



Below is an outline excerpt from my Peer Coaching workshops for Christian churches and groups that helps to define Christian Coaching and how it can be compared to counseling, mentoring, consulting and discipling:

A. Christian Coaching embodies:

- A biblically-based value system.
- A relationship base: Triune God, Coach and those placed in an individual's life.
- A support system for change.
- Transformation of an individual primarily through these relationships.
- Transformational goal: to move individual from superficial relationships to authentic ones.
- Objective for client is for continuous growth and leadership development.
- Known best for being exceptional listeners and for asking powerful, transformational questions that empower the individual to think and act independently.
- Assumes client embodies a certain level of health mentally and emotionally.

A Christian Coach generally works with better than average, high functioning individuals that have made a decision for growth and change. The Coach develops understanding of a person's goals and objectives for personal or professional growth over a brief period of time that are born out of and driven by God-given and heartfelt desires, gifts skills, abilities and experiences. The Coach then partners with the client and empowers that individual in developing instrumental strategies; encourages them with biblically-based guidance to create appropriate objectives and take appropriate action steps to reach their stated goals; and experiences personal or professional success to fulfill God's purposes, offering Glory to God. Aside from being a great listener, a Christian Coach will seldom employ aspects of a Counselor; sometimes performs as a Mentor for re-training purposes; sometimes training includes exhortation as a Discippler; always performs as a Coach.

Biblical example: When walking with His Disciples, Christ performed in the same way an Athletic Coach, Business Coach or Leadership Coach does in that they encourage and exhort, and ask powerful questions to empower the individual in thinking and acting independently, efficiently and effectively.

B. Christian Counseling embodies:

- A biblically-based value system.
- A relationship base: Triune God, Counselor and those placed in an individual's life.
- A support system for change.
- Transformation of an individual primarily through appropriate clinical techniques addressing mental, emotional and spiritual health.
- Transformational goal: move individual from internal conflict to inner peace; thereby being able to participate fully in life.
- Objective for an average to high functioning client is to get them to a place of independence and ready for a higher level of growth and change; such as, release from clinical practice, removal from therapies or leadership development.
- Known best for being exceptional listeners, asking powerful, transformational questions for the individual to reflect internally to foster emotional and mental health.
- Assumes client embodies a degree of ill-health mentally or emotionally.

A Christian Counselor generally will work with individuals that are struggling with one or various parts of their lives; an area which is causing a block in moving forward in one area of life or many. The Counselor develops understanding of an individual over a brief period of time to be able to reach a diagnosis so that a treatment of therapy(ies) may be prescribed. Depending on the nature and severity of diagnosis, the Counselor will determine the therapy or can partner with the client regarding the clinical approach. Oftentimes, a combination of awareness education, training, counsel, advocacy and support can be employed on behalf of the individual. A Christian Counselor with sometimes use techniques of a Coach, Mentor, Consultant or Discippler; but primarily functions as a Counselor.

Biblical example: When ministering to His disciples or the multitudes, Christ listened, saw deep into the truth and heart of the matter and counseled them to spiritual, emotional and mental health.

C. Christian Mentoring embodies:

- A biblically-based value system.
- A relationship base: Triune God, Counselor and those placed in an individual's life.
- Imparts information; less conversation or listening than coaching.
- A support system for change.
- Transformation of an individual primarily through training and handing off information.
- Transformational goal: give individual information so that they can take over position.

- Objective for an average to high functioning client is to get them to a place of independence.
- Assumes client embodies a certain level of health mentally and emotionally.

A Christian Mentor generally works with clients ready for change and growth in a specific skill or practice. The Mentor might assess where the client is regards to knowledge of specific area and then add to that information until all information has been given to client and clients perceives he or she can perform tasks associated with that skill independent of the mentor. Being a mentor is like handing a baton off to the next runner. A Mentor might also employ the techniques of a Coach, but rarely those of a Counselor or Discipler; and mostly as a Mentor.

