

1 Introduction to Health Coaching



Summary Review

The ACE-certified Health Coach is in a unique position to become a well-anchored member of a client's allied health team. In a coaching context, the health coach is a health promoter, health educator, and an active partner. By understanding and applying effective coaching principles, as well as closely engaging with clients in the full range of healthy lifestyle choice management, the health coach will become a valued member of the health, fitness, and wellness community.

Dynamics of the Client–Coach Relationship

The relationship between the client and the health coach establishes the foundation for all future communications and programming. To this end, an effective health coach has an understanding of the following concepts:

- Personal awareness—SWOT analysis
- The DISC model of understanding personality types
- Interpersonal sensitivity and respect

Listening and Motivational Communication Skills

To ensure effective relationship-building and promote motivation within clients, health coaches should practice the following essential skills:

- Active listening
- Motivational interviewing
- Positive listening
- Trust and rapport-building

Coaching Techniques

There are various approaches to help clients achieve their health and wellness goals. An understanding of the following coaching techniques will guide a health coach in choosing the most suitable approach based on individual client needs:

- Cognitive coaching
- Problem-solving models
- Neuro-linguistic programming

Connecting With Medical Fitness Professionals

For a health coach who has the inclination to network with medical and allied health professionals, understanding how to develop relationships with members of the medical community is a significant step in building a practice and career.

Getting Started

This chapter covers the role of the health coach within the allied health community and gives guidelines for building the client–health coach relationship through effective communication and coaching techniques. After completing this chapter, you will have a better understanding of:

- The dynamics of the client–coach relationship
- Personal awareness using a SWOT analysis
- The DISC model of understanding personality types
- Strategies based on interpersonal sensitivity and respect
- Basic listening and motivational communication skills
- Components of trust and rapport-building
- Principles of cognitive coaching
- Problem-solving models
- Neuro-linguistic programming
- Starting the process of connecting with medical fitness professionals

Reading Assignment

Read Chapter 1 of the *ACE Health Coach Manual*, paying special attention to the boldface terms in the chapter. After you have read the chapter, define those terms on a separate piece of paper.

Expand Your Knowledge

I. List the four elements of the “art of living.”

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

II. Match each of the following poor listening habits with the appropriate description.

- a. _____ The faker
- b. _____ The interrupter
- c. _____ The intellectual or logical listener
- d. _____ The rebuttal maker
- e. _____ The focus thief
- f. _____ The advice giver

- 1. A person with this habit rarely asks about the underlying feeling or emotion attached to a message.
- 2. A person with this habit often does not let the speaker articulate his or her feelings or thoughts.
- 3. A person with this habit is typically not concentrating on the speaker.
- 4. A person with this habit is too anxious to speak and shows little concern for the speaker.
- 5. A person with this habit uses the speaker’s words as a way to get to his or her own message.
- 6. A person with this habit is most concerned about getting the speaker to see another point of view.

III. Fill in the blanks.

- a. One of the advantages of performing a SWOT analysis is that it allows the health coach to turn _____ into _____.
- b. A client who is “people-oriented” and “outgoing” falls into the _____ quadrant of the DISC model.
- c. Declarative self-statements (“I will not overeat this weekend”) are linked to _____ motivation, while interrogative self-statements (“Will I avoid overeating this weekend?”) are linked to _____ motivation.
- d. Motivational interviewing is grounded in expressing _____.

IV. List the four-step process that health coaches can use to confirm their understanding when listening to a client.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

V. Briefly explain the metaphor that likens extrinsic motivation to the type of enforcement used by a prison guard.

VI. List the 13 behaviors that are common to high-trust leaders.

Character-based behaviors:

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____

Competency-based behaviors:

- f. _____
- g. _____
- h. _____
- i. _____
- j. _____

Character and competency behaviors:

- k. _____
- l. _____
- m. _____

Multiple-choice Questions

- _____ refers to the ability to recognize one's own feelings, as well as the feelings of others.
 - Empathy
 - Emotional intelligence
 - Sympathy
 - Cultural competence
- Answering the following question—Does the individual have the ability to control impulses, manage emotions, act in resilient ways, and follow through on commitments?—is a means of evaluating which component of emotional intelligence?
 - Self-awareness
 - Self-efficacy
 - Self-confidence
 - Self-regulation
- A client who has been engaged in lifestyle change for more than six months is in which stage of change?
 - Precontemplation
 - Preparation
 - Action
 - Maintenance
- Which of the following nonverbal behaviors often conveys curiosity?
 - Tilting the head slightly to the side
 - Tilting the head slightly forward
 - Slowly nodding
 - Furrowing the brow
- A SWOT analysis is typically utilized to assess _____.
 - The effectiveness of an exercise
 - A client's readiness to change
 - One's self or an opportunity
 - A client's overall progress
- The DISC model can be used to better understand a client's _____.
 - Motivation level
 - Personality type
 - Stage of readiness
 - Fitness level
- Habit strength will typically _____ as a client moves through the stages of the transtheoretical model of behavioral change.
 - Decrease
 - Increase
 - Fluctuate
 - Remain steady
- Which of the following terms is defined as "the demonstration of an attitude of caring"?
 - Sympathy
 - Empathy
 - Respect
 - Emotion
- According to cognitive behavioral theory, what is the link between an activating event and the emotional and behavioral consequence of that action?
 - The client's actions
 - The client's beliefs
 - The client's education level
 - The client's fitness level
- What is the final step in the seven-step problem-solving model presented in this chapter?
 - Implementation
 - Relapse
 - Maintenance
 - Evaluation