



Lesli's Favorite Coaching Concepts and Skills

To be truly successful in private practice it's imperative that we are excellent facilitators of measureable change. With this in mind, I wanted to share some of what I think are the best coaching concepts and skills to get your clients un-stuck, and/or to help them make empowered decisions and take courageous action:

A) Watch out for clients making assumptions based on past experience – Often you'll find clients who draw conclusions and hold beliefs that are rooted in past experience. But the truth is that just because 'such-and-such' happened in the past (such as failure) it doesn't mean that that is destined to happen again now!

In other words, I often find myself telling my clients that who they are today, in this very moment, is different than at any other time in their lives. That in this moment, they have skills, choices, knowledge, and abilities that they didn't have before. They also have me - a powerful and loving advocate that they didn't have before either.

Therefore, they are very likely to achieve results that are absolutely different from anything they have accomplished in the past.

B) Affirmations – Affirmations are positive, present-tense statements that affirm the belief that we wish to hold (even if we don't hold that perspective yet).

In other words, I often have clients create affirmations that are in direct opposition to their fear and doubt. And while we'll both acknowledge that the fear and doubt are more present right now than the "new," belief system, I'll ask them if even a teeny, tiny part of them is willing to believe that the affirmation is possible – that's all that's required.

I'll also ask that they post their affirmation somewhere where they can see it and read it each day. Doing so helps us anchor that new belief system and eventually we come to realize that we do believe it!



Here are some sample affirmations:

"I am willingly growing and stretching every day, and my business is thriving."

"I trust that I am being taken care of, that all is OK, and I am safe in the world."

"People desperately want what I have to offer, and I am honored to make such a lucrative living sharing my gifts."

"As I stay in the moment and cherish the gifts of each day, I am filled with unshakeable inner peace."

C) 3 Steps To Making A Request– Often times in personal as well as business life, we find ourselves needing to make a request of someone, or to negotiate a solution to a situation.

The problem is that too often, we make such a request from the position of "I'm right and you're wrong." And naturally, the person we're talking to feels judged, defensive, and isn't very likely to want to accommodate.

For example, here's a sample reflecting the ineffective way a request might be made:

John: *"Lisa, this office is a mess. I can't find anything around here. I don't know how you can operate this way... Anyone who came in here would agree that this is totally irresponsible – and even lazy! Would you please clean up your act, because I can't operate among this mess!"*

Can you see how much judgment is present here??? John is clearly coming from the place of "being right" when he says "I don't know how you can operate this way" and "Anyone who came in here would agree (with me) that this is totally irresponsible – and even lazy."

The communication is hostile, to be sure, and would tend to send Lisa into a place where she'd likely react by defending herself! I mean,



how likely would you be to accommodate John's request if approached in this way?

Instead, here is a very effective **3-step process** for making a request:

- 1. State the current situation (without judgment)**
- 2. State the impact that the current situation has on you (without making the other person inherently "wrong"), and state how you'd like things to be instead.**
- 3. Politely make your request**

Let me model this for you:

John: *"Lisa, in general, there tend to often be piles of papers around this office, important notes jotted down on post-its, and very little being tracked in our official ledger."* **(Current situation without judgment).**

"This tends to make me feel very anxious. I don't know where things are, and I get nervous among the clutter. I find myself distracted too easily, and often feeling unsettled when I walk in the door. And I worry that I might be missing important tasks or slipping deadlines without even knowing it." **(Stating the impact that the situation has on HIM without making her wrong... In other words, she might operate just fine among the clutter – he's saying that it makes HIM ineffective and anxious).**

"I'd love it if things were regularly labeled and filed, if we had a system for tracking important notes, and if we kept organized records of incoming and outgoing expenses." **(Sharing how he'd like things to be).**

"Would you be willing to get on board with me on this? In particular, would you be willing to start by going through that big pile on our conference table and putting each item either in a file



or into our “requires action” box? I’d really appreciate it.”
(Politely making his request).

