



# Integrative Health Coach Training Program

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**NICKERSON INSTITUTE**  
*of*  
***Integrative Health Training***

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Good health is not simply the absence of illness, it is a balance of the mind, body, spirit and energy that allows us to reach our fullest potential.

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Review where integrative health coaches fit into the healthcare industry and what opportunities await you in this fast-growing, changing industry.

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## A Note from Dr. Wendy Nickerson

After years of my own challenges with depression and anxiety, dropping out of high school due to pregnancy, then for several years, raising my children on welfare as a single parent under extreme conditions, I know what chronic stress and duress are all about. After slowly digging myself out of that social, economic, environmental and spiritual rut, I was blessed with the chance to gain an education — and later, while working with clients who had similar struggles, I realized that the conventional methods of treating the mind (and sometimes the body) were not enough to create sustainable change. I realized that the whole person needed to be addressed, including the *spirit* and *internal energy patterns*.

We have repeatedly seen that those who develop a connection with something greater than themselves heal from addictions, depression and anxiety while gaining a deep sense of inner peace. In addition, being aware of the energy within and around our bodies is essential for developing psychological integration. Learning to recalibrate our energy system is vital for maintaining mental health thought patterns and growth (neuroplasticity) within the brain. Like me, you may have noticed in yourself or others that conventional mental health practices are limited in their effectiveness to create lasting change, and feel drawn to pursue a deeper understanding of the power of 'whole person' mental health care.

Wendy Nickerson, Psy D



**The field of integrative health coaching** with the special focus on holistic mental health care, offers a specialized opportunity for individuals who are passionate about mental health and wellness to actively collaborate with clients and patients, assisting them in understanding and practicing the most advanced techniques and strategies for mind, body, and spirit health.

Integrative health coaching is not only effective for addressing mental health concerns, but is also crucial in relieving and preventing chronic pain and physical illnesses. Recent research indicates that mental health is essential in preventing and managing chronic illnesses such as diabetes, cancer, heart disease and obesity. (1) The integrative health coach serves the unique role of empowering people to take ownership of their own mind-body-spirit health, and to discover their own motivation for lasting behavior change.

Although the health coach profession is continuing to expand, this brochure offers a guided view of its current state and addresses emerging areas of opportunity that will further allow the profession to thrive. Those areas especially include positions in behavioral nutrition, mental healthcare and workplace wellness. The integrative health coach, specializing in holistic mental health, is an intermediate level healthcare position between peer support workers and mental health therapists. (2) The health coach training program was developed to bridge the gap in the present mental health care system, and to provide a mental health care service the bypasses associated stigmas.

Additionally, this brochure features unique insights from currently practicing integrative health coaches across a wide variety of settings who highlight how their knowledge, skills, and passions have translated into diverse, fulfilling careers in an evolving field.

“Health is a large word. It embraces not only the body, but the mind and spirit as well...and not today's pain or pleasure alone, but the whole being and outlook of a person. ~ James H. West



# Holistic Mental Health Provides Many More Opportunities to Heal

In this program, we will explore some basic ideas and strategies for attaining this higher level of well being.

**Spirit** - Studies are showing more evidence how increasing spiritual awareness, incorporating a spiritual practice into our daily lives, and nurturing our beliefs about our spirit-self and a higher power are beneficial to our mind-body wellness and can even contribute to the recovery process from illness and surgery.

**Body** - We know that exercise and nutrition are crucial to wellness, yet science is now revealing even deeper secrets to how the body works. Our gut, for example, is considered a 'second brain' that contains 100 million neurons. It not only controls our digestion, but strongly influences our emotions and how we think.

We also know that, regardless how many anti-depressants someone might be taking, the brain cannot function properly without adequate levels of B12, D3 and Omegas. And while sugar is obviously an issue with weight and diabetes, we now know that it causes inflammation in the brain, rupturing the synaptic and neurological pathways, ultimately reducing the major neurotransmitters required to function.

**Mind** - A healthy mind is more than affirmations and a gratitude journal. You have to know who you are at your very core. Where did you come from? Who are you, really? How can you strengthen your I AM? These questions may scare some people, but a healthy mind includes knowing who you are on all levels. I wrote extensively about this in my book, *Wild Women Never Get the Blues*.

**Energy** - There are many practices that help us balance the flow of our energy (yoga, tai chi, breath work...), but you must first become aware that you ARE energy and that the people, places and things you open yourself up to is going to affect your energetic flow, the quality of your digestion, sleep and your ability to think positive thoughts and authentically connect with others.



**There are many reasons** why people choose to become an integrative health coach. Identifying your personal motivations will help you not only choose the best program, but will also guide you on how to approach your studies. Here are some common reasons given for becoming a coach:

- **Professional career** in private practice or within an organization
- Enhance your **current professional role** with integrative mental health coaching skills
- Improve your personal **mind-body-spirit health**
- Support your **family and friends** with their mental health

If your primary reason for becoming a coach is for a professional career, you will find some information and stats in the **INDUSTRY** section of this brochure including the types of positions available, employment rates, average salary and a personal interview with a Nickerson Institute graduate who started her own business.

Another thing to consider is how your unique skills — beyond those of a certified health coach — might provide opportunities for employment or supplemental income. Consider this list of complementary skills:



**Excellent writing skills** could be used to create a professional mental health blog, a self-health book, or to become a guest or feature writer for print or online magazines, newspapers or professional mental health publications.



