

Intrinsic Coaching™

Intrinsic Coach™
Development

"I Want to Eat Less Sugar"

Intrinsic Coaching™
and Intrinsic Coach™

Development:

I Want to Eat Less Sugar

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Totally Coached, Inc.

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From **Christina Marshall**, President, Totally Coached, Inc.

Dear Colleagues, As committed wellness professionals, we work hard at making a difference for people and too many of us become exhausted from carrying the weight of responsibility for people's results. It's not a secret; it's a difficult situation we hear about all the time. That's why we understand it can be hard to imagine that Intrinsic Coaching™ really does make the difference people want. We want you to know that Intrinsic Coaching™ conversations really are different and we can enable you to have those better and more satisfying conversations every day. That's why we're giving you, here, an inside view of one of our Intrinsic Coach™ development sessions. Please enjoy it.

Regards, Christina

P.S. If you want to have coaching conversations like the one you read here, or experience the same results as the coaches below, contact us at:

480-515-5220 or totallycoached@totallycoached.com

Intrinsic Coaching™ brings people together in ways that multiply who and what they can be for each other. We want you to imagine this and make it a reality for yourself and your organization like our coaches-in-training, below.

As a professional in the health and wellness field, Intrinsic Coaching™ is one of the most significant skills I've been able to learn, and more importantly, apply, on a daily basis. - Debra Dailey, Deputy District Director, Health & Wellness, Cuyahoga Community College

Totally Coached, Inc. gave us a more focused, efficient, and effective way to deliver our services for optimal client outcomes. What we knew before was the best we knew at the time. Once you know Intrinsic Coaching™, you can never go back. It's about developing quality business practices to deliver successful client outcomes. - Teresa Taylor-Dusharm, Director, Advocate Health Care, Chicago, IL

Coaching Conversation: I want to eat less sugar.

(What does Intrinsic Coaching™ look like & how will I learn it?)

Coach-in-training: We've got just about ten minutes. How would you like to use this time?

Coachee: Well, I am a health-nut, there's no question about it... I am very healthy, I'm very active...I value my health a lot. But there's one thing, if I could change and do differently, it would be my sugar intake. For some reason, I've been reading a lot more about sugar and some of the problems that it could cause. I think my diet consists of eating way too much sugar, and I'd really like to find a way to modify that, and make a change in my diet.

Coach-in-training: So, what did you find out about sugar?

Coach-Mentor: Ask a more powerful question, for example: What did you find out about sugar that you want to put into practice?

Coach-in-training: What do you understand about sugar that's something you could incorporate into your life?

Coachee: Well, what I know, and actually I've been just trying

Employees and senior leadership are really buying into our efforts because they're seeing the benefits. We have recently been asked to present coaching to the Board of Directors as an example of a program that builds trust with employees. In less than a year, we went from an idea to a respected and integral program within Clarian. Intrinsic Coaching™ created an avenue to be successful in new and exciting ways. - Elaine Gaither, Case Manager, Methodist Medical Group, Indianapolis, IN

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I am very glad I took the Totally Coached® Series first because they presented a clear picture of what coaching is and is not. Through Totally Coached, I understand coaching to be about eliciting instead of doing all the talking because the coachee is their own best source of answers. In subsequent coach studying, this line has not been made as clear and the coach has been portrayed as an expert, consultant, or mentor, which is no different from what we had already been doing. Totally Coached gave me a way to get results with people I didn't know how to get before. - Bill McPeck, Director, Employee Health and Safety, Maine State Government, Augusta, ME

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to figure this out for myself lately is....Do I eat too much sugar?... so, I've been trying to figure out and calculate how much sugar I am eating and trying to match it with whatever is the recommended amount. So I'm kind of trying to do that a little bit right now. And I've actually done a little research to find out what is recommended, so I know how many teaspoons I should limit myself to each day, and I've been doing a little bit better with reading the labels, so my knowledge is good. But the bottom line is I am healthy, I'm thin, I don't have any health problems and I see it as my one splurge...like I owe it to myself to eat whatever types of foods I want because I exercise and I work it off, and that's my excuse for eating as much sugar as I do. Because I don't see negative effects around it.

