

9 Guidelines for Spiritual Coaching

Spirituality coaching is more than creating goals and holding someone accountable. Spirituality coaching takes into account the whole person, that is, mind, body and spirit. Spirituality coaching focuses on one's essential well being that can only be accessed from one's Inner Core, one's essence. The aim of spirituality coaching is true and lasting transformation, and a true congruence between one's inner behavior and outer behavior, allowing one to show up in integrity and authentically. The following nine spiritual guidelines can serve as a foundation for spirituality coaching.

1. I AM A CELL IN THE BODY OF HUMANITY. Like the acres of sage in a desert that are connected by a single root, I know that I have a connection with, and an impact on, on every other cell in this body called Humanity. I know my thoughts, words and actions affect all the cells in this body. I am aware my thoughts, words, and actions are either "healing" or "killing" these other cells. I operate on the belief that all of life is relationship, and that how I treat one person is reflected out to every individual on the planet in some way, shape or form. I know the planetary impact of my thoughts as I know a butterfly flapping its wings in Japan can cause a hurricane in the Gulf of Mexico.

"How are my thoughts healing or killing someone right here, right now?" guides and makes me consciously aware of my spiritual responsibility in every one of my day-to-day interactions.

2. I EXPERIENCE ALL OF LIFE AS DIVINE. I respect the humanity of each person I know and meet; I am aware that everyone possesses a spark of divinity. I make warm and embracing eye contact and refer to each individual by name when referring to him or her directly and indirectly. I first choose to relate to each person as divine, and only then do I relate to them in their "role" as a client, a neighbor, a direct report, a manager, a leader, a clerk, a wife, a child, an athlete, a coach, a clerk, a repair person, etc. I refrain from referring to individuals as "my client", "my 2:00", "the guy who", etc.

"Am I seeing this person with the eyes of Spirit; am I speaking with the voice of Spirit; am I listening with the ears of Spirit?" guides me to consciously connect with another's divine humanity.

3. I MANIFEST AUTHENTICITY THROUGH HONESTY, SINCERITY AND RESPONSIBILITY. I am first responsible for "walking the talk," and so I consciously monitor my own behaviors and performance and refrain from judging another's motives, intentions or behaviors.

"Am I 'being' and 'doing' honestly, sincerely and responsibly right here, right now in my relationship with myself and with others?" guides me to be consciously conscious of living from a place of integrity and authenticity.

4. THE PRACTICE OF PRESENCE ALLOWS THE SPACE FOR EVERYONE TO BE HIMSELF OR HERSELF. Presence allows me to be in my body, inside rather than in my mind, to be in the moment, in the Now. In presence, I am not in the past or future. I am not judging, evaluating or being "mental". I am still and focused. In every interaction, I set my intention to quiet my mind and open my heart through the action of presence.

I serve as the space in which coaching happens. "Out beyond the ideas of rightdoing and wrongdoing, there is a field; I'll meet you there." (Rumi)

"Is it OK to allow whatever arises in this space, in this moment?" allows me to "go inside" to find inner wisdom, inner knowing and understanding, and insights into my BE-ings and DO-ings in every relationship and interaction.

5. EVERYONE IS EXACTLY WHERE THEY SHOULD BE AT THIS TIME, IN THIS PLACE, ON THE PLANET. It is not my job, role or responsibility to "fix", "change" or tell anyone "what's best for her or him." Each person is exactly where he or she needs to be in the evolution of his or her consciousness right now. Each person has all the answers inside himself or herself. Everyone comes to find right action, right knowing and right understanding from within. My choice is to serve and support others to look inside to discover what they need to know. Whenever a client is in an "I don't know" situation, rather than tell or suggest, I ask: (1) "Is it OK not to know?" (2) "How does it feel not to know?" or (3) "What if you did know?" I have no wanting or needing to fix, make the "right" suggestion, have an answer, and be the coach-turned-consultant. For me, this is acting with honesty, sincerity and responsibility to myself and another to just be the space and be present, in the Now, and allow whatever arises in the other to arise, knowing that their "answer" or "solution" or next step" will naturally emerge.

"Is it OK to be where I am right now?" helps me discover and explore if my need for "control" forces me to gravitate away from my true and real self.

6. EVERY CIRCUMSTANCE OF MY LIFE IS AN INTERACTION OF SPIRIT WITH MY SOUL. I know there is no such thing as luck, circumstance or coincidence. Every thing happens for a reason. I am consistently receiving lessons and teachings.

"I'm curious about this," encourages my continued practice of inquiry and reflection to delve more deeply into conscious awareness and understanding of my self as I continue on my journey as a coach and Earth Human.

7. CIRCUMSTANCES HAPPEN "FOR" US, NOT "TO" US. I remove my self from a "victim consciousness" and "martyrdom" perspective. Blame, jealousy, defensiveness, and resentment are not a part of the fabric of who I am. I am grateful and appreciative of every circumstance, event and person that I meet on my path.

"So, what's the learning here?" guides my responses to life and enhances my personal and professional growth and development.

8. GREET EVERYONE WITH A WARM SMILE. A smile of greeting is a gift of appreciation. There are no "little people", anywhere, who I can ignore or be insensitive toward.

"What seems to be separating me from you?" reminds me that I am in alignment with everyone with whom I come into contact.

9. SPIRITUALITY IS A LOT LIKE BEING PREGNANT. Either I am or I'm not. I can't be "a little bit" pregnant, nor can I be "a little bit" spiritual. If I'm not coming from a place of spirituality, i.e., my Essential Self, what's getting in the way? Ego? Limiting

thoughts and beliefs? Sabotaging self-images or self-concepts? Regret because I'm living in the past, or fear, anxiety and worry about the future?

"What will it take for me to come from my essence and align my outer behavior and inner behavior as one?" reminds me to let go of my ego and "little self" as I continue my journey toward transformation.

So, spirituality in coaching and being coached is not a matter of convenience. One needs to be aware of the discrepancy between genuine spirituality (which comes from Essence and divinity) and counterfeit spirituality (which is an "ego ideal" of what it means to be spiritual) that one puts on like a robe when meeting with a person being coached, or in fact, with anyone.

These spiritual guidelines for coaching serve to inform one's coaching practice and one's life. When individuals make an honest and sincere effort to allow these spiritual guidelines for coaching to be the beacon that drives the direction of their practice, they and their clients most often experience greater inner peace, harmony, balance and well-being at work, at home and at play.

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