

APPLIED **FITNESS** SOLUTIONS  
SCIENCE ▲ SYSTEMS ▲ RESULTS

# Practical Coaching Skills for Health Behavior Change

# My Coaching Story

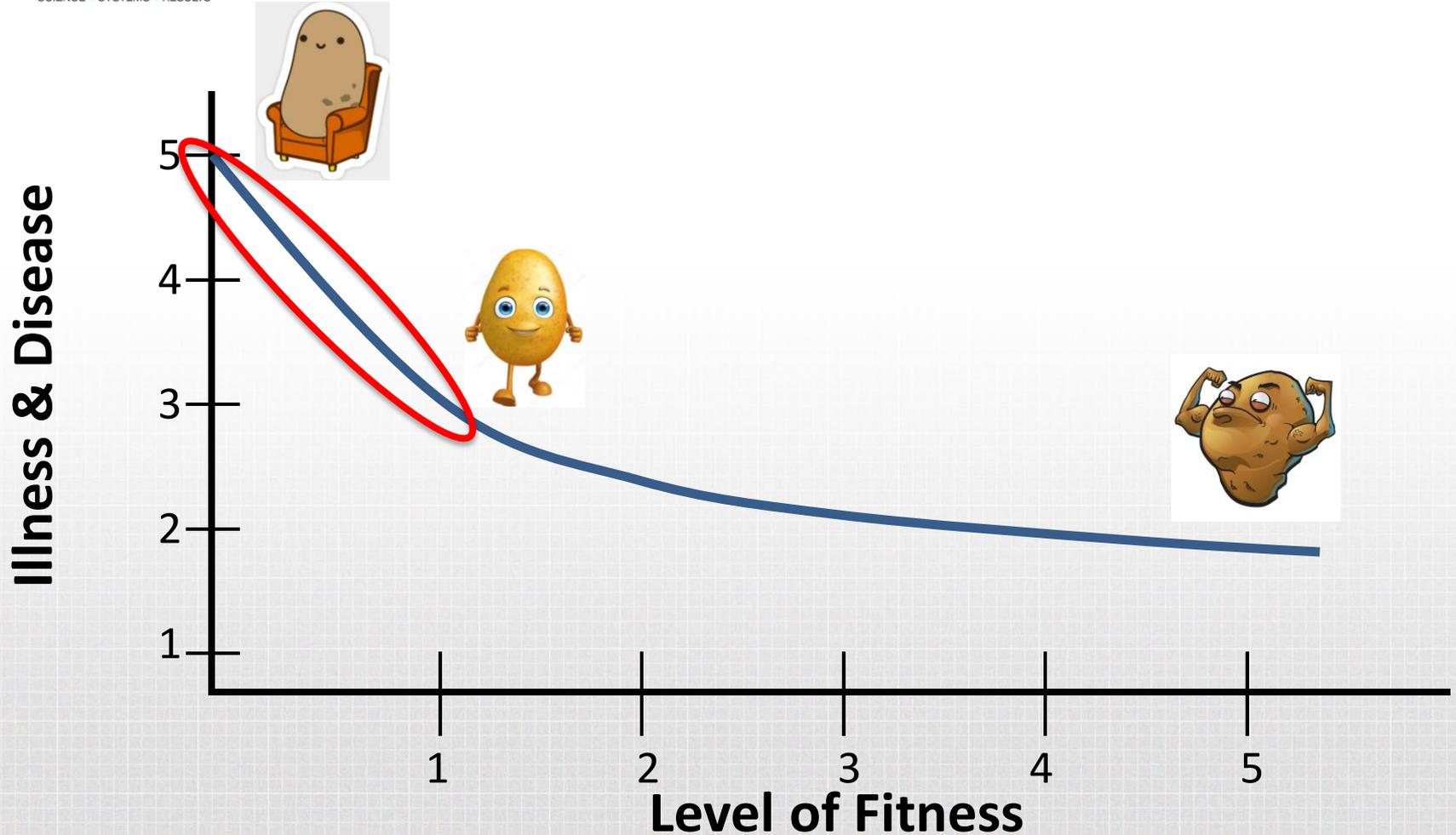
- A coach changed my life
- High School Mike
  - Overweight (280+ lbs)
  - Picked on
  - Social outcast
  - Felt emotionally unsafe
- Met “Coach” Al at a YMCA
- My life changed





