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Overview of Coaching

■ ■ ■ As soon as Lee arrived at the church, he remembered that he had his first coaching call with Terry that morning. Terry had asked him to be prepared to talk about things that would make a difference for him. As the leader for the church's small group ministry, Lee was pleased with how many groups were flourishing; yet he knew that several were not.

Right on time, Lee's phone rang. After greeting each other, Terry asked Lee where he wanted to focus, and Lee began sharing about several of the small groups that seemed to be struggling. When Terry asked, "What else can you do to help those groups?" Lee realized that he hadn't been spending as much time with those leaders as the others.

Terry continued, "The leaders with whom you've invested time are flourishing in their small groups. How can the leaders of the other groups get what they need?" Like a bolt of lightning, Lee recognized that he might be standing in the way of the leaders' success.

"I need to reach out to them just like I reached out to the others. It didn't take much time, and I can see the fruits of the time spent with each one."

Terry anchored the action by asking, "By when will you meet with each one, Lee?" Lee was ready to make the calls and set up the meetings. ■

What is coaching? Such a simple question opens the floodgates into a new and rapidly emerging field. If you were to ask twenty people how they

would define coaching, you would get twenty different answers. Everyone defines coaching differently. This chapter is intended to look at some of the individual pieces of the “coaching” puzzle and to explore both a definition of Christian coaching and a brief historical development of the discipline.

The Definition of Coaching

The Original Definition

A hundred years ago, a coach was a transport vehicle, as commonly remembered in the story of Cinderella. Riding in a coach meant that a person would be moved from one point to another. In *Webster's Dictionary* the first definition of *coach* is, “a large, covered, four-wheeled carriage used as a conveyance, with seats for passengers inside and an open raised seat in front for the driver: stagecoach.”¹

Today, coaching is similar. Coaching is still about forward movement and action. A coach, however, is no longer a physical vehicle like a car. A coach is a person who facilitates actions that transport people from one place to another, from where they are to a new destination. Until recently, most people connected coaching with the athletic arena. Often after the statement, “I am a coach,” the natural response is, “Really? What sport?”

Coaching, as it is used within this book, is not about sports or “winning.” It’s about taking intentional action, moving forward, and improving performance. By nature, coaches desire to help people improve, change, recognize and use their strengths and talents, and be successful. Christian coaches want all this as well as to know that God’s leadership and will are central in the coaching process.

Modern Definitions

Gary Collins, an early adopter within the Christian counseling and Christian coaching arenas, defined coaching as an “art and practice of guiding a person or group from where they are toward the greater competence and fulfillment that they desire.”²

In one of the first coaching books, Sir John Whitmore proposed, “Coaching is as much about the way things are done as what is done. Coaching delivers results in large measure because of the supportive relationship between the coach and the coachee, and the means and style of the communication used. The coachee does acquire the facts, not from the coach but from within himself, stimulated by the coach.”³

According to Dennis Kinlaw, “Successful coaching is a mutual conversation that follows a predictable process and leads to superior performance,

¹Victoria Neufeldt, ed. in chief, *Webster's New World Dictionary* (New York: Prentice Hall, 1994), 266.

²Gary Collins, *Christian Coaching* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2001), 16.

³John Whitmore, *Coaching for Performance* (London: Nicholas Brealey, 1995), 4.

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commitment to sustained improvement, and positive relationships.”⁴

Thomas Crane defined coaching as

a comprehensive communication process in which the coach provides performance feedback to the coachee. Topics include broad, work-related dimensions of performance (personal, interpersonal, or technical) that affect the coachee’s ability and willingness to contribute to meaningful personal and organizational goals...Coaches help people clarify and reconnect to their purposes, values and roles. A coach acts as a guide by challenging and supporting people in achieving their performance objectives.⁵

The ICF, the largest professional association that oversees the coaching profession (outside of athletics), certifies coaches and accredits training programs. According to the ICF Web site, “Personal and business coaching is an ongoing professional relationship that helps people produce extraordinary results in their lives, careers, businesses or organizations.”⁶