Biblical example: Christ mentored His disciples merely by having them accompany Him everywhere He went for those short years in ministry. When He had taught them sufficiently in his eyes, He ascended into heaven sending them and us the Holy Spirit to stay with us until His return.

D. Christian Consulting embodies:

- A biblically-based value system.
- Hybrid of Mentoring; much shorter duration.
- Imparts information rather than having a conversation; least listening.
- A relationship base: Triune God, Counselor and those placed in an individual's life.
- Transformation of an individual primarily through handing off information.
- Transformational goal: give individual information so that they can enhance current position.
- Objective for an average to high functioning client is to get them to a place of independence.
- Assumes client embodies a certain level of health mentally and emotionally

A Christian Consultant is somewhat of a hybrid of being a mentor in that the duration is much shorter and therefore the relationship can be much more impersonal. Generally the consultant works with clients already in transition and just needing more information in a specific skill or practice. The Consultant would simply offer information requested by the client. A Consultant rarely would employ the techniques of a Coach, Counselor or Discipler; but mostly use Mentoring techniques.

Biblical example: Christ in a sense consulted the growing multitudes when he spoke, adding to their base of information they already had on Him. But He did not personally spend time with each one. Christ merely was adding to their body of information, often answering questions in Parables.

E. Christian Discipling embodies:

- A biblically-based value system.
- A relationship base: Triune God, Counselor and those placed in an individual’s life.
- A support system for change
- Transformation of an individual primarily through investing in the individual’s life; training, support and “coming alongside”; and the handing off of biblically – based information and the Spiritual Disciplines.
- Transformational goal: give individual information so that they can take replicate disciples.
- Objective for an average to high functioning individual is to get them to a place of independence; but at the same time, continually investing in that individual and offering support and counsel.
- Assumes client embodies a certain level of health mentally and emotionally.

A Christian Discipler generally works with individuals ready for change and growth spiritually. The Discipler might assess where the individual is regards to spiritual maturity and then continually partner with that individual. The Christian Discipler often will perform as a Coach, Counselor or Mentor but will primarily function as a Discipler. Example: Christ taught His Disciples and acted out all the Spiritual Disciplines so that they might fulfill the Great Commission.

To demonstrate the close parallel between Coaching and Discipling, and the differences between Coaching, Mentoring and Consulting, please view the following:

Table I. Comparison Table for Christian Coaching, Counseling, Mentoring, Consulting and Discipling Modalities

(Based on subjective scale of 1-10, with 10 being highest degree)

<i>Attributes</i>	<i>Discipling</i>	<i>Coaching</i>	<i>Counseling</i>	<i>Mentoring</i>	<i>Consulting</i>
<i>Biblically-based</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Relationship-based</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Support System</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Transformation accomplished primarily through relationship</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>3</i>

<i>Attributes</i>	<i>Discipling</i>	<i>Coaching</i>	<i>Counseling</i>	<i>Mentoring</i>	<i>Consulting</i>
<i>Transformational goal is authentic relationships</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Objective is for client to achieve continuous growth thereby developing leader</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Exceptional listeners for asking powerful, transformational questions that empower the individual to think and act independently to lead</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Assumes client embodies a certain level of health mentally and emotionally</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>10</i>

Conclusion:

Coaching, Counseling, Mentoring, Consulting and Discipling have often been confused with one another or not understood completely. All these entities have legitimate purposes in today's world. However, when it comes to formal Discipling and training our Christian leaders for the future, Coaching and its techniques have longer lasting and transformational effects on the individual when it comes to empowerment, replication, change and the development of our next generation of leaders.

Notice that as Christians we can and must always be Discipling; however, we must determine how we will accomplish that task of replication. Coaching techniques may be employed in all other genres listed above; but one can not effectively coach if using counseling or consulting techniques because those techniques are not compatible in formal Coaching. In terms of replication, Consulting is too impersonal; Counseling can be too clinical; and Mentoring falls short in many of the interpersonal areas as noted in the table above. Thus, Coaching is the technique of choice when Discipling and when looking to build our next generation of Christian leaders.

To find more out about Sandee Strunk, please visit www.LivingWatersCoach.com.