***Tell me about a coach or mentor that has impacted you in a positive way.***

# Our Job *Flattening the Curve*





# Why Start Here?

- *“People won't care how much you know until they know how much you care”*
  - Teddy Roosevelt
- *“Everyone has a plan until they get punched in the Face”*
  - Mike Tyson



# “Bridging the Gap”

- #1 challenge of any allied health professional
  - Values Gap
  - Expectation Gap



# Values Gap

- Allied health professionals HIGHLY value health and health-oriented activities
- Clients/patients do not place the same value on health and health-oriented activities



# Expectation Gap

- Allied health professional's expectations:
  - Fitness/health is a high priority
  - Improving fitness/health takes time
  - They have all the necessary expertise the client needs
- Average clients/patients expectations:
  - Self-care cannot be a high priority
  - I can get healthy quick with minimal change to my lifestyle
  - Not so sure if this person gets me or can help me



# “Gaps” Collectively Lead to

- Inability for the allied health professional to:
  - Empathize
  - Set proper expectations
  - Build a strong relationship
- Inability for clients/patients to:
  - Trust
  - Openly communicate
  - Make lasting change



# Overcoming the Gaps

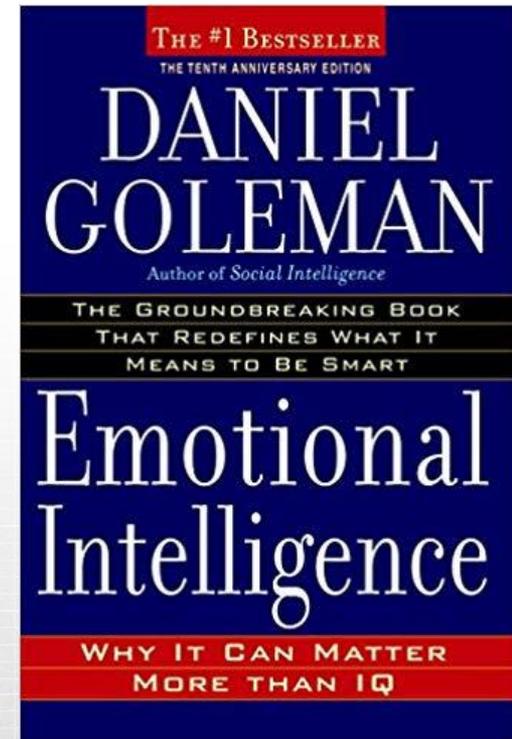
- Realize they exists
- Be aware of them in every interaction and communication
- Keep in mind:
  - *“People won't care how much you know until they know how much you care”*
  - *“What result do you want to create?”*
- Become more emotionally intelligent

# Emotional Intelligence (EI)

- Salovey and Mayer (1990)
  - *"the subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions"*
- Four factors of EI
  - Perception of emotion
  - Ability reason using emotions
  - Ability to understand emotion
  - Ability to manage emotions

# EI by Daniel Goleman

- Published in 1990
- Has been adapted to a variety of settings:
  - Leadership
  - Management
  - Coaching
  - Healthcare





# EI Domains & Competencies

SELF-AWARENESS	SELF-MANAGEMENT	SOCIAL AWARENESS	RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT
Emotional self-awareness	Emotional self-control	Empathy	Influence
	Adaptability		Coach and mentor
	Achievement orientation	Organizational awareness	Conflict management
	Positive outlook		Teamwork
			Inspirational leadership



