

# NeuroBridge Coaching LLC

Connecting Minds, Building Futures

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Life Coach

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### **Frequently Asked Questions:**

#### **How does coaching differ from therapy or mental health counseling?**

Therapists and counselors focus on the past through the present, and coaches focus on the present and help you create the future you desire. Whereas therapists and counselors deal with a patient's mental conditions and processing trauma, a life coach never addresses these issues. The role of a coach is to encourage clients in self-reflection, plan for the future through goal-setting, create step-by-step plans for achieving goals, and develop important skills where needed. Coaching has a very practical focus on helping clients identify and accomplish goals that lead to a better quality of life.

Normally, it's beneficial for the client to start with therapy and then progress into coaching when healing is complete or at least has begun.

It's important to understand that coaching is not mental health counseling. While coaching can positively impact anxiety, depression, and life satisfaction, a coach may never diagnose or treat mental health disorders, provide medical advice, or practice therapy. Coaching is never a substitute for counseling, psychotherapy, psychoanalysis, mental health care, or substance abuse treatment, and it should never be used in place of any form of therapy.

With your permission, I can speak with your care providers if this would be helpful. I am also happy to refer clients seeking mental or physical health therapy to an appropriate licensed professional.

#### **What is your approach to working with clients?**

I provide highly individualized one-on-one coaching for people with autism, ADHD, and similar profiles.

I work collaboratively with clients to identify measurable goals related to areas of life, such as establishing and maintaining healthy relationships, mitigating executive functioning challenges, finding and maintaining employment, recovering from burnout, managing money/creating a budget, navigating



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college, and living independently. Then we collaborate to create a plan for achieving those goals by leveraging your strengths and figuring out how to overcome the obstacles in your path. We will establish a progress monitoring plan and assess your progress toward these goals.

Typically, we meet for a 60-minute session each week (or more based on need & availability) for the first couple of months and then start reducing the frequency to give you increased opportunity to work on your goals independently between sessions. You should expect to have work to do toward your goals between sessions. I will become your collaborator, cheerleader, and accountability partner.

In parent coaching or behavior consultation, we discuss your concerns and prioritize goals based on the importance and urgency of the challenges. In essence, I "coach the coach"-- combining parent education on autism, behavior, and executive functioning challenges to facilitate understanding with problem-solving and skill-building. Always, I provide a non-judgmental listening ear for those who need someone to talk to who gets it, who can tell you that you are not alone, and that all your complex feelings are valid. Progress monitoring will also be a key component of this service to ensure we are moving in the right direction and challenging behaviors are being reduced.

Quick check-ins by text or email are included and available for all active clients.

### **Do we meet online or in person?**

Typically we will meet virtually, via Zoom or Google Meet. I do have limited office hours on Mondays and in-person sessions can be scheduled based on availability. If you are very interested in meeting in person either in your home or in the community, I can sometimes accommodate this depending on where you live and what you want to work on (e.g. meeting at a grocery store to work on shopping on a budget, navigating a grocery store, etc.) There is an additional fee for each community-based session depending on distance/travel time beyond the base rates. Current clients also receive email and text support between sessions as necessary.

### **Do you record the sessions?**

I can provide you a video recording of our virtual sessions. I only record sessions with your explicit permission.

### **Is our work confidential?**

Our work together is confidential with the exception of legally mandated reporting of child or adult mistreatment, abuse, neglect, or exploitation. I take every reasonable precaution to ensure the confidentiality of your information. If you have specific concerns, let's discuss them.

## **What is your certification and background?**

It's important to understand that coaching does not have the kind of rigorous training and oversight the mental health profession has. While there are numerous general life coaching training programs, few are relevant to the challenges that bring neurodivergent people or their parents to coaching. There are no regulations that dictate what practitioners must know in order to practice, and there is no accreditation or governance of practicing coaches. Therefore, it's important to ask me questions and understand my training and background to assess whether I have the skills you need & would be a good fit for you.

I bring a neurodiversity-informed and -affirming approach to improving the lives of neurodiverse people combined with my certifications, training, and skills. I have worked with children, adolescents, and adults with autism spectrum disorder and other cognitive, behavioral, and developmental disabilities for 17 years. I have worked in school, home, and clinical settings to support students and train professionals and families with various behavioral interventions. I have clinical experience as a Clinical Supervisor, Community Support Supervisor, and Director of Adolescent Studies & Transition Services. I have an undergraduate degree in Behavioral Science from Walsh University and a graduate certificate in Applied Behavioral Analysis from the University of North Texas. I became a Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analyst (BCaBA) in 2015. Although my training and experience in applied behavior analysis has helped me to better understand and change human behavior, I strongly believe in a multi-disciplinary approach to support the learning of new skills and behaviors. Throughout my professional experiences, I have maintained a strong passion for building meaningful relationships with neurodivergent people and supporting and empowering them to live as independently as possible and take care of themselves mentally, physically, emotionally & socially.

## **What neurodivergences do your clients typically display?**

To be clear, coaching is not therapy or mental health treatment, and, as a coach, I do not diagnose or treat mental health disorders. That said, many neurodivergent people end up with an alphabet soup of medical and educational diagnoses.

The most common diagnosis for clients I support is autism spectrum disorder. Other clients have had diagnoses that can result in similar social and executive functioning challenges such as ADHD, social (pragmatic) communication disorder, sensory processing disorder, nonverbal learning disorder, giftedness, dyslexia, twice-exceptionality (2e), auditory processing disorder, oppositional defiance disorder (ODD), anxiety, and more.

Some clients may suspect a diagnosis of some kind, but either have not been assessed or have traits that are sub-threshold for diagnosis and have ended up without a diagnosis. If you experience the challenges that are often associated with any of these diagnoses, whether you have a diagnosis or not, let's talk!

**Do I need a diagnosis to work with you?**

Definitely not. I have and will continue to support and advocate for people who only knew they were “different” in some way and struggling. There are many things we can work on while you are working with professionals to get a formal diagnosis, or you may also decide you don’t want a formal diagnosis, which is fine too.

**How do I know if you are a good fit for me or my adult child?**

I offer a complimentary intake/consultation session to discuss your situation and determine if we are a fit for each other. You can schedule this virtual session by emailing me at [carla.neurobridgecoaching@gmail.com](mailto:carla.neurobridgecoaching@gmail.com) or calling me at (330) 289-7705.

**How much does neurodivergent life coaching cost?**

I am not in network with any insurance companies. I offer a sliding fee scale (see Client Forms) that is based on family size, income, and number of dependents. Young adults who can still be claimed as a dependent by their parents are assessed by parents’ income.

Maximum hourly rate is \$125 with lower rates depending upon the criteria listed above.

Groups range from \$50-75 depending on type of group. Consultation and training services vary depending on preparation and travel time.

I accept cash, check, or credit card.

**Do you take insurance?**

Unfortunately, life coaching is not considered a medical expense, so it is not covered by health insurance.

**What is your cancellation policy?**

If you need to cancel or reschedule a session, please be respectful and provide at least 24 hours’ notice. This should be the exception, though. If you have not done the homework or worked on your goals, please do not cancel. Each one of my clients is very different, so coaching is a highly iterative, experimental process. This means we may have to try several different tactics before we figure out what works for you. I realize that many neurodivergent individuals have experienced repeated, soul-crushing failures, and if something is not working, we will work as a team to figure out what went wrong and adjust the plan. I have many tools in my toolboxes, and one or more are likely to work for you!

**How can I start working with you?**

The first step is to set up a free, 30 minute intake/consultation session. This will give us a chance to discuss your situation, what you hope to achieve, and explore if we will be a good fit. I look forward to meeting with you.