

Moving towards Evidence-Based Life Coaching

What is the role of coaching for tertiary students ?

Jenny Clifton Psychologist
Monash University

Why offer Life Coaching?

- First Life Coaching Program for tertiary students in Australia
- Responding to gap in coaching for students in universities in Australia
- University – a performance-based culture
- A mental health promotion tool

Why offer Life Coaching?

- Coming to gain something eg skills, knowledge, competitive edge
- No need for a presenting problem
- Attracts people who may not come for counselling

What is Life Coaching?

- Setting & attaining goals & achieving results through action and change

The Coaching Sequence



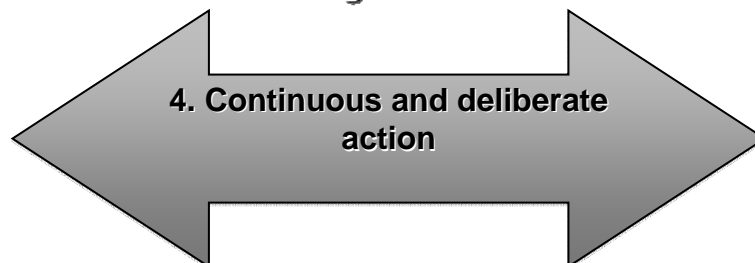
Adapted from Institute of Coaching and Consulting Psychology Workshop Manual

Grant and Cavanagh 2005

Coaching is about Creating Change.

To make change we need:

- ❖1. Discontent with the present
- ❖2. Vision of the future
- ❖3. Skills to get there



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Evidence Based Life Coaching

- Increase in hardiness, hope & decrease in depressive symptoms in high school students (Green, Rynsaardt and Grant 2007)
- Increase in goal attainment, life satisfaction (Spence and Grant, 2005)
- Increase in QOL and decrease in depression, anxiety and stress (Grant 2003)

The Four Do's in making a program work


1. What's In a Name?
2. Interview
3. Goal Setting and Follow through
4. Support from students and staff
: Icy Pole or Ipod?

Student Goals

- Build a family nest, get married , have 1-2 babies, have own house (need to decide country)
- Be financially independent and stable
- Keep in close touch, financially support, and regularly visit my family in Russia (2-3 times a year)
- Learn 2-3 languages
- Grow psychologically
- Maintain former friendships and develop new networks
- Travel extensively around the globe
- Keep good health and physical shape

Program-Key features

- Transfer of knowledge and skills (training) in learning and motivation strategies:
 - Stress management
 - Time management
 - Thinking for success
- Coaching : application of training to own life



Coping With Study Stress – Helpful Tips


Read the following tips and choose 1-2 that you would like to start doing over the next week and that would move you one step closer towards your goal.

Breathing
Breathing exercises can help us to relax and can be done at anytime.

- 1) "Clear Head/ Calm Body" relaxation breathing: as you take a deep breath in, say to yourself "clear head" & as you exhale say to yourself "calm body".
- 2) 5 minute breathing:
 - Close your eyes and bring your attention to your breathing
 - Follow the air as it comes in your nose and the bottom of your lungs.

