

Differences Between Therapy and Coaching

A session with a therapist, coffee with a friend, an appointment with a coach, or even simply petting the dog can all be *therapeutic* - they provide help and support. Listed below are the classical and historical way to differentiate between therapy and coaching. Good coaching and good therapy probably overlap quite often.

Therapy		Coaching
Therapist is in charge. The "mental health professional" diagnoses and sets the agenda	Power	The client is in charge. Coach works for the client and client determines the agenda
"Fix what's broken"	Function	Develops Strengths
Focuses on <u>feelings</u> and <u>past</u> events	Focus	Focuses on <u>actions</u> and the <u>future</u>
Heal dysfunction and pathology Improve the "Being"	Purpose	Focuses on <u>actions</u> and the <u>future</u>
Core Beliefs	Depth of Work	Behaviors and Skills
Explores the root of problems	Process	Focuses on solving problems
The client needs healing	Assumption	The client is whole
Works to bring the unconscious into consciousness	Path to Success	Works with the conscious mind
Works for internal resolution of pain and to let go of old patterns	Method	Works for external solutions to overcome barriers, learn new skills and implement them
Therapists deal primarily with answering the question "Why do I....?"	Questions and Questioner	A coach ask the questions "Who are you? Where do you want to go? and What do you want your future to look like?"

Sources: Hayden and Whitworth (1995), *The Relationship Coaching Institute*, Sharon House