# Emotional Self-Awareness

- The ability to understand our own emotions and their effects on our performance



# Self-Management

- **Emotional Self-Control:** The ability to keep disruptive emotions and impulses in check and maintain our effectiveness under stressful or hostile conditions.
- **Achievement Orientation:** Striving to meet or exceed a standard of excellence; looking for ways to do things better, set challenging goals and take calculated risks.
- **Positive Outlook:** The ability to see the positive in people, situations, and events and persistence in pursuing goals despite obstacles and setbacks.
- **Adaptability:** Flexibility in handling change, juggling multiple demands, and adapting our ideas or approaches.



# Social Awareness

- **Empathy:** The ability to sense others' feelings and perspectives, taking an active interest in their concerns and picking up cues about what others feel and think.
- **Organizational Awareness:** The ability to read a group's emotional currents and power relationships, identifying influencers, networks, and organizational dynamics.



# Relationship Management

- **Influence:** The ability to have a positive impact on others, persuading or convincing others in order to gain their support.
- **Coach and Mentor:** The ability to foster the long-term learning or development of others by giving feedback, guidance, and support.
- **Conflict Management:** The ability to help others through emotional or tense situations, tactfully bringing disagreements into the open and finding solutions all can endorse.
- **Inspirational Leadership:** The ability to inspire and guide individuals and groups towards a meaningful vision of excellence, and to bring out the best in others.
- **Teamwork:** The ability to work with others towards a shared goal; participating actively, sharing responsibility and rewards, and contributing to the capability of the team.



# Assessment of EI

- **Emotional and Social Competence Inventory (ESCI)** – Co-designed by Daniel Goleman, Richard Boyatzis and Hay Group to assess the emotional and social competencies that distinguish outstanding leaders.



# Client-Centered Coaching

- *“What result do you want to create?”*
  - Sustainable health behavior change
  - Foster independence and empowerment
    - Make yourself NOT necessary
- Client is the CENTER of attention
- Less a expert, more of a coach



# Role of a Coach

- Collaborator
- Facilitator
- Supporter
- Educator
- Resource Provider
- Sounding Board



# Health Coaching Model

- Is not the Diagnosis-Prescription (Dx/Rx)
- Dx/Rx assumes pathology
  - Something “wrong” to be “fixed”
- Health coaching assumes some degree of “wellness” already exists
- Our job is to enhance the wellness that lies within someone
  - Not move the pathology and replace it with wellness



# Acceptance & R.E.S.P.E.C.T

- Recognize the inherent worth of all human beings
- Eliminate bias and stereotypes
- Speak with people, not at them
- Practice Empathy
- Empower people to change
- Create an environment of trust
- Treat clients as experts of themselves



# General Best Coaching Practices

1. Be Present & Focused
2. Treat each clients/patient as an individually unique case
  - Maintain a mindset of curiosity
3. Strive for collaboration
4. Avoid being the expert:
  - Ask permission before giving most advice
  - Don't discuss things that have “worked for you”
  - Keep terminology at an understandable level
5. Use your expertise to guide the client/patient
  - Rather than the all-knowing expert that forces the client to do something



# Coaching Communication Skills

- Open-Ended Questions
- Affirmations
- Reflections
- Summaries



# Open-Ended Questions

- Many open-ended questions can be handled in a pre-appointment questionnaire or email
  - Questionnaire can lead to specific open-ended questions during appointment
- Sentence starter: How, What, Why, Tell Me
  - Careful with why: can be judgmental and cause the client to feel pressure (i.e., “Why can’t you?”)
- Careful with too many verbal open-ended question
  - Client to take a passive role/coach seems like expert
  - 2 reflections for every 1 open-ended question

