

SCOTT SYMINGTON, PH.D.

CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST

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COACHING CONTRACT

Welcome to my coaching practice. This document constitutes a contract between us (the "AGREEMENT") and you should read it carefully and raise any questions and concerns that you have before you sign it.

The services to be provided by Scott Symington, Ph.D. are coaching or tele-coaching. The fee for the initial evaluation is \$275.00 and subsequent coaching sessions will be charged at the rate of \$300.00 per 50-minute session. Outside of the coaching sessions, including, but not limited to, between-session email exchanges or phone calls over 5 minutes, report writing, and reading or reviewing documents, will be billed on a prorated basis rounded up to the nearest tenth of an hour. Fees for coaching sessions are to be paid by credit card in advance of the scheduled session. Alternatively, you can have a credit card on file with my office, which will be run at the end of the month for any sessions that transpired that month. You are required to give 48 hours' notice if you need to cancel or change the time of an appointment. Otherwise, you will be charged for the session in full.

COACHING & PSYCHOTHERAPY

In addition to being a coach, I am also a licensed Clinical Psychologist in California with training and experience in diagnosing and treating emotional problems. While there are some similarities between coaching and psychotherapy, they are very different activities and it is important that you understand the difference between them. Psychotherapy is a health care service and is usually reimbursable through health insurance policies. This is not true for coaching. Both coaching and psychotherapy utilize knowledge of human behavior, motivation and behavioral change, and interactive counseling techniques. The major differences are in the goals, focus, and the level of professional responsibility.

The focus of coaching is development and implementation of strategies to reach client-identified goals of enhanced performance and personal satisfaction. Coaching may address specific personal projects, relationship issues, life balance, job performance and satisfaction, or general conditions in the client's life, business, or profession. Coaching utilizes personal strategic planning, values clarification, brainstorming, motivational counseling, and other counseling techniques.

The primary foci of psychotherapy are identification, diagnosis, and treatment of mental and nervous disorders. The goals of psychotherapy include alleviating symptoms, understanding the underlying dynamics which create symptoms, changing dysfunctional behaviors which are the result of these disorders, and developing new strategies for successfully coping with the psychological challenges which we face. Most research on psychotherapy outcomes indicates that the quality of the relationships is most closely correlated with the therapeutic process. Psychotherapy patients are often emotionally vulnerable. This vulnerability is increased by the expectation that they will discuss very intimate personal data and expose feelings about themselves about which they are understandably sensitive. The past life experiences of psychotherapy patients have often made trust difficult to achieve. These factors give psychotherapists greatly disproportionate power that creates a fiduciary responsibility to protect the safety of their clients and to, "above all else do no harm."

The relationship between the coach and client is specifically designed to avoid the power differentials that occurs in the psychotherapy relationship. The client sets the agenda and the success of the enterprise depends on the client's willingness to take risks and try new approaches. The relationship is designed to

be more direct and challenging. You can count on your coach to be honest and straightforward, asking powerful questions and using challenging techniques to move you forward. You are expected to evaluate progress and when coaching is not working as you wish, you should immediately inform me so we can both take steps to correct the problem.

Because of these differences, the roles of coach and psychotherapist are often in potential conflict and I believe that, under most circumstances, it is ethically inappropriate for one to play both roles with a client, whether concurrently or sequentially. Positive change is difficult enough without having to worry about role confusion. This means that if either of us recognizes that you have a problem that would benefit from psychotherapeutic intervention, I will refer you to appropriate resources. In some situations, I may insist that you initiate psychotherapy and that I have access to your psychotherapist as a condition of my continuing as your coach.

It is also important to understand that coaching is a professional relationship. While it may often feel like a close personal relationship, it is not one that can extend beyond professional boundaries both during and after our work together. Considerable experience shows me that when boundaries blur, the hard won benefits gained from the coaching relationship are endangered.

CONFIDENTIALITY

As a licensed Psychologist, I am ethically and legally bound to protect the confidentiality of our communications. I will only release to others with your written permission or in response to a court order. There are some situations in which I am legally obligated to breach confidentiality in order to protect you or others from harm. If I have information that indicates that a child or elderly or disabled person is being abused, I must report that to the appropriate state agency. If a client is an imminent risk to him/herself or makes threats of imminent violence against another, I am required to take protective actions. These situations are quite rare in coaching practices. If a situation occurs in our relationship, I will make every effort to discuss it with you before taking any action.

As you are no doubt aware, it is impossible to protect the confidentiality of information that is transmitted electronically. This is particularly true of e-mail and information stored on computers that are connected to the internet, which do not utilize encryption and other forms of security protection.

ACKNOWLEDGING SIGNATURES

I have read and understand this Agreement and Consent to Receive Coaching Services from Scott Symington, Ph.D. carefully. I understand and agree to comply with them.

Patient(s) Name (print)	Signature	Date
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Signature of Scott Symington, Ph.D.	Date
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