

Coaching Inside and Out - An Evaluation

Graham Smyth, Manchester Metropolitan University, 2014

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Manchester Metropolitan University evaluated Coaching Inside and Out (CIAO) during 2013. This established the positive impact of coaching on CIAO’s clients in HMPYOI Styal and in the community in Cheshire.

Delivery Mechanism

CIAO’s skilled coaches help offenders take responsibility for changing their lives. Coaches challenge and support clients to set and prioritise their own goals and develop their own solutions for up to six hours of sessions.

Approach

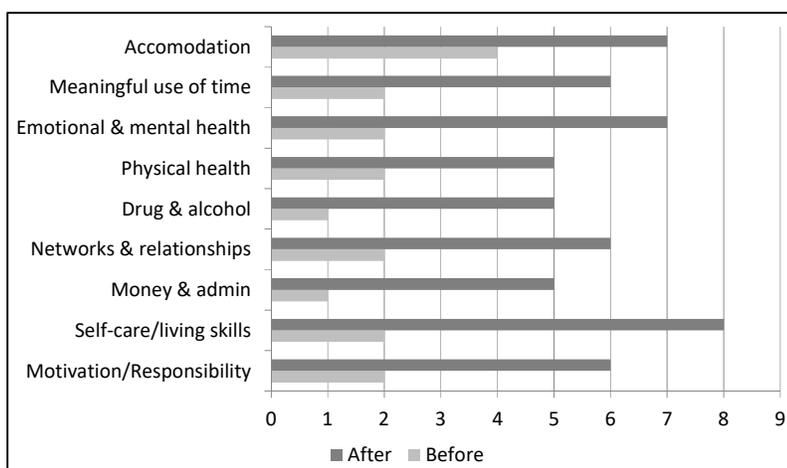
CIAO forms constructive working relationships with its clients as people, not as offenders. CIAO’s life coaching is not a formal CJS intervention and differentiates itself through: enabling self-determination, tapping into clients’ inner-resources, and focusing on action to change the future and encourage self-motivation.

Positive Outcomes

- 94% of those interviewed reported that coaching had a positive impact on them, in making the best of their time in prison, in planning for release and living in the community
- 68% completion rate (for clients with the opportunity to complete coaching)
- CIAO delivers coaching in line with its theory of change, which demonstrates the integrity of CIAO’s work.

Sustainable Results

CIAO has monitored the impact of its coaching using the Outcomes Star tool from the very start in 2011. Results from this were triangulated with interviews to validate the data and demonstrate that 22 women monitored considered they had made substantial changes in the average scores in all areas of life covered by the Star (see the chart below). They achieved two thirds of the maximum possible improvement, with the greatest increase in the two fundamental areas of ‘motivation and responsibility’ and ‘emotional and mental health’.



Client Testimonials

“Without the coaching I wouldn’t have been able to ask myself the right questions or think things through.”

“It is empowering. It enables me to tap into my own resources and build on my strengths.”

Lowest Outcomes Star scores (before and after coaching) in 2011

Long Term Impact

Reductions in re-offending

The reduction of re-offending is not an overt aim for CIAO, but is something to which its coaches and customers expect it to contribute. Coaching helps to promote confidence, hope and a sense of control over clients' own lives and futures – all of which are associated with desistance.

Broader impact within the prison and community

Staff believed coaching was contributing to the effectiveness of other initiatives, with clients more able to:

- Take on board the lessons offered by interventions targeting attitudes and behaviour
- Avail themselves of programmes and a range of other interventions and activities
- Seek opportunities to help others by volunteering for helping roles, encouraging others to take up coaching, and in some cases by seeking to train as coaches themselves
- Involve themselves constructively in their sentence planning.

Client Responses

The best evidence of the positive outcomes and the sustainability of CIAO's work comes from the clients themselves and this was corroborated by staff inside and outside the prison.

- Personal insights and newfound resources gave greater confidence enabling clients to take bigger steps
- Coaching's self-determined approach gave many a greater sense of control over their own lives
- All clients formed a positive trusting working relationship of equals with their coach.

Client Achievements

The evaluation clearly drew the distinction between CIAO's positive and voluntary approach, that was not specifically focused on offending, and other formal criminal justice interventions. Positive benefits following CIAO's coaching included:

- Being willing and able to speak to strangers, including those in authority
- Securing employment and setting up a business
- Giving up smoking.

Independent Corroboration

The evaluation interviewed 21 representatives of partner organisations and 18 people in official positions who were able to reinforce and support the progress reported by the sample of clients and coaches.

Client Testimonial

"If I'd had coaching earlier I think it would have stopped me coming to prison.
I think it would have saved my life - it has saved my life."

Further Information

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