# Open-Ended Questions

- **Digging Deep:** use when it's clear there's more to an issue
  - *“Tell me more about that?”*
- **“If any” Question:** non-judgmental
  - *“What concerns do you have about that, if any?”*
  - Avoid assumptions
- **Change in the Abstract:** gives the client a change to “try on” the change
  - *“What would happen if we tried...?”*
  - Be specific and not abstract in your statement
- **Strength-based Questions:** “what’s worked well in the past?”
  - Great for clients that think they can’t change

# Open-Ended Questions

- **Reasons for Change:** “why do you want to make these changes?”
- **Looking Forward:** “what would your life be like if you made these changes?”
- **Looking Back:** consider a time they were successful or the client didn’t have this issue
  - “What was it like when...”
- **Querying Extremes:** best and worst possible consequences of making a change

# Open-Ended Questions

- Change ruler – “HOW...”:
  - “...ready are you to...?”
  - “...important is it to you...?”
  - “...committed are you...?”
  - “...confident are you...?”
  - “...interested are you in...?”
  - “...motivated are you...?”
- Scale of 1-10 (10 = highest)
  - Why not a lower # results in change talk
  - Why not a higher # uncovers barriers (and sustain talk)



# Use of Silence

- Silence is golden
- Important after a good open-ended question
  - The better the question, the longer the silence
- Gives:
  - You time to think
  - Client/patient time to think
  - Client /patient time to answer

# Affirmations

- Statement regarding one's character and values that acknowledges his/her strengths and efforts
  - Highlights the client's strength, abilities, and positive efforts
- Helps the client gain self-efficacy & confidence
  - Belief in ability to change
- Coach must constantly look for:
  - What clients do right
  - What they've accomplished
  - How they are capable of realizing their goals



# Affirmations

- **Benefits:**
  - Empower the Client
  - Encourage Persistence
  - Decrease Defensiveness



# Crafting an Affirmation

- Coach must interpret what the client/patient says
  - Make an educated guess about what kind of positive efforts the client has demonstrated
- Should focus on specific behaviors (instead of attitudes or decisions)
- Play it safe – pick characteristics you're sure someone possess
- Is a more difficult skill to use initially, has more utility as you get to know the client

# Reflections

- Form of active listening
- Allows the client to feel validated and understood which creates rapport
- Coach making an informed guess about what the client has said
- Causes the client to think deeper about what they said to move them through ambivalence towards change
- Attempt 1-2 reflections for each question asked

# Forming Reflections

- Statements, not questions
- Concise (never longer than the client's original statement)
- Not just what the person says, but what they mean to say
- Open with:
  - “So you feel...”
  - “You’re wondering if...”
  - “It seems as though...”
  - “You are...”

# When to Reflect

1. **When first meeting a client:** lets them know you're hearing them and listening
2. **When you hear change talk:** allows clients to hear their own positive feelings about change
3. **When you hear ambivalence:** allows clients to hear and become aware of their own mixed feelings
4. **When you hear sustain talk (use sparingly):** allows the coach to test the water on exploring change



# Final Thought on Reflections

- No reflection can be wrong, so don't overthink
- Demonstrate empathy and a desire to understand the client

# Summaries

- Recapping of what the client said, usually at the end of the session or at the end of topic
- Benefits:
  - Give a client a bird's eye view of the key information shared
  - Another opportunity for the client to hear ambivalence or a genuine desire to change
  - Provide evidence of the coach listening
  - Organize and make sense of the client's thoughts or feelings



# Providing Meaningful Summaries

- Only revisit essential information that moves the conversation forward
- Could start with:
  - “Let’s see if I have it all...”
  - “Let me take a step back for a moment and look at all the pieces...”
  - “I’m considering all that you just told me, it sounds like...”
  - “I’m noticing a few themes here...”