A **passion for public speaking** would allow you opportunities to present mental health workshops in a variety of settings such as schools, companies, community groups, or as private classes.



If you **present well on video**, your public speaking skills could further be used to create online courses or workshops, a video blog, vodcast, or community support programs.



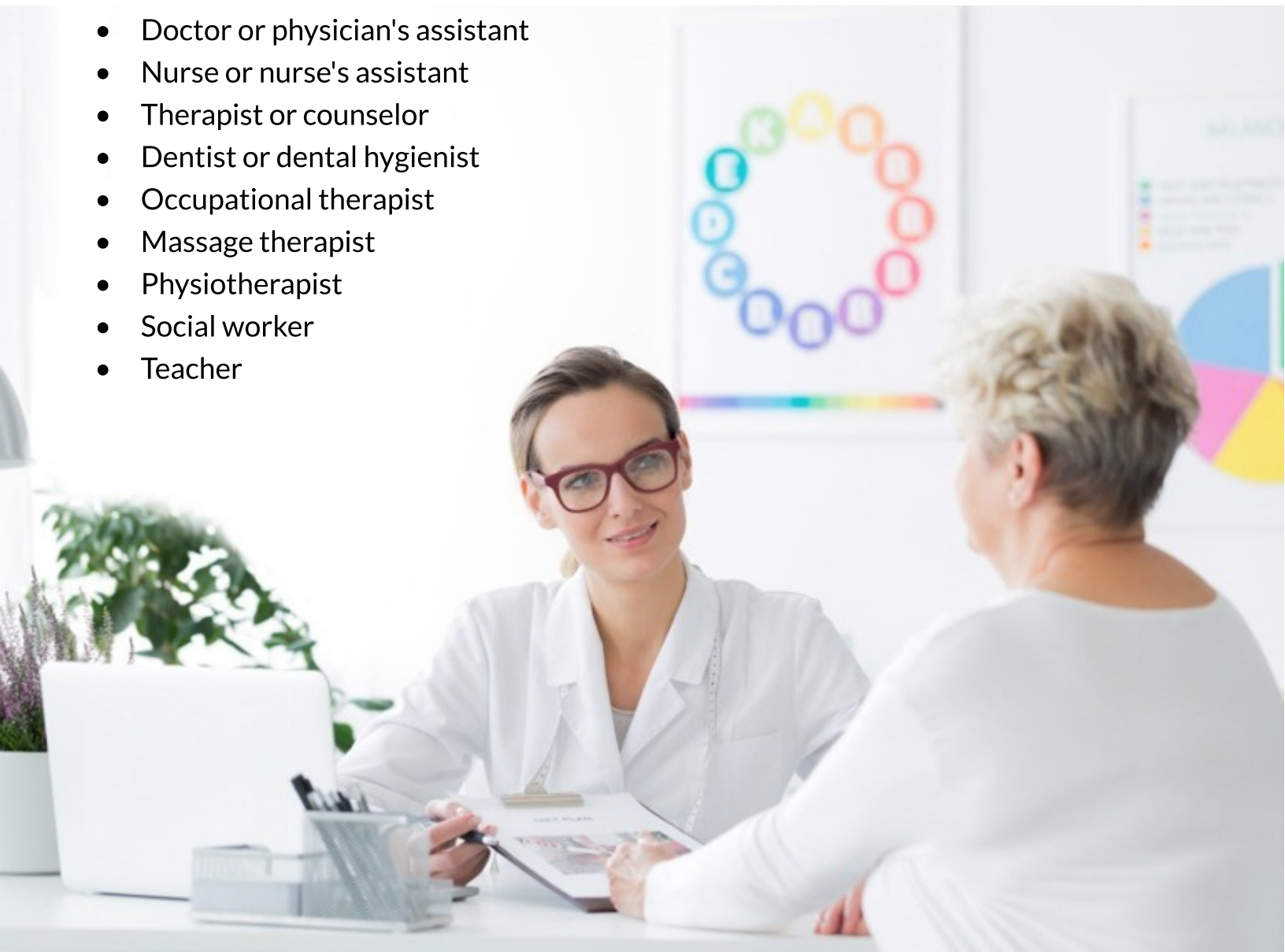
**Business or marketing skills** not only increase the likelihood of operating a successful private coaching practice, but may also be used to teach other health coaches how to do the same.

## Looking to enhance your current professional role?

There are many professions that would benefit from the knowledge and tools gained in an integrative health coach training program. Take the role of a psychologist/therapist, for example, who has been trained to focus specifically on the mental aspects of health; an M.D., likewise, is trained to focus solely on the physical body; a Nutritionist on diet, etc. Integrative health coach training expands the perspective, allowing one to recognize how every aspect of a person contributes to their whole well-being. So while a Nutritionist is certainly not going to start providing psychotherapy, they will — using their integrative coaching skills — recognize that a client's suffering health not only stems from their poor diet, but that their poor diet stems from being in a state of chronic stress. Thus, the integrative health training provides the nutritionist with a wider variety of tools and strategies to help the client manage their stress, as well as their eating habits.