Coach-in-training: That's wonderful what you're doing with your lifestyle, and it's superb that you are definitely health-focused. What on a daily basis do you eat that's sugar? [weak question in that it does not move thinking forward]

Coachee: I eat sugar every single meal. When I think of sugar, I think of sweets....cookies, candy, maybe a sugary sweet cereal....that's what I classify as my high sugar foods. I don't think of the fruit -- when I think of managing my sugar, it's managing my sweets.

Coach-in-training: So, it's your sweet tooth...It sounds like what you're concerned about is that every meal, every day, you're eating something sweet. [without evaluating or attempting to change or add to it, coach confirms what is heard] Do you know what other foods have sugar in them? [weak question in that it does not move thinking forward]

Coachee: I don't really care about the other foods because I honestly think my problem really lies with the sweets that I am eating.

Coach-in-training: Well, what can you do about that?

Coachee: I don't really know. ...certainly I can try and cut down....and I've tried having no sweets with me, none at work... but you know what I do when I get home? I go for the sweets when I get home....so, I have tried all the things, and they really haven't done it for me.

Coach-Mentor: Instead of moving so quickly into the "do," let's look more at the goal and focus more on "what I want is"...Is this something that's really important to our coachee?

Coaching has opened the door to unlimited possibilities for me. I no longer think my skills and knowledge are being wasted. I am now able to find out what people are interested in changing and tailor our conversations to exactly their needs. - Colleen Reilly Perkins, Manager of Health and Productivity, Coors Brewing Company, Golden, CO

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It was a big relief to find out it's not my job to motivate people but rather to elicit their best thinking. It's a shift that replaces exhaustion and frustration with energy and enthusiasm. - Susan Cohen, Health Promotion Coordinator, Healthtrax, Glastonbury, CT

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Everyone thinks they know how to call someone on the phone. But then you realize they don't know until they know about coaching. Coaching really is a skill. - Beth Neilson, Manager, Methodist Medical Group, Indianapolis, IN

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Your presentation of coaching is FANTASTIC. To me, you nailed it down – deficit vs. asset approach. Thanks for putting that in my brain. - Jim Smoke, author of 17 books, including the best seller, Growing Through Divorce.

Coach-in-training: What do you really want for yourself, or what is important to you?

Coachee: I guess I am honestly under this mentality that it is okay for me to do this...I tell myself that I shouldn't be doing this, and that I need to be eating this...but what my gut says is, "It's okay because I work out, I'm thin, I can eat whatever I want...this is my splurge." That's really what I keep telling myself.

Coach-in-training: And so you keep telling yourself this over and over. What does that mean to you? [coach asks for new thinking]

Coachee: It means I'm not committed to changing this...It means I'll never be committed to changing this lifestyle...that particular habit... that as long as I keep saying that to myself... that it's okay for me because nothing is going to happen...I haven't gained weight...I mean I've been eating like this for years...I've never gained weight...I've never had problems with diabetes... when I read things about sugar I'm most uncomfortable about the possibility of getting cancer.... It's not the weight thing...it's not even the fact that it's poor for your teeth, or I'll get diabetes...It's like...getting cancer...but that's so far away for me to look...that I don't know if it's going to be enough for me to change this habit.

Coach-Mentor: I just want to review what I heard. Is that ok?

Coachee: Yes.

Coach-Mentor: I'm hearing you say your gut tells you this is okay for you, but your education and training says you shouldn't eat so much sugar. I guess what I am wondering is whether I am hearing correctly that you have a question: Is this okay for me, or isn't it okay for me? Is that a question that you have?

Coachee: That is a question that I am actually fighting with myself around....Is it okay for me, and am I taking a risk? Am I really risking my longevity or quality of life because I consume sweets like three times a day?

Coach-Mentor: Do you have the answer to that question?

Coachee: No.