By not making Lisa wrong – perhaps she works incredibly well within these conditions – and instead sharing the impact that the situation has on him (i.e. it happens to make him distracted and anxious), he can ask her if she’s willing to adopt a new behavior and she’s likely to receive it as: *“Hmmm. Yes, I’m willing to make this change in order to help him out. It doesn’t bother me, but I don’t want him to feel distracted and anxious. Yes, I’m more than willing to help him out.”*

D) The Tyranny of the Urgent (or Rules for Prioritization): This is borrowed from the highly astute Steven Covey. It’s about how we tend to categorize our priorities, and an error that many of us tend to make.

Each task on our “To Do” List will fall into one of these 4 categories:

- 1. Urgent and Important**
- 2. Urgent but Not Important**
- 3. Not Urgent but Important**
- 4. Not Urgent and Not Important**

Now it doesn’t take a rocket scientist to understand that **the first tasks we need to attend to are those in Category 1: Urgent and Important.**

But what do you think should be next? It turns out that **many, many smart people in today’s society move next to the items in Category 2: Urgent but Not Important.**

But this is a big mistake! Because in order to achieve our dreams and live a life that achieves our deepest priorities, we need to attend to what is IMPORTANT to us most of all!

It’s not intentional that people get distracted or enticed to attend to those things that feel urgent but, when you look at it, aren’t really that important. Because deadlines seem to inspire action.



However, what a travesty it is when we succumb to “The Tyranny of the Urgent” rather than attending to what is really most important to us!

For example, for the sake of example let’s say that it’s very important to me to be healthy and to lose about 20 pounds. I know that will make me feel much better physically, give me more energy for my kids, and enhance my intimacy with my husband.

And let’s say my last client ends at 4pm and I have just enough time to go to the gym before my family will descend for dinner. However, all of a sudden I realize that it’s the last day to use that 20% off Macy’s coupon I’ve been carrying around!

Hmmmm, what should I do? Truth be told, if I’m a fairly typical person, it’s very likely that I’ll run over to Macy’s to use that coupon (urgent) versus going to the gym (not urgent, rather, an ongoing commitment).

But do you see what I just did??? **I put something that is ultimately NOT that important to me or my values** (getting a store discount on something that I probably don’t need anyway) **ABOVE something that is a genuine priority and value of mine!** Why? Because I was seduced by that darn urgency!

The most EMPOWERED order in which to approach our tasks is actually this:

- 1. Urgent and Important**
- 2. Not Urgent but Important**
- 3. Urgent but Not Important**
- 4. Not Urgent and Not Important**

I’ve found this tool to help not only many of my clients in terms of time management and prioritization, but I, myself, often have to run things through this very filter in order to stop myself from being seduced by tasks that, while urgent, are ultimately not that important – or won’t get me closer to my most heartfelt goals. *I remind myself that what’s truly important always is the better choice.*



E) Love vs. Fear – When it comes to making decisions, every single choice we make comes from an underlying motivation of either Love or Fear.

Let me explain – Love and Fear can look many different ways:

<u>LOVE</u>	<u>FEAR</u>
Trust	Anger
Faith	Suspicion
Abundance	Manipulation
Creativity	Need to Control
Generosity	Scarcity
Joy	Sadness
Forgiveness	Guilt
Letting Go of Control	Regret
Desire for Growth	Fear of “Missing Out”

This is why it’s SO important to look at **what is the underlying motivation from which I am making this decision???**

In fact, the same “external” decision could actually be coming from 2 very different motivations – so this is NOT always clear based on what the decision itself is, rather, it’s incredibly important to look deeper.

For example:

“I’m going to take this job because it’s an opportunity to stretch myself, to express my talents, and to really make an impact on a lot of people!” (LOVE)

“I’m going to take this job because I desperately need the money and I’m worried nothing better’s going to come along in this economy” (FEAR)

“I’m going to give my husband some difficult feedback because I think it will ultimately help him grow and will help improve many of his interpersonal relationships, and I trust that, because I



have his highest good in mind, we'll get through the conversation, even if it's a bit sensitive at first." (LOVE)

"I'm going to give my husband some difficult feedback because I'm angry, I want to hurt him, and I want him to know that he's not 'all that' and that he's actually very lucky to be with me." (FEAR)

Numerous times in my own life – and in the lives of many of my clients – have I used this exercise to get much more clarity about what is driving a particular decision.

