



The Importance of Rapport

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The strength of health coaching is in a relationship. The relationship between a health coach and a client (or patient) is an integral part of the client's wellness journey, but for there to be a good relationship, the coach must build and maintain rapport with their clients.

Rapport is a word that comes to us from Old French. It originally meant to bring back or to carry, but it now means a friendly and harmonious relationship (1). Baker, Watlington, and Knee (2020) researched this topic and found that the "interactions perceived to be of a higher caliber (i.e., those with more rapport) were more satisfying to one's needs both within-persons and between-persons" (2). Like all human beings, clients desire connection with others, and when this need is satisfied with a coach, the relationship deepens and flourishes.

In 2023, Clason et al. (3) found the following characteristics increased the effectiveness of health coaches: being trustworthy, showing integrity, compassion and empathy, and being an active listener. Although the training of a health coach was also important, these attributes reveal how important our character traits are to having success with our clients. Without these, rapport will not develop and clients will not return where they do not feel safe.

Relationships are everything; and as the strength of health coaching is in a relationship, the strength of Christianity is in a relationship as well. God wants a relationship with mankind and He too wants us to trust Him and have rapport with Him. Throughout The Bible, God wants to abide with us (4), reason with us (5), and guide us (6). As our relationship with God grows, our relationships with our clients deepen and rapport is strengthened. Let us always remember this important connection and do all we can to foster rapport with clients at every session.



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4. Exodus 25:8
5. Isaiah 1:18
6. Psalm 48:14

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