

Personal Development Comparison Tool

	Life Coaching	Spiritual Direction	Therapy / Counseling	Consulting	Mentoring
Relationship	One-on-One or Group	One-on-One or Group (ministry context)	One-on-One or Group (clinical context)	One-on-One or Organizational (professional context)	One-on-One or Group
Direction of Focus	Present and Future, Vision	Relationship with God	Past and Present, Working Through Pain	Specific Project or Problem	Sharing From Lived Experience
Desired Outcome	Action Toward Meaningful Goals	Discernment of God's Direction	Healing, Restoration, and Coping Skills	Expert Recommendations and Solutions	Personal and Professional Growth in a Role
Professional Training	Professional Training and Certification Expected	Formal Training and Certification Available, Not Always Required	Professional Training and Licensing Required	Training and Expertise Specific to the Field	Not Typically Required
Delivery	Phone, Video, or In Person	Phone, Video, or In Person	Usually In Person (telehealth also common)	Usually In Person	Usually In Person
Role	The coach acts as a partner and facilitator, helping clients clarify goals, create actionable plans, and overcome obstacles. The client sets the agenda.	The spiritual director acts as a trained, prayerful companion who helps individuals notice and respond to God's presence in daily life.	The therapist provides a safe, confidential space to explore emotional, psychological, and behavioral concerns; diagnoses, builds treatment plans, and teaches coping skills.	The consultant acts as an external expert who diagnoses problems and often helps implement solutions for a client's professional challenges.	The mentor acts as a trusted advisor who guides a mentee's growth through shared experience, wisdom, and constructive feedback.