And if I DO discover that a particular decision I'm considering is not coming from a loving place but from a place of fear, it's a wonderful tool to ask myself **"What would someone coming from complete love and trust choose here?"**

F) Evaluate and acknowledge yourself based on what's on your side of the street – It's human nature to evaluate ourselves based on the results we're producing. That seems reasonable, right?

But I want to draw an important distinction here. Let's say you have a truly spectacular strategy session with someone – you're on the ball, extremely persuasive, ask all the right questions, present your offer powerfully, etc. And the person says yes and signs up with you!

At this point, you're thrilled, and are celebrating that you got a new client!

But what if the person had said no? **Does that make your performance during the strategy session any less spectacular?** Of course it doesn't!

That's why it's so important to acknowledge ourselves based on what's on our side of the street – not the things we actually can't control!

In other words:

"I'm a success today because I had a spectacular strategy session – regardless of whether the person said yes or no."



"I'm a success today because I made that phone call to that JV partner – regardless of whether we even connected or not."

"I'm a success today because I kept my commitments with regards to my diet and exercise – regardless of what the scale says."

Now I'm not saying we don't celebrate real results when they happen – of course we do! And it's human nature to do so.

But the truth is that those results are actually "icing on the cake," so to speak. I need to acknowledge myself for having a great strategy session – their saying yes is icing on the cake. I need to acknowledge myself for reaching out to that JV partner – their saying yes to promoting me is icing on the cake. I need to acknowledge myself for eating "on plan" and exercising – that the scale saying I've lost 2 more pounds is icing on the cake.

So be sure that you and your clients **are evaluating yourselves based on what you could control, the efforts you made, rather than the external result that you really could not control!**

G) Sentence completion – This is a technique I love to use when someone is stuck, not understanding what the fear is that's holding them back. And/or when someone is unclear what their goals are, or what's really important to them.

You simply have them finish at least 5 statements that start with the following types of "sentence starters," and they must do so rapidly, without thinking:

- "I'm afraid that _____"
- "If I leave my job, then _____"
- "I wish I could _____"
- "It's finally time to _____"
- "I'm ready to _____"



The truth is that you can come up with any sentence starters that will help your client “tease out” what they’re really feeling, what’s really going on for them.

You can do this with a client verbally when you’re actually speaking or give this to a client as a writing assignment for at home. The only instructions are that they just keep going as rapidly as possible without “thinking.”

This exercise always reveals much information, and I do believe it brings out subconscious feelings. And once we know what’s really going on for someone, we can help them much more effectively.

H) Don’t Judge Your Insides By Somebody Else’s Outsides – Oh how often we feel scared, of have self-doubt, question whether we’re capable, etc. That’s a very normal part of being human, and I know we’ve already discussed tools for dealing with these.

But the worst thing of all is when we compare how we feel inside with what we’re seeing someone else produce “outside.”

Meaning that I might see another coach in my category who is doing a big live event, who has just filled an expensive program or has a huge social media following (with gorgeous photos posted all over the place) and think *“She has it all together. She’s just so confident and successful. I’ll never be like that. I’m such a fraud. What’s my problem???”*

The truth is that we have NO idea what’s going on for that other person! We don’t know if inside she’s terrified, or has great self-doubt herself and feels like an imposter. Or whether she’s dealing with a broken marriage through all of this. Or whether she’s fighting debilitating depression. Or whether her business is actually completely disorganized behind the scenes.

Now we’re not hoping for such a thing for anyone, of course. But I wanted to point out that to judge how we feel or what we fear by comparing ourselves to our *perception* of someone else just by what they’re showing the outside world is not remotely fair or accurate. Important to remember!



*****And a reminder of my favorites from some of our other classes on Mindset:**

Reframing Limiting Beliefs

The A-B-C Process (Looking At How Our Interpretations of Events Are Subjective And Can Be Proactively Changed)

Turning Payoffs Of Negative Messages Into Healthier Choices