



Coach Approach Ministries Podcast
Episode 49: Am I a Natural Born Coach
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[Intro Music]

Brian Miller: Welcome to the Coach Approach Ministries Podcast, where we help people find their way with God by training the best Christian coaches in the world. Our podcast today is sponsored by our certificate in Christian Leadership Coaching. This is a nine-month, ICF-approved coach training program that will prepare you to coach those around you to set goals, take action, and reach new levels of success. We have a cohort forming in July, so if you're interested, go to our website at www.coachapproachministries.org/coachnow. I'm Brian Miller, strategic director for Coach Approach Ministries, CAM for short, and I'm joined here today by the author of a new book, an eBook, Mr. Chad Hall. Chad, what book have you written?

Chad Hall: The book is, *The Nine Things It Really Takes to be a Great Coach*.

Brian: The nine things it really takes, the inside scoop. Chad went undercover as a coach for like seven years. He didn't talk to his family for three years. That wasn't required. He just didn't want to.

Chad: It's kind of like *Undercover Boss*. Yeah, that's right.

Brian: Undercover Coach. So, this is a new eBook that you wrote, we have on our website, and you can get it for free at coachapproachministries.org. If you can't find it, we haven't done our job. I think you can find it if you go to coachapproachministries.org. It's a great eBook. There's other eBooks that are not free. This one is free because we think it is a great introduction to let you know what's going on with coaching. Chad, how did you come up with nine things?

Chad: That's as many as I could come up with, to be honest. I really wanted ten things, but I was just out, and I could make one up, but no, I think these are the right nine. The idea was, of course we train coaches, we've had a lot of conversations with people about, "Do I have what it takes to be a coach", or "What does it take?" Just to address some of those questions not only for people thinking about coaching, but also people who are maybe several years in their development of becoming a great coach, and they're wondering, "I don't know. Maybe something's missing. What's my next growing edge?" I

just try to boil it down and think, “Okay. In my experience, as a coach, and working with other coaches, what are those characteristics of really great coaches?” Hopefully, it’s a resource to would-be coaches or coaches who are still growing.

Brian: Fantastic. I looked at the nine things, and my first response was, “That’s right.” That’s absolutely right. Those are the nine things in my mind. Well done, Chad, I appreciate it.

Chad: Well, we can end the podcast now.

Brian: Well, if someone says, “You’re absolutely right,” and then continues to talk, that always confuses me. I’m like, “If I’m absolutely right, why are you chiming in at this point? We already established that I’m absolutely right.” So, we’re going to do this over a couple podcasts because we think this is really good stuff, and we want to talk about this. We want to make sure you get the opportunity to get this book, which I said you could get at coachapproachministries.org. So, we’re going to take a look at the first two things, and the first one is, *A Natural Desire to Help*. So, what do you mean by natural?

Chad: Yeah, I mean, you just are born with it, or at least it’s developed over your lifetime that you have an internal and innate desire to help people, and I’d say not just help people like give them a big hug, but you have a natural desire to help people create outcomes, so you want to help other people succeed. You don’t have to be told to do that. You don’t have to pump yourself up to do that. It just comes naturally to you. It’s a strength that you have that you want to help other people move forward in life. Some people have that, some people don’t, and that’s not a criticism of the people who don’t. God’s created people different, and this is one of the distinct characteristics of people who make great coaches. I want to be clear, it’s not that you have this overwhelming, all-encompassing desire to help other people. You just need some level of that. If you don’t have any of that, you’re probably not going to be a great coach. I will most assuredly say you are not going to be a great coach if you don’t have at least some level of desire, so you’ve got to find it intrinsically motivating to help other people create outcomes.

Brian: So, in my mind, you just described two kinds of people. There’s my mom, and there’s my dad. My mom loves watching people. She could just watch people all day. She’d find that really interesting, and she’s not judgmental, she’s just really interested in people. She’d love talking to these people. I remember her going into a store one time. She was in there forever. I said, “What took so long?” She said, “I was talking to someone.” I said, “Who?” She said, “I don’t know.” That’s my mom, and she was always helping, and investing, and talking to people. Then there was my dad, who, when I had a 4H project to build something, he built it, and said, “Here you go. I helped you,” and he was a super guy, but he didn’t have this natural power to invest in people, to see people grow. He was a hard worker, and he might be thinking, “I’m doing my job, now you go do your job.” That’s okay. There’s nothing wrong with that, but that’s probably not a coach, whereas my mom, I always thought my mom would make a great coach because she’s so curious, and she’s so interested in people.