Coach-in-training: What do you think that answer would be? [often a good question; in this case our coach-mentor will ask the coachee to back up to further develop the unanswered question]

With coaching, there is no such thing as a routine call. - Elaine Gaither, Case Manager, Methodist Medical Group, Indianapolis, IN

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We coach now, rather than direct, and it's really interesting to see the night and day difference. I've even had people give me their cell phone or home telephone number and ask if I can call them there. - Tanya Most, Case Manager, Methodist Medical Group, Indianapolis, IN

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I am a Health Educator and I am used to teaching rather than coaching. It was difficult for me to adjust to the process of letting the coachee take the lead, however now that I've made the shift, I let my coachees tell me what they need and what they will do get there. With my old skills and new skills combined, I find that coaching makes my work much less draining for me personally. Now, I focus on coaching and implement education when appropriate. I look forward to seeing greater individual successes due to the fact that coachees determine their own needs, goals, and action steps. - Tracy Kuhn, Wellness Coordinator, Advocate Health, Caterpillar, Inc., Chicago, IL

Coachee: I think it would be "no."

Coach-Mentor: Let's back up to look at the question some more. I don't want to move so quickly to the "do" of finding the answer. [To the coachee...] So, you have a question and not the answer. Is it important to you that you get a really good answer to that question?

Coachee: You know, it's been weighing on my mind for a really long time....I find myself focusing on articles that deal with sugar and so that's why I think it has come up and is more of an issue now to me than it ever has been because I am so much more focused on it for some reason right now.

Coach-in-training: Is it appropriate to ask her: What do you want to do with this problem?

Coach-Mentor: I want to keep going with her getting the answer to her question. Our coachee just said she is reading a lot of articles that are telling her how sugar is bad, so I want to keep going with that...and let's just find out what the real issue is. And she needs an answer to that question before she can get to the "do differently" part. I'm hearing an unanswered question and she agrees she has one and needs to answer it. So my next question would be something like: Are the articles giving you an answer? Are they giving you the answer you are looking for?

Coachee: They are helping me because I feel like now I have a better idea of what is recommended...I didn't know what was recommended. I do find myself looking more at labels....and am more conscious...it's still not enough to make me cut out on the three a day sweet snack. And I mean sweet, like donuts, cookies, and so on.

Coach-Mentor: Now back to that question. Your gut says it's okay for you, and your education and training says it isn't. And I'm wondering what it is with that question -- Is it or isn't it okay? How do you answer that question?

Coachee: I don't know...You're really making me think now...I really don't know...I almost have to think that to myself when I pick up that next sweet. Part of me says it's okay to have a little bit, but not as much as I have been.

Coach-Mentor: So then, maybe the question, when you pick up that cookie, isn't, "Is it okay, or isn't it ok," but rather, "How much of it is okay?"

One of the main things I learned is that everybody is an individual, and what works for one doesn't work for another. Like others, I was exhausted after doing exercise prescriptions because the things we thought would work, and we would try to explain over and over and over, were just not hitting a cord with the person we were talking to. So, it is really good now that we ask people to talk about what they want, and they find it themselves.

For example, I did a body comp for a guy whose body fat percentage has gone up a lot in the past six months. I asked him, "What is different now from what used to be?" and he came up with three or four different things. He was surprised that he thought of things he hadn't yet realized -- things I couldn't have thought of or predicted for him. And so this way is so much better because I could have sat there and told him "do this, do this, do this, do this" but it wouldn't have hit him like what he thought of it himself.

That is the biggest thing for me -- that everybody has their own way of doing things. We learned to tell people what to do but it just doesn't work that way. When he showed up, he said, "I give up," but when we got done talking, he said, "All right, I am going to get back on the treadmill, right now." - Erin Cummins, Health Specialist, Coors Brewing Company, Golden, CO

Coachee: Yeah...I'd say that's a better question.

Coach-Mentor: to Coach-in-training: You only have a couple minutes with our coachee now so have her focus on where she is, what does she have right now that she didn't have eight minutes ago when this coaching conversation started. Ask her to identify what she could take with her this week. She has some work to do.

Coach-in-training: What single thing, that you learned just now, can you take with you?

Coachee: I think I really need to make a decision for myself about how much I am going to really feel comfortable with...to kind of balance it with the fact that it's okay because I'm healthy and it's also not okay because part of it is unhealthy. That's kind of what I need to figure out is that balance, because I do truly believe that I can have some sugar... because I do feel like I deserve sweets because I am so active and should be able to enjoy them.

Coach-in-training: Is that something that this week you can make a decision on, reaching this balance?

