



What Coaching Is - and Isn't

When presented with the words “coach” and “coaching,” we all bring a set of images and experiences with us. Sometimes they are positive, but often they’re not particularly pleasant. As you’re considering coaching - whether just a one-session tryout or a longer-term relationship, it’s important to know what coaching is - and isn’t. It’s also important to know how coaching in the Diocese of New Jersey differs from other kinds of secular or corporate coaching.

What Coaching Is

- **Coaching is a working relationship where a trained and experienced person helps you achieve your goals.** In the church, those goals are always what we perceive God’s will to be for us. As coach, instructor and pastor Bob Logan says, “The best way to live is to find out what God wants you to do and to do it. A coach helps you to do that.”
- **Coaching is action-oriented.** One of the most important priorities of a coach is to have each of your sessions end with action steps - specific, clear, time-bound commitments you make that will move you forward.
- **Coaching is about one person coming alongside another to help him or her be successful.** This is achieved through careful listening using what we call “powerful questions” that help connect your deepest passions and motivations to the work you’re doing. In this way, coaches are like the Bible figure of Barnabas (See [Acts 4:36](#)) who helped St. Paul so much.

What Coaching Isn't

- **Coaching is expert guidance, but it's not consulting.** Each of our coaches believes that you are creative, resourceful and whole; he or she believes that you (or your group) have the wisdom, knowledge and gifts you need to move forward. This might seem strange to you, but when a skilled coach helps you realize that you have answers you didn't know you had, and you act on them,

you have much more ownership of the process. You also grow much more quickly. It really works.

- **Coaching can be healing in its own way, but it's not therapy.** Coaches are not qualified to provide the healing work of a trained therapist (though certainly, greater success in the things that are important to you can be healing).
- **Coaching can be spiritual, but it's not spiritual direction.** Spiritual direction is a unique and powerful ministry in itself, where the director walks with the directee in exploring and enhancing their experience of God. Coaches may touch on this, particularly in our diocesan coaching where we insist on the centrality of God's will for all of us, but coaching has a unique focus on concrete action steps and accountability for action commitments.

How Coaching in The Diocese of New Jersey Is Different from Others

- **Our coaching programs form disciples of Jesus, and help others to do the same.** In the Diocese of New Jersey, we are committed to the stated purpose of the church: "We are here to form disciples of Jesus Christ who participate in God's mission of reconciliation in the world."
- **All of our coaching efforts, without exception, ground both coaches and coachees in Christian discipleship.** Our coaches consider themselves "disciple-makers," and will work with you to embody that in yourself as well. In fact, some groups we coach take on their purpose as "live and love like Jesus and help others to do the same."
- **Our coaching programs are designed, in every session, to support (and sometimes challenge) you in your personal journey as a disciple of Jesus.** Action steps are always evaluated by how well they further God's mission in the world and assist Jesus in the work he does. As leading author Greg Finke helps us understand, Jesus is already out there working with everyone. Our job as Christians is to get out there and help him.