Definition from a Christian Perspective

From a Christian perspective, coaching is a relationship that involves Christ’s presence and truths from Scripture along with high standards as a coach. This equation might be viewed like a mathematical formula:

$$\begin{aligned} &\text{Christ’s vision and mission} \\ &+ \text{Scriptural principles} \\ &+ \text{Christ’s presence} \\ &+ \text{High standard of excellence as a trained coach} \\ &\hline &= \text{Christian Coaching} \end{aligned} \quad ^7$$

With such a wide-ranging variety of coaching definitions, individuals can become easily sidetracked in examining and comparing the varying nuances of each definition. Therefore, to help target focus and direction, one overarching definition of Christian coaching will be the cornerstone of this book, a definition that positions the coaching relationship as the cornerstone of coaching, just as Jesus Christ is the cornerstone of the church and our relationship with God.

Christian coaching is a focused Christ-centered relationship that cultivates a person’s sustained growth and action.

To help envision the coaching relationship, examine Figure 2.1. Let’s unpack some of the meaning conveyed in this illustration.

⁴Dennis Kinlaw, *Coaching for Commitment* (San Francisco: Jossey Bass/Pfeiffer, 1999), 30.

⁵Thomas Crane, *The Heart of Coaching* (San Diego: FTA Press, 1998), 30–31.

⁶ICF, www.coachfederation.org.

⁷Jane Creswell, Western Seminary coaching course MCS 501, 2005.

The Christian Coaching Relationship

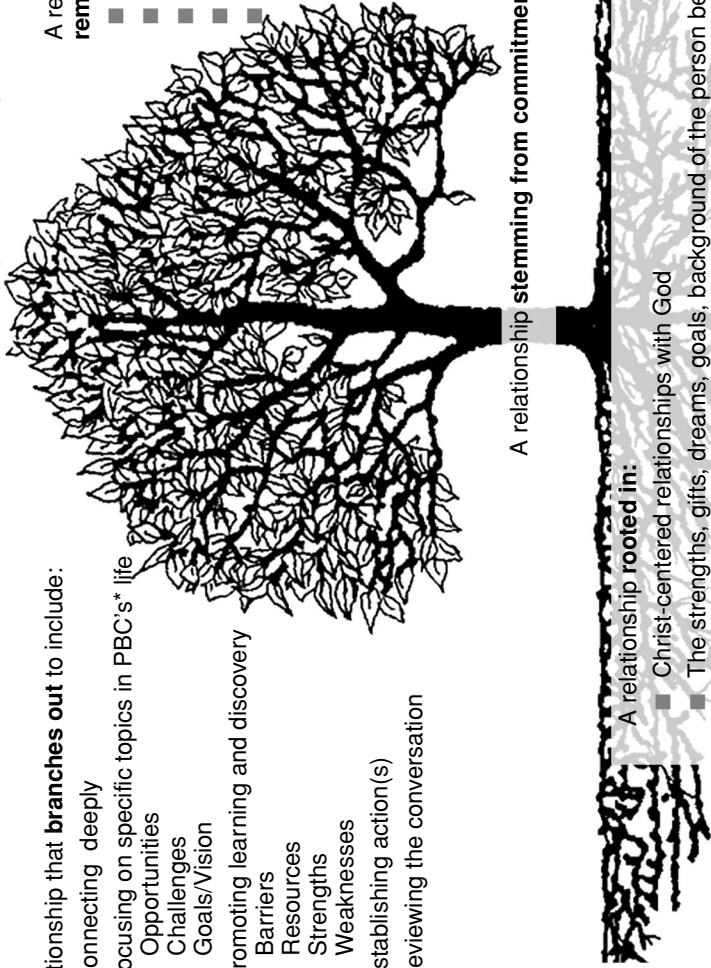
A relationship that **branches out** to include:

- Connecting deeply
- Focusing on specific topics in PBC's* life
 - ~ Opportunities
 - ~ Challenges
 - ~ Goals/Vision
- Promoting learning and discovery
 - ~ Barriers
 - ~ Resources
 - ~ Strengths
 - ~ Weaknesses
- Establishing action(s)
- Reviewing the conversation

A relationship that **produces "fruit that remains"** in life of the PBC* such as:

- Clarifying purpose and strategy
- Setting and reaching goals
- Deepening relationships
- Gaining better balance
- Moving forward

*PBC=Person Being Coached



A relationship **stemming from commitment to PBC and PBC's journey**

A relationship **rooted in:**

- Christ-centered relationships with God
- The strengths, gifts, dreams, goals, background of the person being coached, along with a willingness to be coached
- Coach's training, skills, experience, preparation and readiness to coach

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing" (Jn. 15:5).