Consider how integrative health coach training might benefit you if you are currently a:

- Doctor or physician's assistant
- Nurse or nurse's assistant
- Therapist or counselor
- Dentist or dental hygienist
- Occupational therapist
- Massage therapist
- Physiotherapist
- Social worker
- Teacher





## What do graduates say about the Nickerson Institute program?



The Nickerson Institute is a well rounded, informative, and fascinating program! I was never bored with the information and truly loved my time exploring integrative health coaching. Dr. Nickerson is always available for questions and provides great bi- weekly meeting content and speakers. You will not regret taking this course.

Erin O'Neil Prater, 2021

Thank you Wendy for this course! I feel much more confident in my ability to help others and do what I truly love — guiding and coaching people. If you are looking to become an Integrative Health Coach, do not hesitate to join this program!

Guillaume Panet, 2020

Dr. Nickerson's IHC Program provided me a framework for moving forward in my practice. I feel confident that by completing this course I have the skills and language to coach clients in professional and ethical manner. Thank You!

Anne Lyle, 2021

The Integrative Health Coach Training Program is the definition of money well spent. It is such an empowering program not just for my career but for my personal life as well. Through this program, I have been able to understand so many things about myself that will help me not only be a better, more self-aware human being, but also a very effective holistic mental health coach.

Ooreoluwa Adejuyigbe, MD, 2021

I think this course is a great investment for those who are looking to provide a paid service, or simply learn how to take better care of themselves or loved ones. While there are many health coaching programs out there, the psychologically informed perspective is what makes this course unique. As a soon-to-be psychologist, I appreciated the psychological perspective of the program and I learned a lot, even within some of the areas I was already familiar with.

Kayla Tucker, 2020




## If your primary reason for becoming a coach is for personal development or to support others in your life...

Many of the graduates of the Nickerson Institute IHC training program say that they went into the program to help others and ended up helping themselves. The reason for this goes beyond simply gaining new information or applying tools and strategies in new ways.

***Becoming a coach for others requires that we know ourselves completely and have faced our shadows, our mistakes, and our humanity with the same compassion we feel called to offer others.***

In this program, you will learn that you can only help your client achieve the level of whole health that you, yourself, are living. In exploring each of the dimensions of integrative health, it is not uncommon then to discover a part of yourself that is not fully healed or has been overlooked on your own path of self-development.

To put it plainly — becoming an integrative health coach is not for wimps. This program asks you to dig deep, stretch yourself, be honest and become acutely aware of who you are and how you came to be that way — and most importantly, that you are committed to self-care and self-love. It is on that journey that you will find the most valuable tools for supporting others.

A smiling woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a dark blue sports bra and teal leggings. She is holding a clear water bottle with a pink cap. She has a large floral tattoo on her left arm and is wearing a gold chain necklace and white earbuds. The background is a bright, out-of-focus outdoor setting.

***As we work on ourselves, we notice how others around us begin to 'heal'.***



My "why" for taking the integrative health coaching program was primarily to be helpful to my family (my husband has Parkinsons dementia and I am his care partner). I wanted to get up-to-date on mental health, physical health and spiritual health and increase my skill set and understanding. Now I realize, it was ultimately most helpful for my own health and self management and well-being.

I now feel empowered with current modalities and fully resourced with my new mental health toolbox. I'm able to use everything I learned in my personal life, in my family, and professionally, as well. I loved every minute of this program and I'm only sad that it's over.

Dr. Wendy Nickerson has created a personal and professional training program — and with her live webinars and meeting the other integrative health coach students, I feel like I'm in a supportive and healthy tribe. I'm now excited to register for the Highly Sensitive Person's program and look forward to using my integrative health coaching skills in every area of my life.

**Suzanne Balcom**

[suzannebal.com](http://suzannebal.com) | Nickerson Institute graduate, 2020



# "I was born to do this."

**While unpacking** from a cross country move, I found some notebooks I'd had from ten years earlier. They were filled with ideas and lists of personal and professional goals and I remember being eager to see how many of them I had achieved and what happened with all my creative ideas.

As I flipped through the pages, I barely recognized myself in them. The personal dreams and professional goals I once had did not hold any meaning or align with the life I now imagined for myself.

I felt especially adverse to the notes from the year when my father died, my husband's life-long career came to an end, and I was thrown into premature perimenopause. The result was a four-year depression that I honestly did not realize I was in until the water was over my head.

When I came out the other side of that depression, I realized I had a choice — I could keep going along as I was, living "on the defense", hitching my wagon to other people's stars, not living my own passions — or I could learn a new way of living. I could get training to use the tools that would "tune up" my body, mind and spirit so that I could live the whole, healthy, fulfilling life I was born on earth to have.

Once I committed to that choice, finding Dr. Nickerson's integrative health coach training program, doing the work, and putting myself out there seemed one of the most natural things I'd ever done.

Now, when I glance through my journals, I can see that I am still changing, still evolving, yet I recognize my true self in those pages and feel an overwhelming peace as I say, "I was born to do this."

**Jeannette Folan**

empathdiary.com | Nickerson Institute graduate, 2017





# IHC TRAINING PROGRAM

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If you've been shopping around for a health coach training program, you've probably noticed that each places a bit more emphasis on one aspect of health. Some are more focused on fitness, or nutrition, or diminishing the effects of certain physical conditions like cardio issues or chronic pain. The Nickerson Institute's coaching program is geared toward **holistic mental health** and how the mind can be trained to aid in the healing of mental, emotional, and physical illnesses.