# Providing Meaningful Summaries

- End with:
  - “How did I do?”
  - “Did I get it all?”
  - “Did I miss anything?”
  - “What else”
- After providing the summary give the client time to respond
  - Silence is golden



# When to Summarize

- To communicate interest and understanding
- To highlight ambivalence
- To reinforce change talk
- To transition to a new topic or phase of the appointment
- To get a client back on track
- To wrap up a session



# Motivational Interviewing

- Client-centered coaching style that embraces autonomy and strengthens motivation to change
  - Client “taking the lead” vs. expert directing action
  - Autonomy: independence or freedom of the client’s will or actions
- Helps to overcome ambivalence to change
  - Ambivalence: coexisting feelings within an individual of positive and negative feelings toward an action, simultaneously drawing him or her in opposite directions
    - Great in the contemplative stage of the TTM



# 4 MI Principles

1. Express empathy: reflect an attitude of acceptance, use skillful listening, demonstrate understanding
2. Develop discrepancies: clarify the difference between the current and preferred behavior, encourage exploration of likely outcomes with and without change

# 4 MI Principles

3. Roll with Resistance: Avoid arguing, offer new perspectives, and demonstrate flexibility and patience
4. Support Self-Efficacy: instill confidence in the ability to change, limit and redirect negativity, affirm appropriate goals



# Clarifying Misinformation

- Be empathetic
- Resist the “Righting Reflex”
  - Purpose is to not give advice and fulfill the coaches agenda
- Use Elicit-Provide-Elicit



# Clarifying Misinformation: Elicit-Provide-Elicit

- 1. Elicit:** gauge level of interest in implementing misinformed strategy
  - *“Tell me more about what you know about...”*
    - Find out more information from the client/patient about what they know on the subject matter
- 2. Ask permission** to provide additional information
  - *“Would you be interested in hearing what other clients/patients have found?”*
- 3. Provide:**
  - Provide concise, understandable, and relevant information
    - Watch for nonverbal cues
  - Use language that supports autonomy by avoiding “you have to” or “you must”
- 4. Elicit:** *“what are your thoughts on that?”*

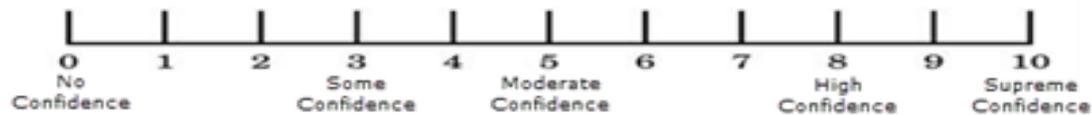


# Byproducts of MI Conversation

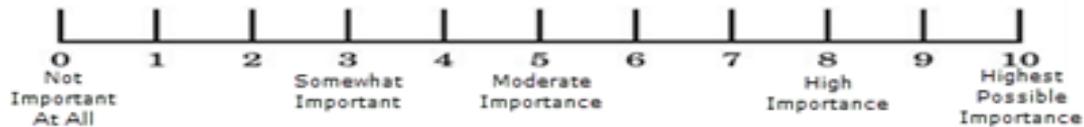
- Sustain talk: talk about the cost of changing and the benefits of staying the same
- Change talk: talk about the benefits of changing and cost of staying the same
  - MI should generate change talk

# Assessing Readiness

Indicate (with an X) on the ruler below how confident you are in your ability to achieve these goals:



Indicate (with an X) on the ruler below how important it is for you to achieve these goals:



- “Why did you choose \_\_\_ instead of a lower number?”
  - Uncovers affirmations and change talk
- “Why did you choose \_\_\_ instead of a higher number?”
  - Uncovers barriers and sustain talk



# Additional Coaching Resources

- **Certifications:**
  - Wellcoaches
  - ACE Health Coach
  - National Society of Health Coaches
- **Books:**
  - Motivational Interviewing for Fitness & Nutrition (Clifford/Curtis)
  - Motivational Interviewing (Miller/Rollnick)
  - No Sweat (Segar)
  - Wellness Coaching for Lasting Lifestyle Change (Arloski)



# Thank You!!!

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