“A focused Christ-centered relationship...”

Focused: Christian coaching is purposeful in intent. It is not a relationship for the sake of relationship. It is a relationship with a precise and stated reason for being. The focus in a coaching relationship is always on the person being coached and supporting that person’s growth and action.

Christ-centered: The primary distinction that sets Christian coaching apart from all other coaching is its Christ-centeredness. Apart from Christ, there is no Christian coaching. The assumption in Christian coaching is that the coach is a Christian. The person being coached may or may not be a believer. The coach’s faith impacts the entire coaching relationship, including attitudes toward the person being coached and the situation being discussed, use of skills in the coaching conversation, perspectives, as well as holy nudges from the Holy Spirit.

Relationship: Coaching, in its essence, is relational. For the Christian coach, the relationship includes the coach, person being coached, and Christ. Because of the unique strengths, gifts, dreams, goals, and backgrounds of the person being coached along with the unique training, skills, experience, and preparation of the coach, each coaching relationship is unique. It is a relationship with a commitment. The commitment is to Christ and to the person being coached.

“...that cultivates a person’s sustained growth and action.”

Cultivates: Cultivation occurs in conversation. Coaching conversations are the necessary sunshine and water to cultivate the coaching relationship. Through coaching conversations, with the coach using the eight skills outlined and discussed later in this book, the person being coached is able to focus on specific personal opportunities or challenges, anticipate barriers, identify resources, and develop an action plan.

A person’s sustained growth and action: Coaching is about transformation. Coaching without sustained growth and action on the part of the person being coached is not true coaching. Christian coaching always, without exception, results in action. The coach supports the person being coached in developing action plans as well as systems of accountability for following through on those plans.

Roots, Branches, and Fruit of the Coaching Relationship

Now, consider the roots, branches, and fruit of the coaching relationship.

Roots–Preparedness

“So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness” (Col. 2:6–7).

These words of instruction from Paul to the Colossian believers are vital for the Christian coach, as well as for the person being coached, if that

person is a believer. Quite often, deepening roots with God allow for deepening exploration, discovery, and action in the coaching relationship.

Choosing to be coached makes a powerful statement about an individual's readiness to move forward in life, ministry, or work relationships, or in a myriad of other arenas. For coaching to be successful, the person being coached needs to be ready and willing to engage in a coaching relationship. Starting with the first conversation and throughout the coaching journey, the focus will remain on the strengths, goals, areas for development, and specific situations of the person being coached. As different areas are addressed, the willingness of the person being coached to explore and to take action is critical to the coaching process.

Preparedness by the coach is also important. Each coach brings to the coaching relationship a different level of training, skills, and experiences. The wise coach is well prepared for each coaching conversation so that full attention can be given to the person being coached. Being prepared means being able to focus on and be fully present with the person being coached, being in a place without interruptions, and being ready to concentrate on whatever the person being coached brings to the conversation. Commitment to the Lord, to the coaching relationship, and to the journey of the person being coached is paramount to strong coaching.

The Christian coach's personal commitment to God provides roots and stability for the coaching relationship. The coach's relationship with God positively impacts the coach's relationship with the person being coached. In all aspects of the ongoing coaching relationship, the coach should seek God's wisdom and discernment as the person being coached moves forward.