Chad: Yeah, I would maybe speculate that what makes for a really great coach is a combination of those two. Especially those of us who work in ministry, we kind of see a lot of people who have a natural desire to help people, or a natural interest in people, but what they’re missing is the piece around help

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people create outcomes. They just want to be around people and talk and that kind of thing, but to be a really great coach it takes a combination of, I want to see people succeed, I want to help other people develop, I want to create some good in the world through other people. So, in the eBook, I talk about that there's a task and a relationship aspect to it, and the task, make things happen, get things done. Relationship, other people matter. When you put those two together, a coach helps other people get things done, move forward in life, create outcomes. Some people have the natural desire for that, and other people have the natural desire to be around people. That's fine. Other people have a natural desire to get things done without people. That's fine too. Just, those extremes aren't going to make a good coach. The combination of it is going to make a really good coach.

Brian: I love the description of the combination where, I'm still thinking about my mom and dad. Maybe I need to move off of that, but Mom's so curious about people, but Dad's so curious about ideas, he really was. He wanted to dig into an idea, find out more about that. There's all these pieces, so that the client can own their situation. So, it can be theirs, but there's this partnership. Chad, this natural desire to help. I think that's a great word we should explore for just a second, partnership.

Chad: Yeah, it is a partnership, and you may even say, it's a natural desire to partner with other people, to help them create these outcomes, and again, that means you're not just sitting on the sidelines watching people do stuff. It also means, you're not just kind of taking it over from them. Really, coaches are facilitators. We're facilitating people coming to new awareness, taking action, reaching new goals. So, if you don't have that kind of partnering, facilitating bend to you, coaching's not going to come very natural for you.

Brian: An interest in what makes people tick. Probably, a clue would be that people like to tell you things, I guess. You have a natural sense of being a fairly good listener. Those would be some clues. What would you see as some other clues that you might have a natural desire to help?

Chad: Yeah, I hear this a lot of times in training when I say, what got you here into coaching? I hear these kinds of things from people, "Others approach me with their challenges. Others tell me I'm a good listener. I have a natural curiosity about people doing things, and what's their motivation, and where are they going in life?" I don't want to say that if you're not attracting clients already, you're not going to make a good coach, but I think some of those signs are, if you were to engage in those kinds of conversations, or you at least would like to be able to. I think that's part of why I gravitate in these first couple of things, to talk about natural, you've got to nurture this desire, but if you don't have it to begin with, at least a little bit, you're probably not going to have anything to nurture.

Brian: That's a good word. So, let's take a look at thing number two, some natural talents. So, what would be some natural talents?

Chad: The point here is, without some natural talent, you're never going to be a great coach. So, desire without talent equals disappointment. I have the desire to be an NBA player. I do not have the talent. So, I'd be disappointed. I really think there are four main talents. Again, these are natural talents. You're born with them, you can develop them, you can add skill and knowledge to turn these into a coaching strength, but man, you're just born with this kind of stuff. One, you've got to be good with people.

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That's beyond just being interested in people. You have to have this kind of way of being with people where you have enough kindness that other people want to talk to you. The way I say this sometimes in coach training is, I'll give feedback to a coach, and I'll say, "You're easy to talk to, and there's no substitute for that."

Brian: Yeah, easy to talk to. You just create an environment where I want to tell you more.

Chad: Let's face it. We all know people who are not good at this. They suck up all the air in the room. They talk over everybody, or they're so stonewall silent that it's awkward and really uncomfortable. You don't have to be the world's greatest conversation partner, but you have to have some level of being good with people, being easy to talk to.

Brian: That's helpful. What's the second one?

Chad: Another thing, and I don't know that we need to go through all four of these, but a really important talent is, what I call, a flexible mind, that can go back and forth between big picture and details. An inflexible mind gets stuck in one of those. I was just giving feedback to a coach last week, and he was always getting stuck in the details. He heard every little weed that the client said but couldn't kind of pull back and see the big picture, the meaning, of what the client was saying. Likewise, some coaches have an inflexible mind that only sees the big picture and can't get into the nitty gritty of what's it going to take to move this forward? What are some specific action steps? Really being curious about the intricacies. So, this flexible mind that can see the big picture and work out the details, because that's what a client needs. They need both of those, and the flexibility is when do they need which. I do think that's a natural talent. I think some people are just naturally good at that. They have a naturally flexible mind. Again, they could develop it to be even better, but you've got to have some level of that to be a great coach.

