions. There should be an agenda and this is often done best with the use of a notebook where items discussed are noted, and these can then be reviewed at the forthcoming meeting. The previous week needs to be looked at and analysed, addressing problems that have occurred, what might have been done to help, and general encouragement given. The next week is then planned

ahead, potential pitfalls identified, and as much praise, support and planning done as possible.

It is essential to maintain motivation and keep the individual on track during these sessions. Celebrating successes can turn difficult situations or setbacks into renewed commitment and determination.

WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION?

Prime Performance Solutions - <http://www.pps-training.co.uk/>

Coaching4ADHD – www.coaching4adhd.co.uk

ADD-vance – www.add-vance.org