Branches—The Coaching Relationship through Coaching Conversations

At the core of Christian coaching are relationships—first with Christ, then with others. The model for this centrality of relationships is found in Jesus' greatest commandment, "Love the Lord your God with all you heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself'" (Mt. 22:37–38). The coaching journey unfolds as the connection between coach and the person being coached is established. In Christ, deep connections support all interactions. Throughout the coaching experience, the focus remains on the topics that the person being coached brings to each conversation. This includes challenges, opportunities, goals, objectives, or specific circumstances.

Throughout coaching, the coach encourages the person being coached to learn and discover new things about God, life, relationships, impact of behaviors, and self. Interestingly, because coaches are always seeking to improve their skills and knowledge and because coaching is a collaborative experience, often both the coach and the person being coached learn and

grow. The growth of the person being coached comes as a result of taking action, and the coach grows through participation in the journey of the person being coached.

Coaching is about taking intentional action aligned with God's will and with the desired outcomes of the person being coached. Establishing specific actions is a critical part of coaching and occurs during each coaching conversation. Sometimes, only one or two actions are identified; at other times, the person being coached develops a thorough action plan. Either way, a brief review of actions concludes the coaching conversation.

The Christian life is a life of both reflection and action. One without the other creates an imbalance. Christian coaching affirms learning and discovery in the life of the person being coached, not for the sake of learning and discovery in and of themselves, but, rather, for the sake of establishing appropriate and God-honoring action.

Fruit—Bringing out the Best

As the coaching relationship progresses, fruit develops. Fruit can be internal or external. Internal fruit includes a deeper walk with God, clarity of vision and values, or simply a better quality of life. External fruit includes reached goals, changed relationships, or increased effectiveness within ministry. Just like a bowl with a variety of fruits, coaching brings out the best in people as they grow, change, and deepen their walks with the Lord.

Christian coach Eddie Hammett has said that coaching has borne more fruit, quicker, and with greater effectiveness than any other ministry in which he has been involved. In workshops in which he has shared this statement, he has often received pushback from participants. The uneasiness usually revolves around giving attention to results. As one participant said, "Jesus is much more concerned about our hearts and our intentions than with our results." The origins of such protests are understandable. Christians, churches, and ministries that are too focused on "the bottom line" can mistake peripheral issues for the main thing. Sometimes measurable results can overtake simple obedience to Christ.

However, the New Testament *does* show that Jesus was interested in the results of ministry efforts. In the parable of the talents (Mt. 25:14–30), Jesus told the story of three servants who received varying levels of responsibility and were held accountable for the results of their investing strategies. In another account, Jesus cursed a fig tree that had stopped producing fruit (Mt. 21:18–19). As these and other passages testify, God expects fruit.

This idea of bearing fruit is often referred to as stewardship. Coaching supports Christian stewardship by giving positive attention to the results of a life lived with intention. Coaching conversations often begin by acknowledging that bad or little fruit is being produced. People are not satisfied with the results they are getting and want to get better results. Coaching invests attention in exploring the results a person is getting, the level of

satisfaction with the results, and how poor results can be a doorway into investigating habits, attitudes, beliefs, and actions that produce the results.

Basic Coaching Principles

Undergirding Christian coaching are several key principles. These principles help distinguish coaching from other disciplines, such as counseling, mentoring, and consulting (see appendix 1, “Distinctions of Coaching,” p. 125 for more information on these distinctions). The underlying truth of these principles for Christian coaching will become evident as they are woven through the pages of this book.

Principle 1—Taking Intentional Action

Coaching always encourages intentional action. The wise coach encourages others to continually think ahead, move forward, and be proactively involved with their lives. The wise coach looks for ways to encourage continual forward motion and intentional action. Simple questions that encourage intentional action include:

- “How can this conversation help you move forward?”
- “What specific actions are needed right now?”
- “What other options need to be considered before you take action?”
- “With that outcome in mind, what actions will you take?”

■ ■ ■ For many years, Susan felt led to pursue a master’s degree in organizational development. She loved school, so the thought of it excited her. However, life kept intervening. She married, started her career, and gave birth to twins. Then she heard about coaching. The idea of receiving coaching was intriguing, particularly because the thought of getting her organizational development degree was still in her mind.