The program uses a **bio-psycho-social-spiritual model** which considers every aspect of the person's life from their attitudes and beliefs, education, financial position, physical care, lifestyle, identity, and relationships with family, peers, and God. It considers how each aspect influences the others, such as how our thoughts and attitudes can affect physical health — down to the cellular level!

You'll learn how the **relationship between client and coach** (called 'attunement') is imperative to success and how to build that rapport and trust through active listening, motivational interviewing and mindsight techniques.

This program is based on a **client-centered focus** in which the exchange between client and coach is considered sacred. It is an exchange of energy at every level — mind, body, and spirit.

The Nickerson Institute's IHC training program prepares students to consider every aspect of health as it contributes to the health of the whole person — and to understand that most mental health issues, such as anxiety and depression, need to be healed in the energy system, body and spirit, as well.

The traditional approaches and alternative strategies taught in this program allow coaches effective, adaptable tools that promote positive change and empowerment for their clients.



# CORE COMPONENTS

of the Nickerson Institute Integrative Health Coach Training Program



## TEACHING MODULES

Each of the 15 learning modules includes an informational video presentation and valuable resources for each topic such as supplemental videos, worksheets, books, articles, interactive quizzes, and websites.



## ASSIGNMENTS

Writing assignments are required for most modules and generally include self-reports, case study assessments, and your approaches to various client scenarios.



## DISCUSSIONS

Most modules include questions to be answered by students on the IHC online discussion board. These discussions allow for varied perspectives so that students might also learn from each other's ideas and personal experiences.



## LIVE SUPPORT

The self-paced course includes bi-weekly live sessions where you receive support from the instructor and engage with fellow students. A live monthly meeting includes expert presenters on relevant health topics, healing techniques and business development.



## PRACTICE

As you learn the coaching fundamentals, you will be asked to practice your skills with pseudo-clients and to submit some sessions in recorded format. Our unique coaching buddy system offers the chance to be partnered with other IHC participants and/or graduates.



## COACHING TOOLBOX

As the program progresses, you will find tools and strategies that work with your coaching style or for specific situations. Throughout the course, you will continue to build your own toolbox that can serve to support you throughout your career.

Dr. Nickerson's IHC training program is a terrific way for students to learn how to offer a healing space for those looking for mental health assistance and support using a variety of conventional and complementary evidence-based techniques and methods. Health coaches are needed in hospitals, clinics, communities and schools everywhere. Dr. Nickerson's teaching approach is light, thoughtful and inclusive. This program will help you grow personally as well as professionally.

Dr. Pam Purcell BSC, ND, CBP, IHC

# COURSE CONTENT

The 200-hour integrative health coach training program is presented in 15 modules, and develops your skills in these core areas of health challenges and wellness approaches.

## COACHING SKILLS

- The role of a health coach
- Listening skills and motivational interviewing
- Client engagement and attunement
- Ethics, boundaries and guidelines for a healthy client relationship
- Facilitating behavior change
- Developing advocacy skills in your community

## COMMON ISSUES & TRADITIONAL SUPPORT

- Cognitive Behavioral Coaching strategies
- Rational-Emotive Coaching strategies
- Coaching for grief and loss
- Working with issues of the elderly
- The mind-body effects of trauma
- Detecting and preventing suicide
- Understanding teen depression and substance abuse
- Helping someone die peacefully

## BODY BASICS

- The truth about food
- Foods and nutrients for optimal mental health
- Physical activity and cognitive functioning
- Chronic pain and illness: the mind-body connection
- The therapy of sleep

## ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES

- Alternative therapies for depression and anxiety including breath work, sound healing, meditation, yoga and more
- Mindfulness techniques for whole health
- Biofeedback for stress
- Spiritual awakening & shifting to higher consciousness
- Self-compassion, self-care and self-love

The IHCTP is especially useful to holistic nurses who want to have a more integrative approach and independent role in their nursing practice. I was able to apply what I learned from the Integrative Health Coaching Program into my own nursing practice. Wendy's enthusiasm, openness, and ability to think outside the box is phenomenal. I highly recommend this course!

- Sandra Coutts MSN, RN, CIHC



# BENEFITS OF BEING A STUDENT/GRAD

Students and graduates of the IHC training program are invited to collaborate with the Nickerson Institute in a number of professional avenues, offering opportunities to:

- Generate income
- Attract potential new clients
- Expand your online presence
- Get a deeper understanding of the holistic health topic you are passionate about
- Build confidence
- Polish your writing and presentation skills

## Write for our blog



Students and graduates are invited to submit articles for the Nickerson Institute blog. In addition to sharing your knowledge and polishing your writing skills, this is an opportunity to promote your coaching services and increase your online presence. Select articles may also be promoted via the Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn pages.

## Present at a meeting



One of the common ways for new coaches to attract clients and generate business is to give presentations in their (live or online) community. As an IHC graduate, you will have the opportunity to give a 20-minute presentation at either a bi-weekly support meeting or at our monthly professional meeting, allowing you to hone your presentation skills, introduce current mental health topics, demonstrate effective healing techniques, or offer business solutions. This is also an opportunity to reach beyond the Nickerson Institute community, as the recording of your presentation may be used for your own marketing/promotional use.

## Develop an online course



Graduates of the IHC training program are offered the chance to develop and instruct an online course relevant to integrative health. These courses will be promoted to the general public, as well as students in the Nickerson Institute programs.