Brian: That is really interesting. I agree with you that there needs to be some natural talent, but I don't want anybody to go running at this point because there are certainly skills you can learn and process you can learn that help you to know when to flex between the big pictures and the details. You've made me think about, I trained two ladies in my church to coach, and we would do it in a triad situation where the two of them would coach me. One of them was great at big picture questions, and curious, and really made me think about dreaming and what's possible, and the other one was kind of quiet during that time, but then when, we talk about the hourglass, when we got to the details, the other one would take over and say, "What are you going to do and when are you going to do it," and really nail me down. Then the other one would kind of lay out. When you said that, it made me think maybe in some ways, neither one of them had a natural flexibility between the big picture and the details, but as opposed to being good with people, I think we can all say, "Yeah, I'm good with people," or, "I'm not so good with people." This flexible mind, Chad, what are some clues that we might, or might not, have a flexible mind?

Chad: Well, I would say that we all have a flexible mind to some degree. I'm sure there's some small segment of the population that's just so cemented in to either big picture or detail that they're not going to move back and forth between those two, but I would say the majority of people in the world,

maybe 80%, have some degree of flexibility, and the more you flex your mind back and forth, the stronger it's going to be. You'll have those neural connections, or whatever, that allow your mind to be more flexible between the two. The other thing is just to notice about being intentional about going back and forth. So, if you know, you have to at once, hold the whole conversation in your mind, and by whole conversation I mean what's the topic, where do they want to go with this topic, what's their goal for this conversation, that kind of stuff, and where are we right now in the conversation, what's needed right now in the conversation? If you can practice that, holding the big picture and the immediate detail in mind, I think you're going to increase your flexibility, and just know that you're probably going to gravitate to one or the other, big picture or detail, and just work to incorporate more of the other one in. If you're open to doing that, it probably means you have a flexible mind. If you're not open to doing that, it probably means you don't have a flexible mind, and you're one of the 20% who can only see the world one way, either big picture or detail, and you probably need to get into some other profession.

Brian: If you can only see at 40,000 feet, which is where I see a lot of times, but can I go into the details, or if I can only see the details and never get to a bigger picture, but that one's a little harder to get a handle on, I think, than am I good with people. I think that one might have to be explored a little bit to find out how flexible my mind is.

Chad: Maybe we need to do a whole podcast on that, or maybe, Brian, you need to write the next eBook on, it's kind of like *A Beautiful Mind* except it's *A Flexible Mind*.

Brian: *A Flexible Mind* by Brian Miller. That sounds great. What's the third natural talent?

Chad: A third one is, you've got to be wired in such a way that you can create space to let the client be the hero. This is maybe a cousin the one with being good with people, but it really isn't enough to just be comfortable around people. You've got to have a level of humility, self-awareness, just to know that this coaching relationship is not about you. It's about the other person. It's about the client, and they're really the hero. One of the things I see trip up a lot of new coaches, and if they can't get over this, they're not going to make it as a coach, is they want to be the smart one, they want to be the hero, they want to be the savior, they want to be the one who was the hero, the rescuer, "Wasn't it great how Brian helped me?" What you really want your client going away with is saying, "I can't wait to do what I just came up with. Oh yeah, Brian helped me." If you can't take that back seat and let the client be the hero, you're probably not going to be a very good coach.

Brian: This is another one where it may take someone helping you think this through. So, I have a friend, a pretty good friend, who, whenever he tells a story, it's always dramatic, it's troubled, and he flies out of the rubble, and thank God he was there because otherwise... I doubt that he's thinking to himself, "I could never be a coach because I always have to be the hero." I doubt he has any awareness of that. How are some ways you could bring some personal awareness to whether you're capable of letting someone else be the hero?

Chad: I think you probably see this in other areas of your life as well. Do you always have to be the leader? Do you always have to be the one making the decision, or can you make room for others? Do you partner well? Do you treat people as an equal, or is there always an inferior/superior dynamic to the

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relationship? I find that people who are naturally talented for coaching when it comes to this particular talent, they are okay being equal. They either think I'm the boss or somebody else is the boss. I'm in charge or someone else is in charge, and coaching just doesn't fit that dynamic. It's a partnership where we are both doing things different, and again, it's for the good of the person. If you see in all your other relationships in life that you struggle with that partner, equal, equal but not identical, then coaching's probably going to be a struggle for you.

Brian: There are definitely some learned skills that can help you to separate that out, which I think are very important, but if you cannot allow someone else to be the hero, if there's no one around you that's done well, if you can't name five people who you're impressed by, you may be in trouble. There are definitely skills that are taught in coaching, and mindsets that are taught, that help you understand how to partner, how to be an equal, what you bring to it. There are definitely pieces of that. So, what is the fourth natural talent that is required to be a coach?

Chad: I mentioned earlier, a flexible mind. This one is different. It's a strong mind because you have to be in a range of activities as a coach. You have to listen, you have to communicate, you have to process problems, you have to plan, you have to offer feedback. You have to hold multiple things in your head at the same time. It's not that you have to have to have an IQ of 150 or be a super-genius.