Susan decided to explore getting a coach. After interviewing several coaches, Susan hired Loren, a coach in another state. Early in their telephone coaching relationship, Loren wondered out loud what it would take for Susan to look into a degree program. “Susan, what actions can you take to start the process?”

Susan responded with several possible actions that would help her to know what was available.

“And what actions will you do first?”

Again, Susan became clear on how to prioritize the actions.

On their next call, Susan excitedly reported that she had discovered a great distance-learning program that combined on-line classes with group activities. She had already signed up for a conference call that would explain more about the program.

Loren immediately acknowledged what Susan had done and the level of enthusiasm that he heard. He then asked, “What are the next actions, now that you have a possibility in mind?”

Susan thought for a minute and responded, “I need to talk with my manager and find out if this is something my company will pay for and if I can take the time that I’ll need every now and then for group projects. I also want to start thinking about how this will impact my family.”

Loren responded, “How can you do school and continue to be a great wife and mother?”

Within two months, Susan had a plan for her master’s degree and was enrolled in a program. She and her husband were talking about how to have the least impact on her family, and her manager had assured her that she could take the time she needed to do the project work. Susan was thrilled! ■

Principle 2—Serving

Coaching is about being in service to others, always keeping the other person’s best interests in mind. Jesus modeled service by laying down His life for us. “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Mk. 10:45).

A coach serves the person being coached by saying something difficult for the person to hear, asking the person to stretch in ways not done before, or challenging the person to see something from a totally different perspective.

In the spirit of service, the coach must also be willing to let go of the person being coached, or give a referral to someone else. For example, it might become clear that a professional service other than coaching is appropriate for the person being coached. Or, it might become clear that the person being coached would benefit from working with a different coach. In either case, keeping in mind an attitude of serving the person being coached, the coach may need to make a referral.

■ ■ ■ Several years ago, Sarah, a new executive coach, received a call asking if she could coach a ministry leader and his team as they launched a new ministry in Los Angeles. Sarah was thrilled. It would be a twelve-month contract. However, a few hours after the initial call, Sarah thought of a colleague who was closer in proximity and had experience in launching similar ministries. On one hand, this was the type of work Sarah wanted to do; on the other hand, Sarah’s colleague was more suited to the project. After praying about the situation, Sarah called her colleague to see if he was interested and had time to take on a client like this. He did. Sarah knew that this was the right decision for the ministry, even though it meant giving a referral rather than taking on the client herself. ■

If coaching is about serving, then it means trusting that God is our source and our provider, rather than trusting an organization or person as our source. It means always keeping in mind the best interests of the person being coached, rather than the coach. As the apostle Paul wrote, “Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus” (Phil. 2:3–5).

Think about It

- ◆ Who is your source?
- ◆ How does this impact the way you serve others?
- ◆ How does this show up in the ways you conduct yourself?

Principle 3—Speaking the Truth in Love, without Making Others Wrong

One non-negotiable Christian coaching principle is to not make others wrong. Even when it is important to speak honestly to the person being coached, the Christian coach does not make others wrong.

The Christian coach who inadvertently makes a person being coached wrong can, and in fact should, immediately apologize and ask forgiveness. What a model this is for all of life! How many of us have people in our lives who are sensitive enough to recognize when an offense occurs and who are willing to apologize and learn from the situation?

Christian coaches must be willing to say, “I’m sorry,” as soon as necessary, to learn from their mistakes, and to monitor their words carefully. The apostle Paul’s words to the Ephesians offer good guidance to the Christian coach: “Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen” (Eph. 4:29).

■ ■ ■ Kiera and her coach, Todd, had been working together for several months. Recently, they had been discussing a challenge that Kiera was having with her manager, Matt. Todd assumed that Kiera needed one more conversation with Matt and said to Kiera, “You’re not ready for the conversation yet.” Following the comment, Todd noticed a silence that was unusual for their working relationship. He asked if he had said something that had offended her.

She responded, “Yes, it sounds like you don’t think that I’m ready to talk with Matt.”

Todd immediately said, “I truly am sorry that I offended you.”