The unique and valuable aspects of this opportunity — besides gaining the experience and satisfaction of developing an educational program to help others achieve holistic health — are that the course becomes a residual income, and as the developer/instructor, you have a platform to promote your own coaching services to those who enroll.

# TUITION

The Nickerson Institute offers two options for tuition for the Integrative Health Coach Training Program.

## Full One-Time Payment

**\$3,799 US**

Pay in full upon approval of your application using Paypal, credit card, debit card or an e-transfer.

## Installment Payment Plan

**\$1,000 US x 4**

This plan allows for the full tuition to be paid over a 4 month period. Access to the program is given upon receipt of the first payment, with 3 additional installments charged every 30 days.

## Forms of Payment

All certificate programs and courses at the Nickerson Institute may be purchased using Paypal, Visa, Mastercard, American Express or Discover.



“The only person you are destined to become is the person you decide to be.

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

# COMPLEMENTARY PROGRAMS

Upon completion of the Integrative Health Coach Training Program, you may choose to expand your knowledge and toolkit further with these complementary courses.

## Highly Sensitive Person Certification Program for Mental Health Professionals

The HSP trait is a relatively newly identified and researched variant of the central nervous system that allows the person to detect subtleties in their environment, process data at a deeper level, and experience profound emotions within themselves and (mirrored in) others.

While the trait is present in 20% of the population, it accounts for 30-50% of clients seeking therapy (thus, one of the reasons why training is so valuable for mental health professionals).

The most common challenges of HSPs include depression, anxiety and identity issues (often related to spirituality).

As the methods & support for HSPs are different and far more effective than what is appropriate for other clients, this 10-hour certification program offers the research, traditional therapy methods, tools and exercises, supporting handouts, assessments and alternative approaches including energy psychology techniques and spiritual matters relevant to HSPs.

For more information, visit:

[nickersoninstitute.com/hsp-certification-program](http://nickersoninstitute.com/hsp-certification-program)

## Optimum Brain Health: Improve Sleep, Memory, Focus and Cognition

When brain function improves, so does overall mental health. When we learn how the brain works and how stress, diet, sleep and physical exercise impact our cognitive functioning, we can gain control over the quality of our whole health even as we age.

Participants of this program will learn the components of increasing intelligence with evidence-based, best practices for cognitive function at any stage of life. Through an 8-step action plan, they can implement the methods (for themselves & their coaching clients) to improve and sustain cognition and increase the overall quality of their health.

For more information, visit:

[nickersoninstitute.com/optimum-brain-health](http://nickersoninstitute.com/optimum-brain-health)



Discount for IHC graduates



Discount for IHC graduates



10 CE credits





# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## **Do I need a degree to participate in this program?**

No, it is not necessary to have a degree, however some hiring organizations favor those that have a degree in addition to the IHC training. It is more important that you have an interest and passion for mind, body, spirit wellness.

## **I am already a Health Practitioner. How would this program help me?**

This program teaches techniques and strategies related to holistic mental health. This includes mind, body and spirit. Most professionals are usually trained in only one aspect of health (mind or body), however research has repeatedly indicated that an integrative approach produces much more sustainable results.

## **Will I get help with setting up my business, visibility and ongoing support?**

Yes, after completion of the course you will receive 4 recorded sessions on important aspects of setting up your business. This will cover areas of social media, proper forms, brochures, website, and powerpoint presentations, for example. In addition, you will be invited to monthly meetings that include presentations by wellness experts on starting a business, alternative healing techniques, and more; as well as engaging with other IHCs about the many aspects of business and coaching.

You will also gain visibility on the Nickerson Institute website with your personalized one-page Integrative Health Coaching business web page. This professional webpage will be located on the Nickerson Institute of Integrative Health Training website, under "Find an Integrative Health Coach".

## **Could I get hired somewhere as Registered Health Coach instead of working for myself?**

Health coaching is becoming more popular, however it is still in its beginning stages. More urban areas hire health coaches, whereas in rural areas it is better to start your own business.

## **How does the accreditation part work?**

On the following page, you will find detailed information on the accrediting organizations and how they serve the industry and you, as a certified coach.

**This program isn't about teaching you how to solve other people's problems or heal them. What you'll learn is how to help people tap into that part of themselves that already knows how to heal itself.**

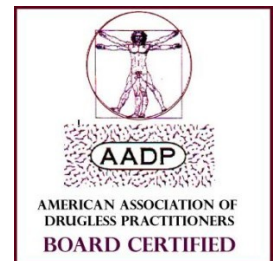
# ACCREDITING ORGANIZATIONS

Upon successful completion of the Integrative Health Coach Training Program, you are considered a CERTIFIED health coach. To become a REGISTERED coach, meaning that you are officially on record with an accrediting association, you will need to complete a membership application, provide the necessary documentation, and pay a membership fee which entitles you to a variety of support from the organization. Here is some information about the accrediting organizations for the Nickerson Institute's Integrative Health Coach Training Program:

## American Association of Drugless Practitioners

Established in 1990, the AADP supports over 21,000 international professional holistic practitioners including doctors, nurses, naturopaths, chiropractors, health coaches and "drugless" professionals.

The AADP offers its members the following benefits:



**Professional Liability Insurance** - a professional liability policy that covers consulting and educating and runs approximately \$138 per year for a \$1 million dollar policy.

