

Lesson 32

Concluding Your Coaching Session

“Great is the art of beginning. Even greater is the art of ending.”

— Longfellow

Ending your coaching session skillfully will help your client wrap up the material discussed, underscore any insights and tools gained during the session, engender confidence to move ahead, and feel complete. You can also use the conclusion of your meeting to affirm any particular goals and intentions your client has chosen during the session.

Here are some tips to help you create a healthy completion for your coaching session:

End on time.

Time limits empower focus. Staying within your time frame will make what happens during your coaching period more meaningful. If you work with a client regularly, he will recognize that he needs to get his work done during the time allotted. Even if you see this client only once, the experience of ending on time will sharpen your own focus and serve as a model for healthy boundary setting.

Occasionally you may feel it is appropriate to go overtime. This might happen if the client is in the midst of meaningful material and it would be jarring or frustrating to stop the conversation at that point. If you feel it is important to continue, you want to, the client wants to, and you both have the time, you might choose to do so. Such a situation is, however, an exception to regular practice. My coaching sessions rarely go overtime, and I and my clients generally cover all necessary material during the time allotted. For now, simply know that this is an option if and when called for.

If you see several clients in a row with let's say 10 minutes between your appointments, ending on time is crucial. This will afford you the space to renew and relax and get ready for your next session. Completing on time with one client is your service to your next client and yourself.

Give the client some notice.

Let your client know that the completion time is approaching. You might say something like:

“We have about five minutes left. Is there anything else you'd like to share in closing?”

“We're approaching the end of the hour. The time sure has gone quickly today.”

“It looks like we're coming up on the end of our time together. I've enjoyed our exploration today. How about you?”

“Do you feel complete for our session today?”

If the client tends to keep going at the appointed time: “Looks like our time is up for today. We'll need to stop here.”

Summarize.

Ask the client, “What are you taking from our session?” or “What insight, lesson, or principle stands out for you?” or “What has been most meaningful for you about our time together today?”

Or

Give your own summary: “I hear that you are more conscious of how you give your power away to your mother; you realize you need to take time to renew yourself; and it's time to lighten up on your self-criticism. Would you agree?”

Do not open up new major material as the conclusion is approaching.

Bite off only what you can chew in the time allotted. Do not ask questions or suggest delving into something that you won't be able to give proper attention to. If the client opens up a big door as you are nearing the end of the session, say something like, “Exploring that will probably require more time than we have left. How about if you think about that and we can start our next session with your questions or insights?”

Give or remind client of homework.

“So you’re going to tell your husband you’d really like to go to Sedona this fall.” (See the previous lesson on homework for more details.)

Thank and /or affirm the client and the work he or she has done.

“Wow, we sure have covered a lot of ground today.”

“I’ve really enjoyed our time together.”

“I want to compliment you for your honesty and willingness to move ahead. I’m inspired.”

Most clients are aware of the time and some will wrap up their session on their own. Some will say, “I see that our time is almost up,” or “This has been a great session.” If the client loses track of time or does not take responsibility for completing, it is your job to do so. You don’t have to feel guilty about stopping. If you make the most of your time together, however long that is, you will have had enough time.

After your coaching session:

You may find it helpful to do something to clear your energy field after speaking with a client, especially if the client has done emotional processing and you have unconsciously sympathized with his feelings.

You might symbolically wash your hands, step outside into the sun and take a few long deep breaths, listen to some music, do some yoga, or take a short walk. You might also say a prayer of affirmation or release, such as;

“I now release my session with [Name of client]. I lovingly let go of her, our conversation, and the feelings she expressed. I place her in the hands of God, trusting that all is well and that she will navigate her life in accord with her soul’s guidance. I recognize her and myself as whole, capable, and at peace. I move on to my next activity with freedom and a light and happy heart. And so it is.”

Affirm:

I bring my coaching sessions to a healthy and rewarding conclusion.

I use the time allotted for the highest benefit of the client and myself.

**When my sessions are complete, I release them
and move on to my next activity with a happy heart.**