Brian: That's true. Not everyone can be as smart as we are, Chad. It's a bell-curve.

Chad: Yep, combined, we have an IQ of 150.

Brian: Oh shoot. Okay.

Chad: I'm going to say this as straightforward, this is going to be politically incorrect probably, but you probably do need an above average intelligence. I wouldn't rate that purely on IQ, but if you do have a low IQ, it's going to be a challenge. You told me about this guy, I can't remember now who it was, who defined IQ as how quickly you can process things. It's not a character trait. It's just that your neurons fire more quickly than they do for other people. When you're in a conversation with somebody, it's moving fast. You need to process pretty quickly. Again, not super-computer kind of thing, but a little smarter than the average bear will help. This is not for the dull.

Brian: I know people have said to me, "Boy, you're quick." I think that's helpful. I think there's a range of how quick you need to be, but there needs to be the quickest. I was trying to think of the dumbest coach I know. No, not really.

Chad: Don't name names.

Brian: No, but I think you're right. I think there's a strength to being able to hold a lot of things in your mind, have a certain level of concentration. Not like you're going to be a physicist or high-level mathematician, but there is a sense of where you have to be able to hold a few things in your brain at the same time for the client as they talk. The picture I have is your wife shopping, you've got to hold the packages, you've got to be able to hold several things at one time.

Chad: Well, you know Brian, I think that's right. That's a great image because I'm just noticing what trips up some early coaches. Again, they can develop this and get better at it, but they get tripped up because they get distracted. I hear this all the time where a client needs to come up with ideas or options, and the very first option they spit out of their mouth, the coach says, "Let's run with it. Let's go with it," and they don't realize, "Oh no. We were generating options." What are we doing here? We're generating options, and this is one option. Let's see another option, and that's not really multitasking, it's just holding different things at once and knowing that's what you're doing at the moment. I did want to give a little bit of a caution, though, because you could be smart, you could be above average intelligence. Coaching is not the place to show that off. If you have this need to demonstrate how smart you are, then that's not really what coaching's about.

Brian: You could probably be too smart, in some ways.

Chad: That's what you struggle with.

Brian: Man, it's a real struggle every day.

Chad: It's a burden.

Brian: But I'm good with people. That's my saving grace.

Chad: It's the cross you bare. Wicked smart.

Brian: Wicked smart. I do like the picture of a strong mind that's able to hold a lot of things. It doesn't mean you can't take notes. I do that. I jot a few things down, a few options, you can come back to that. It's just the capability of being able to handle several things for the client so that they can move on, they can think about something else but may want to come back, and you're hanging on to that for them, but that's great.

Chad: One more thing with this, Brian, because I don't want to give the wrong impression. It's not that the conversation has to move fast. Some people think one of our friends, who's a great coach, part of the partnership here with Coach Approach Ministries, Linda Miller, when you're coaching with her, you know how a rollercoaster at first just takes off, the whole ride with her is that way. She's just fast. Man, she moves fast, and that works great for the kind of people she coaches. It may not be for everybody. I want to be clear. You don't have to move fast as a coach. That's not what we're talking about here.

Brian: No, I've got a friend who's a coach who especially embraced the idea of not thinking of the next question until the client is done talking, and so, they really demonstrated well that the client was done talking, and they would be like, "Hmm. Yeah. Okay." There's a sense for most people of, "Oh. That's too slow," but I found it to be really engaging, honestly. He wasn't just slow. We were taking the whole thing in, and that's what we were doing. There was a strength to it.

Chad: That's a methodical, which means there's a method to it, and I actually think sometimes that not as bright person that tries to preload the question by thinking about it while the person's still talking, that's me snapping my fingers as a quick person might do, who is willing to wait, and now I can process

what question to ask after the person's done talking, and again, it doesn't have to be lightning fast. It can be, okay, I've acknowledged that you've finished talking, and here's the question. That little bit of time they developed with the question, they can put it together, they can assemble it after the client gave them all the parts, so to speak. With a person who's a little less capable, they feel like they've got to generate the question after the client started talking like three minutes ago, and they're processing the whole time the client's talking.

Brian: So, that is an introduction to the book, *Nine Things That It Really Takes to be a Good Coach* by Chad Hall. You can have this book for free at www.coachapproachministries.org. You're going to find it there, easy enough to download, and we just want to thank you for joining us today. This podcast was sponsored by our certificate in Christian leadership coaching. It's a nine-month, ICF-coach approved training that will that will prepare you to coach those around you to set goals, take action, reach new levels of success. We have a cohort forming in July, and we would love to have you be a part of it. Go to our website at www.coachapproachministries.org/coachnow. We'll see you next week for episode number 50.

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