



WHAT ELSE IS IN YOUR TOOLKIT?

What else might empower our clients? Myriad complementary disciplines can be integrated into a coach's toolkit, argues [Jo Permaul](#) – for clients to consider their body, mind and spiritual wellbeing.

Integrating a diverse complementary toolkit into my coaching practice has made for some fascinating client journeys. I trained as a homeopath and homeobotanicals practitioner and worked as an intuitive before I completed my training as a holistic life coach, and yet now the frame for all my client-based work is coaching. It allows me to take my clients from a place of illness to a place of wellness, in which they can explore self-empowerment and listen to their own voice as part of the healing process.

As director of a training skills provider for wellness coaching, I have noticed the type of people that coaching attracts, and many of our students have complementary medicine or healing modality skills, either as an integrated element or as an addendum to their sessions. In this post-Covid era dominated by a cost of living crisis, it makes sense both financially and on a connection level to offer our clients more than one service. Clients already know, like and trust us, and they have seen that what we do brings results. Coaching enables the client to make significant changes and put things into action, but imagine if you could help your clients with physical, emotional and spiritual healing too. What else might you like to offer?

TOOLS FOR THE BODY

The excellent experiential work of Gabor Maté¹ has taught us that the body holds on to emotions, manifesting them as physical ailments and, at times, disease. Somatic coaching is increasing in popularity as an emerging new modality. Finally, we are pulling away from the Cartesian division between the mind as one entity and the body as another. This holistic approach is exciting and fascinating, and it adds new innovative ways of exploring how we might embrace coaching as a dynamic for healing.

Imagine the experience: you sit down with your coach, who you debrief about the physical pain and mental anguish that you are experiencing. They then ask you some impactful questions about what is currently happening in your life. The session may then involve activities such as working with acupressure points (to get rid of pain, ease headaches or aid drainage) using self-massage techniques or perhaps some basic needling from an acupuncturist (perhaps to help with excessive worry). After just 30 minutes, you walk away feeling both mentally and physically lighter.

Abi Adams, coach and founder of Project Woman, says: 'Many women come to me emotionally volatile, experiencing certain female health symptoms or wanting to know more about their body and health.' She integrates yoga, kinesiology, strength training, traditional Chinese medicine and bioenergetics. 'There's confusion and frustration around wanting to be a certain way or feeling like something is missing, but underneath it all is the misunderstanding

of emotions and how they digest stress. The greatest tool has been around menstrual cycle health, as it can open up the emotional door to how we treat ourselves, how we perceive the world and how we receive support. When we address these aspects, we can begin to soothe the nervous system and create a greater communication with ourselves and the life we live.'

In my own practice, I have sent clients Bach flower remedies and homeobotanical blends to aid physical manifestations such as rashes, menstrual cramps and recurrent headaches.

TOOLS FOR THE MIND

The grey area between counselling and coaching has been explored by many professionals. In his book *Personal Consultancy*, Nash Popkovic writes discusses how coaching can be the paradigm for building confidence while the interweaving of counselling explores the root issue, enabling you to fix the foundation.²

On my journey, I have discovered coaches who have integrated hypnotherapy and neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) into their coaching work because of the dynamic relationship between coaching, which catalyses change, and the hypnotherapeutic or NLP tools that are needed to put change into action.

Natasha Jackson writes about how she uses this integration: 'For me, progressive coaching is about looking deeply inwards, which is why alongside NLP techniques I work with an archetypes deck by Kim Krams – a deck rooted in Jungian theory.³ The cards offer thoughtful questions, inviting interpretations of symbology and identity, aiding self-reflection and often summarising a session perfectly.'

As coaches, mindfulness is an area where we ask our clients to stop overthinking. Tamsin Williamson, a parenthood coach, uses mindfulness in her own way, stating that this has to be part of a process in which clients flex their mindfulness muscle regularly. 'I introduce mindfulness to my clients as a practice to integrate into their lives on an ongoing basis to complement our more "conscious" coaching work, as it supports them to make more aligned and intentional progress in their lives while feeling more grounded and connected to their deeper selves.'

TOOLS FOR THE SPIRIT

I have over 20 years of experience reading tarot and it has always been my go-to tool for delving deep into the psyche. Rich in symbolism and imagery, the power of tarot has been documented extensively. Tarot and other cards used in divination can bring great comfort in a coaching session. The process of allowing a client to pick out a card and see how the image resonates with them can open up the room for deeper discussion. Personally, I am a huge fan of the Rider-Waite tarot deck, but Goddess Cards⁴ are hugely popular in women's empowerment and health coaching, especially when it comes to the fast-growing area of coaching for menopause. Tools such as physical cards enable the client to approach a topic from a different perspective and to access their higher self. They can be a great tool for someone new to the coaching process, who may struggle with answering questions. A simple 'what does this card mean to you right now?' can open portals into their psyche.

Reiki is a practice that has been around for hundreds of years. Born in Japan, Reiki is a hands-off healing practice that cleanses blockages and energy shifts. Now, it is being used in cancer care, and some of the larger cancer charities will have dedicated Reiki practitioners working with clients. Sharing the cancer journey can be an incredibly vulnerable process, but the benefits of cancer coaching are priceless. Adding a practice like Reiki into a cancer coaching session highlights the value of coaching to heal the mind and Reiki to heal the soul and spirit.

As Sarah Potter, coach and holistic therapist, says: 'I use Reiki (and hypnotherapy) in my practice. Reiki activations for intense emotions can really support the healing process.'

Tommy Ludgate, a coach for creatives, uses art as an add-on to work on a more spiritual, creative level. He writes: 'I love using creativity as part of my coaching as it can so quickly access our subconscious in ways dialogue can't. It peels back the layers on our potential overthinking and gets to the heart of our intuition. Some examples of things I like to use include: drawing a picture of your current mood, colouring while pondering on given prompts or the process of collage; cutting or ripping what you are most drawn to in a magazine.'

When reflecting on working with my clients, my *raison d'être* is to help them maintain wellness. To be a coach is not enough for me. The interplay and eclecticism of tools and approaches keep me alive, passionate, inquisitive and curious. My personal litmus test is: how have I helped that client to empower themselves? Sharing resources allows for the most beautifully woven stories, ones that fulfil me on a deep, core level, and the people I meet along the way are just wonderful!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Jo Permaul is director of Wellness Professionals At Work, which runs AC-accredited courses in wellness and life coaching. She is a qualified holistic life coach, homeopath and teacher. She lives in London and is hugely passionate about improving wellbeing through self-empowerment. Jo's practice has involved the integration of coaching, homeopathy, tarot, astrological awareness and herbs, and she has worked with clients both in the UK and internationally.

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1. Mate, G. Vermillion 2019, *When the Body Says No*
2. Popovich, N. *Personal Consultancy – A model for integrating counselling and coaching*. Routledge 2013
3. Krams, K. *Archetypes*. Harper One 2019
4. Virtue, D. *Goddess Cards*, 2004 (out of print)