Coachee: I think so, I think I can.....definitely.

Coach-in-training: Could you maybe email me when you reach a decision, a comfort zone, this week?

Coachee: Sure.

Coach-Mentor: I'd like to add something. You said something earlier. It was about when you pick up that next cookie and hold it in your hand. Could you describe what it was you saw yourself doing that would move you along?

Coachee: I can honestly see myself thinking, "How much of this is going to be okay, and is it going to be balanced with how much of this isn't okay...because of the unhealthy qualities of eating too much." I could see myself pondering that question when I pick up the next sweet I eat at lunch time, or whenever it is.

Coach-Mentor: I will really enjoy hearing what you develop as you ask yourself that question.

Coachee: I will, too. You guys really made me think about this. That was great questioning. Yeah, I will get back to you guys.

I had a really good success with somebody that, afterwards, I was like “Wow, all I had to do was listen to what she wanted.” What she needed was so simple, but when she first started, I thought, “Oh, no, here she goes, she’s going to go on and on and it’s going to take and waste 30 minutes of my time.” But I just sat back and listened and it was so easy. It took 30 seconds to help her. I can see it saving a lot of time because, when you listen you can get more, even quicker, results. Because it doesn’t take as much time when you listen, I feel like it will make us all more efficient. More importantly, because we’ll be wasting less time, we’ll be helping more people.
- Kim Fickes, Wellness Specialist, Coors Brewing Company, Golden, CO

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What I learned the most is the self management of turning off my ideas and recognizing that the person you are working with has their own solutions. I have learned to really, really focus on the person -- it does become simple when you listen. You don’t have to think so hard when you’re listening because you hear them and what they have to say. They figure everything out.

It’s amazing how focused people become when you frame

Coach-in-training: I think for me what I learned is more about focusing in on where she is at. I mean it helped me to listen more and focus more and when I ask a question, ask one that helps her explore even more. Thank you. It makes so much sense.

Coach-Mentor: There’s a tendency to want to go quickly to a “What can you do?” kind of question. But it’s not helpful at all. If she could really and truly tell you, she’d already have the problem solved. Going too quickly into “what can you do about it” actually gets in the way. Because jumping quickly to the “do” is actually a problem focused conversation instead of the solution focused conversations that both of you really want. Isn’t it amazing what you can do in ten minutes?

Coach-in-training: I just felt a big “aha...”

Coachee: You really made me ask myself if it was important to me...and I really did have to think about it! There was some great questioning in there. This was very interesting....

Coach-Mentor: Also, people have unanswered questions which they then blow past and try to make decisions without getting their questions answered. People do that all the time, and your job as a coach is to hear it, and to hear it right where they are. It really is to look at a person as being full of solutions that they don’t yet realize they have and to notice when they have a question that they then just ignore. Solutions so often are found in the answer to the question that got ignored.

Coachee: It will be more of a feeling that I’ve changed, than it is that I only eat one type of sugar, one sugary food, once a day, 3 days a week....

Coach-Mentor: And you gave that clue in the conversation. That what you know in your gut is right is what you’re going to do. So, what I want for you is I want your head and gut to have the answers they need so your head and gut can agree.

Coach-Mentor: Does anybody else have anything they want to add about that particular scenario? Let’s just go around and summarize things up with that.

Coach-in-training 1: One thing is about how hard it can be to hand over control of the conversation to the coachee and how productive it is when you hand it over.

Coach-in-training 2: I am just going to say that it’s okay to ask

the conversation with the ten minute concept. It's so valuable. Think of how often somebody comes into your office and, pretty soon, 45 minutes goes by, and you finally say, "So how can I help you?" And you're just getting started and neither of you have really said anything yet. That framework, that ten minutes that's just for you so you can accomplish what's important to you, can be so effective.

- Marilee Pfarr, Health Promotion Manager, Federated Insurance, Owatonna, MN

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I can totally relate to the efficiency of the time you spend with people. It's amazing what happens when you listen like a coach. I am working with someone right now who tells me exactly what she wants. I listen, she does it, and that's all there is to it. With coaching, the conversations are more fun, people get more out of them, and they take less time. - David Coates, Wellness Supervisor, Coors Brewing Company, Golden, CO

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The idea that people are capable, that they know what they're doing, made a big difference for me. People know what they need to do, they know how they need to be pushed sometimes, and sometimes they need a little information. My other big take

"dumb" questions that you have no idea how your coachee is going to answer.

