

>>PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS<<

>>FOR WORKING WITH A COUNSELOR OR COACH<<

By

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1- Never send (what you consider to be) **confidential** information to your counselor/coach through **regular email**, since regular email is, generally, NOT guaranteed to be secure. If you need to send confidential information, use an email system that is **specifically designed to be secure**, or use encryption software on your document (and send the key separately by a different secure method), or use regular mail/phone/fax.

2- Your counselor/coach can only know what he/she hears from **you**. If you are **acting**, then don't expect good results for **yourself**, just for your "**character**"!

3- Many people can achieve great transformations through self-help, but recognize if/when you may have reached a **dead-end** and may need help from friends/family or professionals.

4- Do's for Online Counseling/Coaching

- * Do know your **true goals** or reasons for accessing e-help before starting an online counseling or coaching session.

- * Do **be on time** for your "live" (chat) session. The counselor/coach has reserved the time for you. Be sure to specify the timezones carefully as your counselor/coach may not be in the same timezone as you!

- * Do find a quiet and secluded area (free of extraneous noise) to use as a place to **concentrate** on your chat or e-session so that you don't get interrupted or distracted.

- * Do be prepared to commit the **time** to your e-counseling/coaching, including both online time and homework time.

- * Do familiarize yourself with the **limits and benefits** of online counseling and coaching before you register for a session.

- * Do know the rules of good **netiquette**, especially as it relates to email. Also, see #1 above.

- * Do develop good online **habits** if you are using online services, such as checking your email at least once a day, more often if you are replying or making a request of your e-counselor or coach.

- * Do plan on using or developing good **time-management** skills to enable you to balance your e-sessions with your other responsibilities and obligations.

- * Do respect the rules of online **honesty and integrity**. See #2 above.

- * Do take **breaks** from being online too long; give your eyes and mind a chance to rest.

- * Do remember that email is your primary form of communication, therefore you must be **clear and detailed** with the information you are sending. However, see #1 above; use secure email if at all possible.

- * Do assume your share of the **responsibility** for the success of your on-line coaching/counseling.

5- Don'ts for Online Counseling

- * Don't focus on grammar and spelling errors in your e-session but, rather, focus on the **content** and the essence of what has been written.

- * Don't be intimidated by the psych lingo but, instead ask your online counselor/coach for

clarification in plain English.

* Don't think you can be anonymous in on-line counseling/coaching; in fact, do expect more interaction, and **better results**, the more you reveal about your inner desires.

* Don't be afraid to **ask for help** if you are having problems using the site's technology or secure chat line.

* **Don't take online counseling/coaching lightly** because it can be just as effective as traditional counseling/coaching in most instances.

* Don't expect to be a **passive** client; you must be self-directed and self-motivated to succeed.

* Don't **procrastinate**. Procrastination may be the one deadly sin of online counseling. If you agree to certain tasks or deadlines, stay on top of your assignments.

* Don't get **discouraged** if online counseling and coaching doesn't work for you; this type of goal and solution focused counseling is not suited for everyone; however, do look into other psycho-educative opportunities to achieve your goals.