

Capstone Essay

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Module One

Dwight Bain says often that coaching is about results. On page 4 of *Christian Coaching Models: Finding What Works for You*, Bain asks if we are a *Travel Agent Coach* or a *Tour Guide Coach*. The first concept is intriguing as I cannot imagine trying to guide someone in an area or field I haven't visited and maneuvered through myself ... frequently and successfully. Brochures and enthusiasm are all well and good, but how could a guide possibly offer assistance in identifying where any pitfalls lie, how to avoid them, or how to get out should the client falls into one? It would be worse than the blind leading the blind in that the *Travel Agent Coach* would provide a false sense of security for the adventure.

A *Tour Guide Coach* makes much more sense. God has built a specific set of experiences into the life of this type of coach. He's taken them along the very pathway a client needs to travel so they're familiar with any hidden obstacles or barriers. In addition to first hand knowledge of how

to avoid or manage any difficulties that may arise, the *Tour Guide Coach* provides their clients with relatable enthusiasm for the journey as well as confidence of success by their own example. Expertise that develops from God's Ephesians 2:10 process is essential.

I chose this particular concept to highlight because the clarification helps me understand the value of my role as a *Tour Guide Coach*. Clients who come to me will likely be aware of my makeover. My excitement over the inner changes that accompanied my transformation already inspire other women and will influence my clients. The deep work God has done and is doing in my life include His taking me over countless hurdles and through many rough patches that are common to women. In essence, He's filled my tool kit with insights and strategies to help other women find their way with His compassion and discernment. And I'm not afraid to use them.

Module 2

Sylvia Frejd offered the idea of a 'Surrender Walk' on page 17 of *Coaching Clients for Life Focus: God and Spiritual Development*. She explained that she has her client identify, through prayer and meditation, three items they need to release solely into God's care. Then she gives them three stones and has them label them with a marker to represent each item. Walking prayerfully to a stream behind her house, she encourages the client to drop each stone into the water to illustrate their surrender to the Lord.

I chose this technique to highlight because it surprised me when Sylvia said she undertook the activity on her own when she found herself overwhelmed by circumstances. I've found similar activities at retreats and other gatherings effective in addressing various issues, but I never thought about choosing to do so on my own. Her sharing opened a new door for me.

If I sense a client's facing an obstacle or carrying a burden they simply cannot resolve on their own, I would lead them in the Surrender Walk process. The goal would be to encourage the client to develop a balanced view of handling difficulties by doing our part along with bringing them to God for His solution. And in that process, remembering that God is God and we are not.

Module 3

Richard Eley talked about coaching a client to drill down to their core issues to create a 'Manifesto' for their life. He referred to Bain's baseball illustration of cutting through the yards and yards of cotton to uncover the hard core at the center. The topic appears on page 7 of the *Coaching Men* discussion and Eley outlined the importance for men to go below a surface view of their life. The coach would support the client in a deep review of their personal and professional lives, their gifts and strengths, their character and values. In this way they would address the core issues that drive their daily attitudes and actions.

I chose to highlight this technique because though it was presented for use with men, the approach is definitely applicable for women. Weber, Shaffer, Brazelton, Dopf, and Frejd offered an extensive list of issues women bring to coaching on page 10 of *Coaching Women*, followed by a list of 'How a Coach Can Help' on page 11. In light of that combination, creating a Manifesto seems to be a valuable tool to help a client set a solid foundation to identify her issues as well as a framework for coach and client to address them together.

For example, a client who was moving into a transition might want to jump right into prioritizing steps she needs to take. I would coach her to consider where she is today and where she'd like to be as a way for her to grasp a realistic perspective. From there I'd have her review what she brings to her situation in terms of knowledge and experience, gifts and strengths, character and

values, and how she'd like to reflect those qualities in her plans. The first step would be to have her write out her own Manifesto as a set of guiding principles for setting and reaching her goals.

Module 4

'Principle Four: Listening and Reassuring' on page 13 of *The Coach-Client Relationship* with Dwight Bain and Georgia Shaffer is fascinating. Following an interview, speech, or other event, the coach would ask the client what three to five aspects they Liked Best (LB) about their performance. Then the coach would ask what three to five things the client would do differently Next Time (NT) to improve.

I chose to highlight this technique for two reasons. One because it would be easy to learn and put in practice with a variety of clients. Two because it would facilitate the kind of progress suggested by the Sam Walton quote on the same page. "Just 2% better every day!" It was fun to discover such a simple structure that would stimulate steady growth toward meaningful results, one I'm intend to adopt myself.

Whether a client were hesitant or confident, I would use our review of their first event together to start a Progress Journal. I'd lead with a question about their favorite parts and follow it with how they might polish their performance. Then I'd have them head the first page with the title and date of the event, and list their LB's and NT's. We would repeat the exercise after every event, and review entries from time to time to create a significant growth habit.

Module 5

'Writing a Credo' was the first creative idea Catherine Hart Weber shared on page 27 of *Therapist as Life Coach* in her discussion of creative ways of coaching for change and growth.

Having a client create a statement that summarizes the beliefs and principles that guide their decisions and behavior provides a solid beginning for the coaching relationship. First because it encourages the client to consider and record the basics of who they are and how they interact with the world which will lead to where they want to go. The exercise also assists the coach in developing a positive framework for an action plan.

I chose to highlight this particular technique because I've found the activity helpful in my own life. Presented with thoughtfulness and enthusiasm, I've seen it used effectively with others individually and in group settings.

For my own clients, I would lay out the assignment with careful instructions to set aside plenty of time to fully express themselves. I would suggest they include a seed passage or verse from Scripture that would act as an organizing factor to maintain a Christian perspective. In that process I might share my own Credo.

I believe God calls His children to express His active love in practical ways that reflect the level of compassion, healing, and power He grants us. *Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.* Matthew 10:8 NASB The translation into my life is—Heal the soul sick, bind up the broken hearted, tend the abused, drive out confusion, doubt, and fear. Freely you have received, Sandra. Freely give.