**Office Packet** - includes Client Questionnaires, Disclosure forms, Office forms, etc.

**Laboratory Testing Services** (USA and Canada) - submission of non-invasive tissue (hair) mineral analysis (excludes New York and California).

**Referral List** - all members will be automatically added to a list used to refer practitioners to the general public.

**Resource Link** - the member's business website can be added to the AADP Resource Link Page.

**Certificate and ID card** - verifying that you are board certified with the AADP as a health coach.



Initial application fee \$285 US  
Annual renewal fee \$150 US



No continuing education credits are required for AADP membership

For more information, visit:

[aadp.net](http://aadp.net)

## Health Coach Alliance

The Health Coach Alliance™ (HCA) is the largest international professional Health Coach association of its kind. Its members are comprised of registered health coaches from all over the world. This association requires 20 continuing education credit hours per year (starting in the second year of membership).



The HCA offers its members the following benefits:

**Member Designation** - includes an HCA seal (for use on marketing materials) and a registration number.

**Professional Liability Insurance** - a professional liability policy that covers Commercial General Liability (CGL) and Errors and Omissions Insurance (E&O) for approximately \$200 per year for a \$1 million dollar policy.

**Personal Insurance** - members can apply for medical, dental, critical illness, AD&D and life insurance coverage under the HCA/CAIN group policy.

**Form Templates** - includes client intake, disclosure, disclaimer, authorization and consent forms.

**Ethics & Scope of Practice** - up to date videos and resources are provided for members practicing in the U.S. and Canada on the latest laws and ethics related to health coaching.

**Business Tools** - a resource library of third-party service providers ready to help you grow your practice — from web designers to scheduling software and marketing services.

**Perks & Discounts** - offered to members by various wellness companies and CE programs.

**Continuing Education** - to help you reach your 20 required credits per year, members have access to approved, discounted educational programs.



Initial application fee \$298 US  
Annual renewal fee \$300 US



20 continuing education credits are required per year

For more information, visit:

[healthcoachalliance.ca](http://healthcoachalliance.ca)



The current medical and mental health systems are failing to prevent illness and provide adequate support for those suffering from chronic disease and mental health issues. Registered integrative health coaches are now being recognized as one of the solutions to this problem, helping people make critical lifestyle changes to improve their health and well-being.

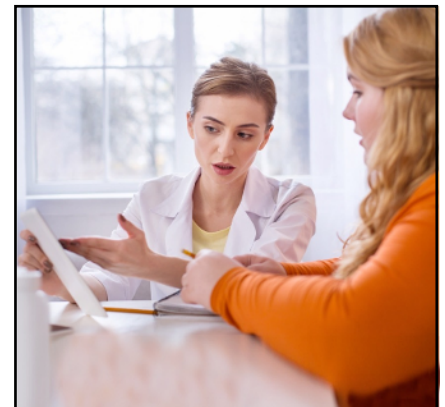
Here are just a few examples of recent statistics and official support for the advancement of health coaches.



Health coaching is ranked as one of the biggest health trends, consistently placing in the top 20 since 2010. (3) According to the United States Department of Labor, the employment of healthcare support occupations in the U.S. is expected to grow 13% by 2024, which is “faster than the average for all occupations.” (4) Health coaching has grown to a \$6 billion market in the United States, and more than 100,000 people are part of the profession. (5)



The Health and Wellness Coach Resolution (H. Res. 552) in the U.S. House of Representatives declares "support (for) the efforts of health and wellness coaches of the United States on their important work to improve the health and wellness of the Nation". The resolution shows how members from both parties in Congress understand and support the research fueling the increase of a holistic approach to wellness with health coaches as the guides. (6)



The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention supports health coaching as a promising strategy for helping patients make behavior modifications that can prevent or manage diabetes and other chronic conditions. (7) And clinical studies employing Duke University Integrative Medicine's model of IHC have demonstrated improvements in measures of diabetes and diabetes risk, weight management, and risk for cardiovascular disease and stroke. (8)

# JOB OPPORTUNITIES & SALARY

While the health coaching profession is still young, and there will undoubtedly be more positions opening up for individuals trained as registered health coaches, this list offers the current opportunities published on recruiting sites in the US and Canada:

**MENTAL HEALTH COACH:** This role provides support, crisis intervention, and referrals to clients who utilize the services of community partner agencies as well as coaching for the staff working with individuals who experience mental health and concurrent disorder related issues. Mental health coaches typically need an undergraduate degree or community college diploma and be certified as a health coach. The current median annual wage for mental health coaches is \$58,000 (May 2020 job posting). (9)

**COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS:** The role is to collect data and discuss health concerns with members of specific populations or communities. Community health workers work in a variety of settings, including hospitals, nonprofit organizations, government, doctors' offices, private businesses, and colleges. They generally work full time. Community health workers typically need to have at least a high school diploma. The median annual wage for community health workers was \$40,360 in May 2019. Overall employment of community health workers is projected to grow 11 percent from 2018 to 2028, much faster than the average for all occupations. Growth will be driven by efforts to improve health outcomes and to reduce healthcare costs by teaching people healthy behaviors and explaining how to use available healthcare services. *\*Note: on the US Bureau of Labor Statistics website that the position of "Health Educator" is similar, but requires more advanced education.* (10)

**PERSONAL SUPPORT WORKER:** While the responsibilities and logistics of this role may vary with each organization, the description is generalized as offering care within senior and independent care residences, shelters or non-profit centers, promoting a healthy and independent life style, observing general physical and emotional well being, and building relationships with community partners to promote health. They are generally employed full time. Some positions may include shift work. The median annual wage for personal support workers is \$32,000 (based on a random sampling of job postings April 2020). This role has been available for many years to non-accredited individuals, but will likely grow into a position with greater qualifications, responsibilities and compensation. (11,12)

# WHAT ABOUT PRIVATE PRACTICE?

While being employed by an organization has the advantage of job security and benefits, starting your own private practice has many benefits too, such as making your own hours, setting your own fees, choosing where you work, and choosing how your role as an integrative health coach can expand to include more of your passions.

