



What is Health and Wellness Coaching?

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Coaching is a burgeoning, new field in the health and wellness industry. It is a process that, “unlocks a person’s potential to maximize their own performance”.¹ Health and wellness coaching is designed to bring out the very best in people and, unlike psychotherapy, does not focus on the past. Rather, this type of coaching specifically concentrates on the present and future concerns and goals of the client through an alliance between two people: the coach and the client. The role of a coach is to empower their client by recognizing and facilitating the client’s innate potential to create their desired life:

A coach does not tell the client what they should do, rather they help the client discover the right path or action for themselves by asking powerful questions and reframing desires into requests for action. Through the coaching relationship the client willingly agrees to make him or herself accountable with the coach in order to implement the changes they want in their life.²

Thus, this type of coaching takes an active and directive role, applying the principles and processes of life coaching to the goals of lifestyle improvement for increased levels of wellness.³ For instance, the coach may help educate the client on specific health-related topics and support them with health and wellness goals.¹ The objective is to create an interactive partnership to focus on lifestyle changes that will foster a more satisfying and healthful life.

A good example of holistic coaching is the Co-Active Coaching Model.⁴ This model addresses the client’s whole life and recognizes that the decisions people make are interconnected. For example, a career or job change can affect one’s physical and mental health, environment, family, and friendships. While a coaching session may focus on one facet of a client’s life, an underlying current is constantly flowing;⁴ the client may have one issue to address, but it can affect other areas of their life. Most importantly, this model is based on the fundamental principle that “clients have the answers or they can find the answers.” In other words, a coach does not need to “fix” their client, but rather facilitate the process of discovery.

Wellness coaching begins with the understanding that wellness is “not simply the lack of disease process or simply the absence of illness,”³ but a continuum that is fluid and ever-changing. So much of health and wellness is behavioral, therefore having a coach as an advocate for health can inspire and support growth.