



# Professional Coaching's Unique Contribution to Mental Health -

Being an ethically constructive disruptor  
dissolving stigma, shame and stuckness

Hope: To resource and support coaches in  
working ethically, boldly, respectfully, and wisely  
with clients who live with mental health issues

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## Perplexed x 2 !!

1.

- Coaches work with people who are well .....
- Counsellors/therapists/psychologists work with the unwell ...  
people with mental health issues”

2.

If we say we are interested in promoting mental health ....

why is our professional language about mental health so impoverished  
and restricted in comparison with our language about mental illness?

“FINE”

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## The prevalence of mental disorders – The GLOCAL reality

**18% – 36%**

**1:3 dilemma – if it isn't me, its one of these 2 people nearby**

- According to the only representative study conducted so far in **South Africa, 30.3% of adults** will have suffered from some form of mental disorder in a lifetime
- Mental disorders are commonly occurring and often seriously impairing in many countries throughout the world. The lifetime DSM-IV disorder prevalence estimates (combining anxiety, mood, externalizing, and substance use disorders) are 18.1–36.1%

On 3, call out what you read ...

1.....

2.....

3 .....

**OPPORTUNITYISNOWHERE**

# ICF Definition of Coaching – Coaches’ Remit

“ICF defines coaching as **partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential**, which is particularly important in today’s uncertain and complex environment.

The coach's responsibility is to:

- Discover, clarify, and align with what the client wants to achieve
- Encourage client self-discovery
- Elicit client-generated solutions and strategies
- Hold the client responsible and accountable

This process helps clients dramatically improve their outlook on work and life, while improving their leadership skills and unlocking their potential.”

Source: <https://coachfederation.org/need/landing.cfm?ItemNumber=978&navItemNumber=567>

## ICF Distinction – coaching and therapy

**Therapy:** **Therapy deals with healing pain, dysfunction and conflict within an individual or in relationships.** The focus is often on resolving difficulties arising from the past that hamper an individual's emotional functioning in the present, improving overall psychological functioning, and dealing with the present in more emotionally healthy ways.

**Coaching** is partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential.

**Coaching**, on the other hand, **supports personal and professional growth based on self-initiated change in pursuit of specific actionable outcomes.** These outcomes are linked to personal or professional success. Coaching is future focused. While positive feelings/emotions may be a natural outcome of coaching, the primary focus is on creating actionable strategies for achieving specific goals in one's work or personal life. The emphases in a coaching relationship are on action, accountability, and follow through.

Source: <https://coachfederation.org/need/landing.cfm?ItemNumber=978&navItemNumber=567>

## A stance on mental health in a coaching context

People with mental health issues still live and work in everyday life – unless they are institutionalised

People with mental health issues still have hopes and desires

People with mental health issues also seek to be partnered



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## Mental Health

### VITALITY

#### ***Mental Health – a definition – World Health Organisation***

Mental health is a “state of well-being in which every individual:

- realises his or her own potential
- Can cope with the normal stresses of life
- Can work productively and fruitfully
- Is able to make a contribution to her or his community”.

*A resource: WHO-AIMS Report of Mental Health System in South Africa (2007)*

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If we are not focusing on detecting / assessing mental health issues ....

What instead?



## Coachability

**Principle of utilization** – do the best with what is  
Instead of wishing or waiting for things to be  
different. Milton Erickson

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## Coachability

Someone who is **committed to their own development**, who **is hungry for feedback from others** and **open to anything that they can use** with which **to improve themselves**.

“Coachability is the willingness to be corrected and to act on that correction. When we are coachable, we are prepared to be wrong. We can withstand a high degree of candor. We are willing to let others evaluate — and perhaps even plumb the depths of our performance because we understand that the journey of personal development cannot be traveled alone.”

Five Signs of Coachability: humility; action bias; purity of purpose; willingness to surrender control; faith – August Turok, Forbes blog

Source:

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/augustturok/2011/09/30/are-you-coachable-the-five-steps-to-coachability/>

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What are we activating?

**Pathology?** **The wholeness of the person?**

Expanding ....

“I am more than my label” ...

Dignifying the WHO of the client

Exploring ....

**VITALITY**

- Stories of change
- Stories of coping

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**Intrigued?  
Keen to explore further?**

**Contact me for  
Training - Short courses, ICF-ACTP  
Supervision – group and individual  
Talks and Presentations**

**Online and On-site – Local and International**

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