Later in the day, Todd thought back on the conversation and realized that he had *assumed* that she wasn’t ready, rather than

checking in with her. He decided to call her. “Kiera, I realized that I made an assumption that you weren’t ready to talk with Matt. My error. I should have asked you if you were ready or what else you needed before you had the conversation. Again, it was my error. I hope the conversation goes really well.” ■

One of the best gifts a coaching relationship offers is the gift of safety. This doesn’t imply that the coach isn’t honest or direct but rather implies that the coach carefully matches the words, tone, and directness to the person being coached and the situation. Safety, therefore, comes from knowing that the coach will be honest, will not intend to make the other person wrong, and will take responsibility if a mistake is made.

Not making others wrong is a huge part of creating a safe environment, or sanctuary, for people to explore and try new behaviors. Most people have few, if any, places to try to do things differently without fear of embarrassment or humiliation if a mistake is made. Very few people have any safe places at all—not at school or work and, unfortunately, usually not in churches or homes. Sometimes, the coaching relationship is the only situation in which a person knows he or she has no need to worry if mistakes are made and feels safe enough to try new behaviors.

Author Dinah Maria Mulock Craik expressed beautifully the sentiment of sharing a sanctuary with another individual when she wrote:

Oh the comfort, the inexpressible comfort of feeling safe with a person, having neither to weigh thoughts nor measure words, but pouring them all right out, just as they are—chaff and grain together—certain that a faithful hand will take and sift them, keep what is worth keeping, and with the breath of kindness blow the rest away.⁸

Principle 4—The Power of Great Questions

Part of the beauty of coaching is the core belief that the person being coached has the answers, whether on the surface or buried. A clear distinction of Christian coaching is that we can trust God and others to come up with the needed answers. In coaching, the focus is on asking great questions that will unlock the answers rather than on giving the answers. The person being coached, rather than the coach, is responsible for answers or solutions.

Believing that answers lie within the person being coached and that person’s connection with the Lord unleashes creativity and innovation. Asking questions such as, “What else are you considering?” or, “What other ideas do you have?” communicates that the person being coached knows more than is being said and is capable of coming up with more creative ways of approaching the situation. This approach subtly trains the person

⁸Dinah Maria Mulock Craik, *A Life for a Life* (Whitefish, Mont.: Kessinger, 2004), 184.

being coached to ask the same questions internally, increasing self-confidence and trust in God to reveal His will and purposes.

Principle 5—Coaching Isn’t for Every Situation!

Coaching is appropriate in many life situations; however, in other situations, it is inappropriate. When a person honestly doesn’t know what to do, coaching is inappropriate.

■ ■ ■ Several years ago, a team member needed to be fired, and the manager had never fired anyone before. In addition, the company risked a lawsuit if the personnel issue was handled improperly. The manager contacted his human resources (HR) professional for help in determining how to proceed. If the HR professional had tried to coach the manager through the process, precious time would have been wasted. Instead, the HR professional gave specific instruction on exactly what to do. The difficult task was completed efficiently and correctly. Giving direction was the appropriate way to work with the manager based on the manager’s level of knowledge and experience. ■

Coaching is also inappropriate in situations in which information that others don’t have needs to be shared. If a team member has been on vacation and doesn’t know what progress has been made on an important project since the previous week, it is not wise for the manager to ask, “What do you think has happened?” Instead, a simple update is more appropriate.

Likewise, in crisis situations, clear and direct instruction is appropriate. In a burning building, it would be important to speak directly, “Get out now!” and give orders on how to evacuate the building rather than casually asking, “What do you want to bring with you as we leave the building?” Crisis situations or instances when an immediate decision is needed are not times for coaching.

While coaching is inappropriate in some settings, coaching is perfect in a number of settings. For example, coaching is a good fit when

1. a person is ready for the next level of development personally or professionally
2. specific goals or tasks need to be accomplished
3. a person demonstrates a desire to respond to change positively
4. development is as important, or more important, than the task or goal
5. there’s a sense of a new season of life and it’s time to prepare

The Origins of Coaching

Coaching has existed for decades, with a variety of names. Athletic coaching is probably the best known, with many models of helping athletes move forward. Notable are Olympic coaches who strive to instill in their protégés the skills, insights, possibilities, and thought patterns needed to

compete internationally. These coaches are often seen on the sidelines, cheering for their protégés as they compete, embracing and congratulating them when they win, or consoling and encouraging them when they lose.

