

Teen Coaching Experience Interview

What was it like having a coach?

It was cool. It's someone who just listens to you about your life. She gave me the opportunity to talk to her about anything.

You mean she just listened?

Well, she listened and sometimes asked questions, but she wasn't pushy. The conversations made me think about the things that were important in my life. Before I had my coach, it was hard for me to trust and share my feelings with other people.

Then why did you trust your coach?

I was very stressed and felt like I was trapped and confused with no way out. My trust came from her consistent caring and patience. She was always calm and would continue to listen and ask good questions. She didn't try to control me or tell me what to do. She treated me with respect. And she never judged or criticized me.

Then what?

The good thing is when we talked; she didn't try to save me either. She didn't feel sorry for me, or give me advice. With her questions I could see my choices and find solutions to my problems. That gave me more confidence to make decisions for myself.

What does being "saved" feel like?

My mom always said that I wouldn't be able to do anything. I left and I became homeless and I was angry. If someone tried to save me I would hate it because it would make me feel more helpless. I hate that feeling. I want to feel strong.

How did you feel during a coaching session?

Sometimes we just laughed and had fun.

But if I needed to, I could cry and let go of all of the bad stuff from my body, too. I was so stressed and tired of trying to figure issues out by myself. It was good to say things out loud. It cleared my mind.

What else was important to you?

It was so important for me to feel safe. I was very ashamed of my life and really feeling unhappy. It was so hard to share some things. But I knew that anything I said to her was ok and would remain private.

Anything more you would like to add?

I felt like I had someone who believed in me and with her encouragement I knew I would be ok. I didn't have all the answers, but I just felt better about my future.

Would you advise another teen to use coaching?

Absolutely!