One of the questions often asked by those thinking about becoming an integrative health coach is "How difficult is it to start a private practice?" To answer that question, we asked Nickerson Institute graduate, Kim Dechaine, to share her experiences of starting her coaching business "Inner Powered Leaders" in Alberta, Canada; and to offer advice for anyone considering the same professional path.

## What steps were involved in setting up your business?

Within weeks after I graduated, I became a member of the CHA and purchased the insurance they offered. I wasn't required to register my business name in my province, so operated as a sole proprietor. I didn't even open a business banking account or apply for a tax ID number until I had substantial income. And these things you figure out along the way or connect with people who will help guide you. The post-grad sessions offered with the IHC program are a great resource, too. They can guide you on setting fees, the client forms you'll need, and marketing.



## How long did it take you to get clients?

Before taking the IHC program, I was already doing energy healing work. From the time I opened my door and did some advertising, it only took a couple weeks to get clients. I admit it was pretty easy for me, but that's because I set the intention, built on the relationships I had already established, and kept at it.



[innerpoweredleaders.com](http://innerpoweredleaders.com)

## How many clients do you see a week?

Right now, anywhere from 6-10 clients. If I wanted to, I could fill up my schedule with 20 a week, but that would be the maximum for me. It's important to know your limit and to make sure you have time to take care of yourself and nurture your passions. For me, I'm equally passionate about one-on-one coaching as I am about speaking, giving workshops and building my business in other ways, so I keep my client load to two or three a day.



## **What advice would you give for new coaches wanting to build their client base?**

The advantage of being an integrative health coach is that we can provide our services online. Our clients can be anywhere in the world. Even if you only market yourself within your country, the odds are pretty good that you'll build a decent client base.

For me, I wanted to focus on my community, so I started spreading the word and doing some local advertising. Overall, my advice is to be open to every opportunity. It's not that you're going to shove your business card in the hands of everyone you meet. Don't do that! But don't close yourself off to the possibility that your dentist may have a relative who's been looking for a health coach. Or someone in the social media group you contribute to resonates with your message and hires you. If you put out the intention and put yourself out there, clients will start to appear.

## **What do you attribute your success to?**

70% "doing" type of work and 30% divine intervention. But the 70% is based on almost all intuition. For example, an opportunity presented itself to partner with someone on a new business project. It wasn't a "no brainer". I needed time to think about it. But before I even sat down with it, the person kept popping up in my thoughts every day...every day... all the time. So I've come to trust and act upon that inner-knowing. The more you can develop that skill, the easier it will be to make decisions about your business. Don't get me wrong, you still have to do the work, but determining what work to do and how to do it will flow more smoothly if you cultivate your intuition.

**If you want a successful and healthy life and business, the key is self-leadership.**

**Once you can control your thoughts, feelings and actions, you will be an impactful leader and healer in the world.**



## What's your least favorite part of owning your business?

Marketing. But the more I do it, the better I get at it. I still have a lot to learn about the technology end of it and as soon as I think I've got it figured out, something changes and I have to make adjustments. Yet I've also found that the most effective marketing is really about relationships. I approach each event, each encounter with a genuine interest to be of service. People see that and feel it. That's better than any Facebook ad I could run!

## What about the money? Is there potential to make a good living?

Having your own practice/business has unlimited earning potential; from one-on-one clients, to workshops, to speaking, to online courses, to group classes. For me it has taken some time. It doesn't happen necessarily right away, but it can be a very profitable business.

Figuring out how to set your hourly rate could be a matter of looking at other coaches in your area (either your community or specialty) and your experience level. Sometimes the association you register with has helpful guidelines, too.

If one-on-one coaching is where you expect to make the majority of your income, you can play with this formula to see how doable it is to hit your earning target:

**Desired annual income** = \$60,000 divided by

**48 weeks working per year** = \$1,250 per week income

**Target clients per week** = 20 divided by target weekly income = \$62.50 per hour

Likewise, if you know you can charge \$80/hour, the formula reveals that you would need 15-16 clients per week to reach your desired income.

For group workshops, an average rate per person, per hour is \$24. Online courses can range from \$250-\$400 for an 8 hour program (with recordings available). Keynote speeches are generally \$500/hour and a 2-day corporate workshop can earn up to \$6,500.

## Any other advice for new health coaches?

**Start with You!** One of the things you end up learning in the IHC program is that whatever is going on in your life that isn't working — a job, relationship, your health, money — the solution always starts with you. On my own journey with mental illness, I learned that I had to be the priority. Self-care is crucial. It's the mantra we try and instill in our clients and so it's the one we need to live by ourselves.



Kim Dechaine is an Inspirational Speaker, Certified Integrative Health Coach, Mental Health Advocate and Educator.