CHANGING THE PATTERN OF UNHELPFUL THINKING

Situation or activating events	Automatic Negative Thoughts	Consequences	Disputing automatic thoughts	Corrected thoughts	Consequences
Describe actual event which led to unpleasant feelings	Describe automatic thoughts you had prior to unpleasant feelings	Describe feelings which occurred as a result of automatic thoughts and give a rating of strength of those feelings between 1 and 10 with 1 being low and 10 being high	What is the evidence which supports your thoughts? What is the evidence against your thoughts in the reality?	What would be a better way to think?	Describe feelings which resulted from exercising automatic thoughts and give rating between 1 and 10 of the strength of those feelings with 1 being low and 10 being high
Example: I failed an exam that I should have done well in	I am a failure. I have never achieved anything in my life. I am hopeless	Severe depression/ Sense of hopelessness. Despair Rating 8	There is not really any evidence to support how I feel. I have passed most of my exams up to date and did quite well last year.	I am disappointed with the result of that exam but it is only one assessment and I will try to do better on the next assessment. It is unrealistic to think that I must do well on every exam.	Feeling a little upset and unhappy. Rating: 3
I have to sit an exam in two days and I know that I should be working hard on revision because there is a lot of topics to revise and it is worth 35%.	I work better under pressure so I'll do it later. I'll feel more like doing it later.	Feelings of guilt/ Stress/ Anxious, jittery. Rating 8	I usually don't get good grades when I revise at the last minute so I don't really work better under pressure. I never actually feel like doing it whether sooner or later!	I need make a start on my revision. I can do it if I put my mind to it. If I work hard for a few days it will be worth it.	Feeling a little stressed but motivated. Rating 2
Three exams are coming in three Uni and I have to get a couple of assignments done first.		Feeling stressed and unable to	It's not any different from study load last year - really isn't!	I will have to work hard but I can do it. I have done it before.	Feeling a little stressed but much more positive. Motivated.



Time Management Helpful Tips for students

Read through the list and tick the ones you're already doing. Then, circle the one's you believe would support you achieve your goal & that you would like to start doing:

- Create a weekly study plan specifically for the exam period
- Create a weekly timetable so you can structure your time
- Do include regular time in your weekly timetable for relaxation and leisure activities
- Develop a weekly "to do" list where you rate tasks in order of importance. Include non-study tasks like grocery shopping, paid work etc as well
- Allocate specific time blocks of 30-60 minutes for study

What other idea of what you want to achieve supports my goal?

Staying on Track - Completion Log

Keeping a written record of what you have committed to do can really help you to stay on track.

NAME _____
DATE _____
SESSION NUMBER _____

Recall your primary SMART goal

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Values: _____

Items to complete in order to take you closer to your primary goal/s

1.	DONE?

Rationale for Training plus Coaching

- Training + Coaching more effective than training alone (Olivero et al 1997)
 - Helped coachees make it meaningful and apply it to own life

Coaching for *Exam* Success

- Goal Progression
- Good self-report data
- Moderate-good completion rate
 - Interview
- Name?
- No quantitative measures/control group

Coaching for *Life* Success

- Goal Progression
 - Good self-report data
 - Low completion rate
 - No interview
 - Poor name choice
 - Extraneous variables
 - Results not conclusive
 - More robust design and measures
- } Attracted wrong people

Coaching for *University* Success

- Goal Progression
 - Good self-report data
 - Good completion rate
 - Interview
 - Good name choice
- } Attracted right people
- Robust quantitative measures used
 - But no control group
 - Low numbers so low generalisability

What was Achieved?

- Group life coaching programs offer a supportive, goal-focused social environment and teach students skills to:
 - Set and attain meaningful goals
 - Develop goal-focused action plans
 - Stay on track and maintain motivation
 - Guide efforts for growth & optimal functioning

Looking Ahead.....

- Pre & Post Group Measures:
 - Adult State Hope Scale
 - Coping Self-Efficacy Scale (CSE)
 - Self-efficacy for Learning Form
 - Psychological Well-being Scale
 - Positive and Negative Affect Scale
- Name
- Interview
- Control Group

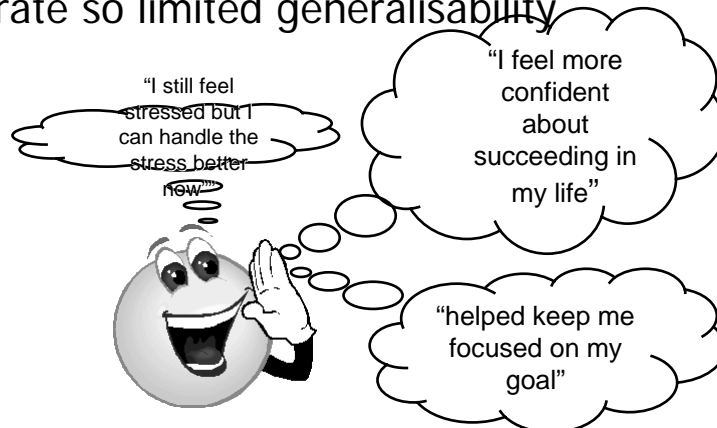
Thank-you!



