



Comparison Chart Conventional Therapy v. Personal Coaching

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Important Notice

We've created this comparison chart with the help of dozens of therapists on the CoachVille R&D Team who are also experienced coaches. And, while not everyone will agree with every single word pair, it's our view that this chart does help to clarify the differences between coaching and therapy. That said, the fact is that many of the differences between modern therapy and personal coaching aren't as big as we might like them to appear. Both professionals can be working with fully functioning adults who are working through a difficult situation. Both disciplines focus on helping people make changes and accomplish goals that really matter to them. They are different ways of working; each with its own special value.

Conventional Therapy tends toward...	Personal Coaching tends toward...
Personal strengthening	personal evolution
triage	visioning
issue resolution	problem solving
why me?/why this?	what's next?/what now?
overcoming obstacles	sustainable flow
traditional relationship	collaborative, equal partnership
unconscious>conscious level	conscious>consciousness level
away from	toward
looks backward	focuses forward
raising standards	raising standards
somewhat vulnerable	generally open, not vulnerable
cognitive/behavior patterns	actively building
letting go	life dynamics
needs help	wants a partner
pain	frustration
past > present	present > future
needs, wants	needs, wants
issue resolution	life design
driven by unresolved issues	chooses goals and actions
absorbs information	acts on information
feelings, discussion oriented	more action oriented
self understanding	self potential
nurturing, supportive	catalyzing, challenging
asks why	asks what
disruptive situations	tolerations
usually a measured pace	often a rapid pace
no personal disclosure	personal disclosure as useful
patient/client	client
medical model	performance model
treatment	co creation
healing	achievement
presented complaints	common situations
mostly monologue	mostly dialogue
progress	performance
was then	is now
professional 'arms length'	close, collaborative
behavior norms	uniqueness
analysis/understanding	possibility
pathology	experimentation/discovery
hope	inspiration
self concept	self discovery



integration	manifestation
diagnosis	self assessment
support	support, solutions
prognosis for recovery	chance of success
diagnosable conditions	everyday situations
anxiety	n/a
depression	n/a
trauma	n/a
emotional scares	n/a
addictions	n/a
compulsions	n/a
emotional issues	n/a
neuroses	n/a
psychoses	n/a
healing of emotional damage	n/a
history	related experiences
self imposed limits	missed opportunities
acceptance	flow
conflicts	paradoxes
reality	paradigms
restoring	expanding
healing	evolving
coping/protective mechanisms	building reserves
beliefs	personal operating system
self responsibility	accountability
stabilize	balance
new perspective	new approach
confidential	confidential
family dynamics	organizational dynamics
hurts	works
personal dynamics	personal style
weaknesses	strengths
problems	solutions
tends toward process	tends toward results
heal past	create future
medical model	performance/growth model
behavior awareness	personal awareness
complaints	tolerations
reactions	responses
restoration	enhancement
undoing	doing
dysfunctional>functional	functional>extraordinary
focused scope	unlimited scope
fear	excitement

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