In the 1980s, Thomas Leonard, a trained financial planner, emerged on the coaching scene. As he talked with his clients, listening to their stories, he realized that individuals needed more than financial planning; they needed life planning. A brilliant and unusual man, Leonard began to talk with his clients about their lives, challenging them to live their lives in a different way. Sometimes he might talk with a person about making dramatic changes, such as moving into a smaller living space and curtailing all expenses other than the basics. At other times, he might challenge a person to address personal needs so that values would drive behavior. Whatever Leonard was doing, it worked!

Out of Leonard's experiences came the concept of coaching others via the telephone, as it provided a level of intimacy without the challenges of face-to-face communication. He also started training others through "Coach U," using the telephone as the primary vehicle for classes. This opened other areas around the world to coach training, and Coach U remains one of the world's largest personal coach training programs.⁹ Sandy Vilas took over Coach U from Leonard and continues to lead the company. Simultaneously, some of Leonard's protégés began to enlarge the coaching profession in a variety of ways. Laura Whitworth and Henry Kimsey-House launched Coach Training Institute,¹⁰ a respected coach training school. Today, many coach-training companies target any number of coaching niches.

In 1995, the ICF was created. This organization offers professional certification for individuals as well as accreditation for coach training schools. The ICF is known for its focus on setting and maintaining high standards of professionalism. In February 1996, *Newsweek* published an article, "Need a Life? Get a Coach,"¹¹ which brought widespread interest in coaching. Since then, coaching has been spotlighted in thousands of articles as well as radio and television interviews.

In recent years, academic institutions have begun to offer coaching courses. Several respected universities offer coaching certification programs aligned with ICF requirements. More academic curriculum is expected to emerge in the coming years.

Right around 2000, coaching emerged in the Christian community. The Christian Coaches Network and coach training schools provide resources for Christian coaches. Gary Collins, well-known in the Christian counseling field, wrote one of the first Christian Coaching books.¹²

⁹Coach U can be accessed at www.coachu.com.

¹⁰Coach Training Institute can be accessed at www.thecoaches.com.

¹¹Kendall Hamilton, "Need a Life? Get a Coach," *Newsweek* (February 5, 1996): 48.

¹²Collins, *Christian Coaching*.

In recent years, coaching has gained momentum in the Christian community. Denominational leaders discovered they could impact congregations and their leaders through coaching. Subsequently, congregational coaches started to emerge and be trained. Seminaries are beginning to see the vision of how ministers and others coming through theological academia can use coaching. Leaders at Western Seminary in Portland, Oregon, saw the potential for coaching in ministers and launched the first coaching credential program in a theological education institution in the United States. Other seminaries and academic institutions are recognizing the potential of coaching and are beginning to make coach training available to students and alumni.

Interest is continuing to escalate as people are sharing how coaching is making a difference and changing their lives. As coaching continues to emerge, the horizon is bright for Christian coaching and its transformational potential for individual believers, congregations, and even denominations.

Prayer

Lord, we submit to You and are excited about how You are leading us. Show us Your ways as we engage in the learning process. Show us how You want us to serve others. Show us how to lean on You as we seek to become more effective in all of our interactions, and remind us to continually give You all the credit and the glory. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Beyond the Book

1. How will you describe coaching when someone asks what it is?
2. What has contributed to strong relationships for you? How can you establish strong relationships quickly?
3. Look at the examples of coaching in this chapter. Think about what you would do as the coach in each situation. Think also about the approach you would take when you discuss it with the client.
4. In what areas of your life are you not taking intentional action? What steps can you take immediately to move forward?
5. What personal areas need further development so that you can focus more deeply on serving others?
6. How often do you make people feel wrong or believe that you have better answers than the other person? What can you do to make positive changes in these areas?