Monash Program – “Coaching for Life Success”

Outcomes

- Good qualitative feedback using self-report measures but low completion rate so limited generalisability



Monash Program – “Coaching for Life Success”

Outcomes

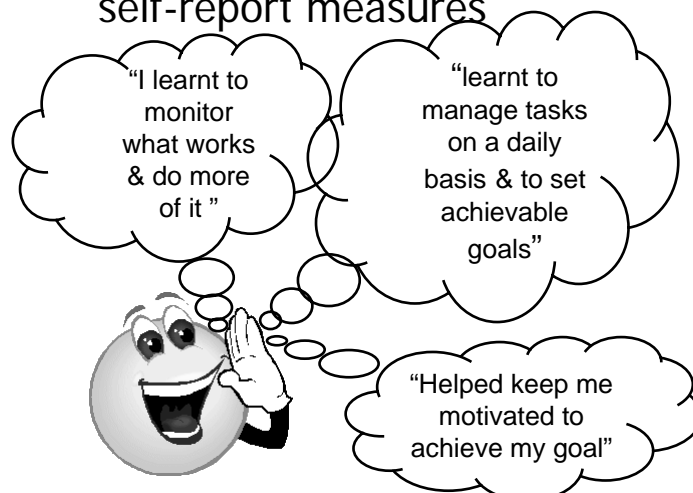
- Goal progression
- Knowing they had to report back to group – took a more active role in own learning
- Normalizing
- Made friendships - important for addressing isolation in international students

Deakin University – “Coaching for Exam Success” Overview Group program

- Deakin University - rural and metro
- Open to under and post - graduates (all faculties)
- Group met for 1 hour per week for 5 weeks
- Pre program interview

Outcome Deakin Program

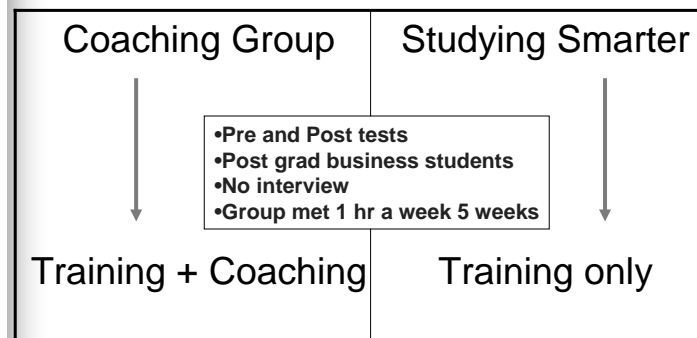
- Moderate attrition rate
- Good qualitative feedback using self-report measures



Monash Program – “Coaching for Life Success” Overview

- Focus on “life success”
- Part of a research study
- Research design:
 - Coaching group (experimental)
 - Training group - Studying Smarter training program (Placebo Control group)

Research Design



Monash Program – Coaching for Life Success Discussion

Why low completion rate?

- “Life success” meant different things to different students
- Post-graduates
- Extraneous variables : illness, room changes and emergency evacuation
- Difficulties in getting students to attend groups
- Higher proportion of International students

Conclusion Coaching program

- But need to consider
 - Characteristics of student population
 - Best vehicle for delivery (coaching ? training?, individual V group)

Future Coaching Programs

- Run program again
 - change program name
 - with pre-program interview
 - without quantitative testing initially until program refined - then research it more rigorously
- Transitions
- Embed within Unit