Coach-in-training 3: Focusing on what the coachee really is saying, and then helping them explore that. This was very interesting, this last little scenario that I participated in, because of that awareness of where your coachee is at and letting them lead.

Coach-in-training 4: I think my goal this week is going to be working on my listening, specifically, not listening for the solution I already have in my own mind.

Coach-in-training 5: Mine is similar...Let the coachee talk more.

Coach-Mentor: In listening to you just now, it occurs to me that when you have a solution-focused conversation, you actually can't be in control of it. Those two things really don't go together. If you have a problem-focused conversation, it's a whole different ballgame because I am looking at you as having an assortment of problems and I'm deciding what they are and I'll give you the same handful of answers I give over and over to everyone else. But in a solution-focused conversation, I can't be in control of it because...guess what? Other than knowing some facts, with a solution-focused conversation there is really nothing you can do other than follow the coachee's lead, help to open up their thinking, and just be amazed and filled with wonder as you watch the process unfold. Did everyone share a learning that they are taking with them?

Coach-in-training 6: One thing I wrote down is going back to "what do you really want," and trying to get the coachee to look at what they really want at the time they are sharing. And I know I'll just jump right back into "Is there something that you are not doing right, and that you could be changing to make a difference and that you could be doing to make a difference?" I'm having a hard time with this because I'm the kind of person who would be jumping into that "do" situation right away.

Coach-Mentor: Everybody does that...even though it doesn't work the way we wish it would. Just keep in mind...this is the middle month when you want better and more for yourself and the people you serve and don't yet have the details of how to get it. The fact that you know what it is you want that's better means you're learning.

Coach-in-training 6: If someone comes to me, then I feel like they are asking for my expertise, so it's hard for me to not just

away is the shift from being the talker to being the listener, not trying to give all the answers you can think of, and, instead, allowing people to reach their own answers. Totally Coached, Inc. has had a very positive impact on the way I look at and work with clients now. - Rich Smott, Wellness Specialist, Advocate Fitness, International Truck and Engine, Chicago, IL

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I am getting better results and also not feeling so exhausted. I'm finding I feel less tired because I am putting less of my own self into it while encouraging the participants to put more of themselves into it. When I make myself be less, they can be more and that's the way it works best. I think that is a really big lesson. - Kristin Wehner, Wellness Specialist, Coors Brewing Company, Golden, CO

tell them what I think they should do. I do want to give them what I know, but then I can see how coaching will help them develop something around the information I give them about how it would work for them.

Coach-Mentor: Just keep this in mind...I think it's in last week's materials where we talk about the central question of coaching and the idea that people can spend a lifetime solving problems and never get anywhere. What's most important is to be real clear on the outcomes you want, and then you know how to align your actions. You can spend your whole life being defined by what other people won't do, by curveballs that get thrown at you, and then you're never moving toward those things that you know are yours to accomplish. So that's why when people come to you with problems, the first thing you want to find out is, "What are your goals? What do you want? What's important? What are the outcomes that you want to see happen?" Because it isn't only wellness practitioners who practice a deficit model of interaction and then wonder why they're not getting anywhere, it's everywhere, and people even do it to themselves, too. Without Intrinsic Coaching™, it's almost impossible to get away from it. And that's why people so often don't accomplish the changes they want to accomplish, the health and well being they want, because deficit approaches to people inhibit learning and growth. It's not what we want but it's what we know...and it's everywhere. However, you guys are changing that. You are doing it. That's about it everybody!

In the two weeks that followed, our coachee reported that she found herself assessing how much sugar she wanted every time she picked up a sweet. As a result, sometimes she would eat one sweet when, in the past, she definitely would have had two and sometimes she has turned down a sweet altogether. Our coachee reported that it's not easy but she does feel more in control. Our coach-mentor told her that her new ability to stop and assess what it is she really wants for herself will grow over time and the learning will eventually be applied to other areas.

Want to have great conversations like the one you just read?
Become an Intrinsic Coach™.

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