

Worksheet: Meet Your Client Where They're At

For coaches

Use it to shift your mindset before a coaching session with your client.

What do you do when your client wants to try something (like a cleanse, challenge, or short-term diet) that you think is a bad idea?

First, resist the urge to argue with them, diminish their idea, or tell them they're wrong. Telling your client they're wrong is a surefire way to squash your positive relationship.

Instead: Look for what they did right.

(At Precision Nutrition, we call this awesomeness-based coaching. Rather than focusing on what a client is doing wrong, awesomeness-based coaching focuses on what the client is doing right. An awesomeness-based coach builds on a client's strengths, and has unconditional respect for their goals, needs, and values.)

Remember: You don't have to agree with your client's preferences in order to coach them.

Use the three steps in this worksheet to help you shift your mindset towards a more awesomeness-based approach.

Step 1. Look for signs of progress.

What progress does their interest in the challenge/cleanse/diet indicate? For example... does it show that they're taking an interest in their health? A willingness to change or try something new? An awareness of their habits or patterns they'd like to improve? Etc.

Brainstorm all possible answers here. Then circle one or two you think are most important for your client. Be sure to give your client a high five for those particular signs of progress.

Step 2. Brainstorm the benefits.

It's easy to think about all the reasons why your client's idea isn't a good one. But just for now, look for the possible benefits. How could the challenge/diet be useful for your client? For example, could it help them learn about what works or what doesn't? Kickstart an ongoing interest in their health? Work as a "spring clean"-type approach to lay groundwork for new habits? Give them a better knowledge of what foods feel best for their body? Etc.

Brainstorm all possible answers here. Then circle two or three you think are most important for your client. When meeting with your client, be sure to ask THEM what benefits they hope to get out of the experience.

Step 3. Consider what habits could transition from the short-term into the long-term.

As you have conversations with your client about the challenge, you may be able to help them establish habits during this short-term period that they can continue to practice long after the challenge/diet/cleanse is over. For now, give some thought to what sorts of habits they might be able to establish now, which could continue to help them long after the challenge is over.

For example: could they develop a habit of cooking their own meals? Eating vegetables with every meal? Drinking water regularly? Moving their body daily?

This pre-thinking will not only help you coach them, it'll help you adjust your mindset to a more positive, awesomeness-based approach.

Brainstorm all possible answers here. Circle two or three you think might be best suited for your client.