Learn more about Kim at: [innerpoweredleaders.com](http://innerpoweredleaders.com) or follow her [LinkedIn](#) or [Facebook](#).

# HEALTH APPROACHES & PRACTITIONERS

There can be quite a bit of overlap between the various health approaches and wellness practitioners, but each have distinctive qualities, as well. Here is a general overview of the most common:

**Conventional Medicine** — emphasis is placed on physical well-being, diagnosing illnesses based on physiological symptoms and treating them with pharmaceuticals, outpatient procedures and invasive surgeries. While conventional medicine does not offer any support for prevention, it is effective for emergency and acute care. Careers in this field that involve patient interaction include: physician, registered nurse, licensed practical nurse, medical assistant, nursing assistant, and emergency medical technologist.

**Naturopathic Medicine** — this model uses traditional and natural medicine (botanicals, pharmaceuticals) and alternative therapies (homeopathy, acupuncture) to restore health to the physical body. While the focus is usually on healing a specific ailment, the approach may be holistic in nature, such as modifying diet and lifestyle to alleviate the illness. At this time, the only career in this field working directly with clients is as a Naturopathic Physician.

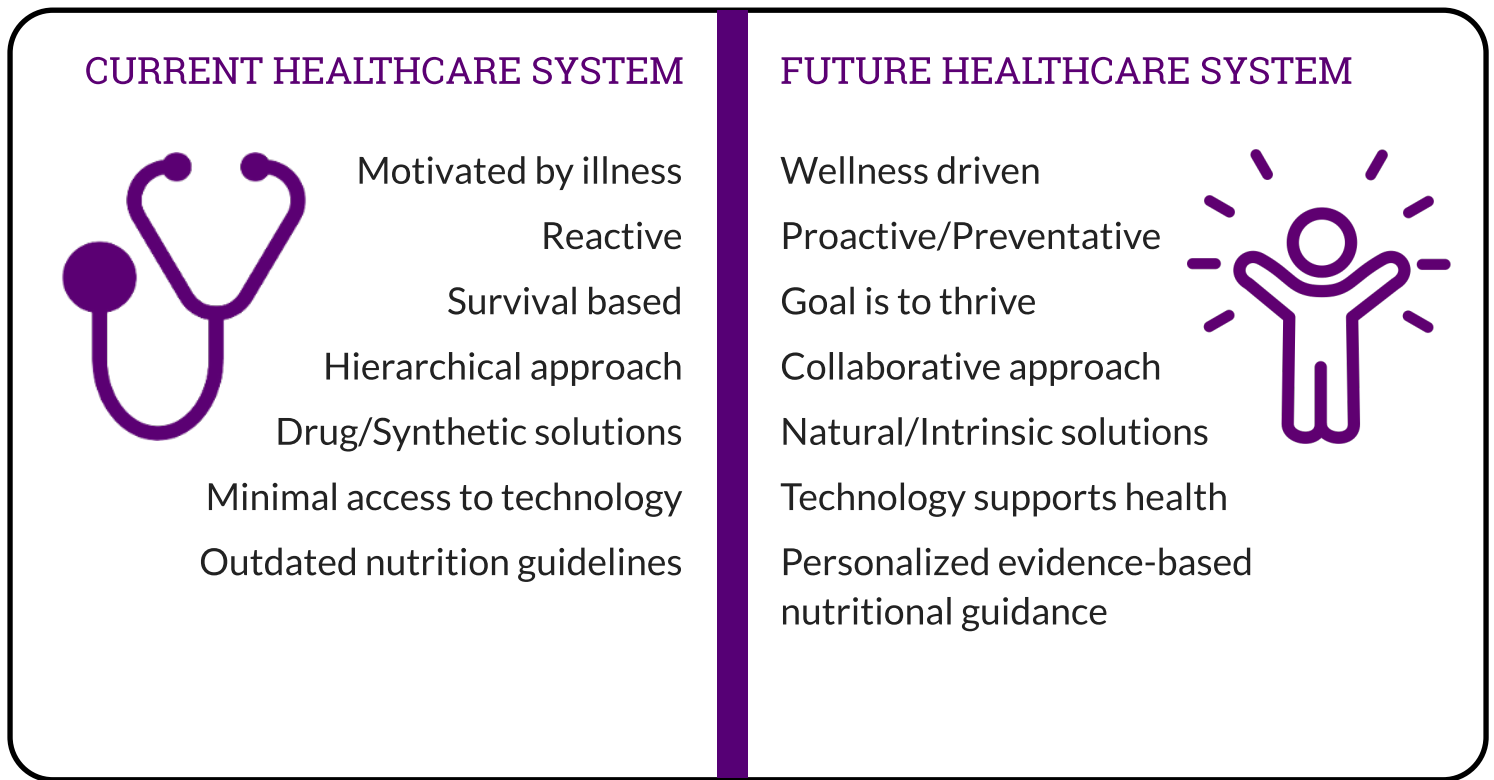
**Holistic Medicine** — considers the interconnectedness of mind, body, spirit and works on bringing balance to the systems, resulting in optimal health. While once considered a unique approach to health, it is now thought to be more of the practitioner's style; therefore, you may experience an M.D., Naturopath, Nutritionist, Psychologist or Massage Therapist who uses a holistic approach to well-being.

**Integrative Medicine** — this model considers the whole person (mind, body, spirit) and is an integration of traditional and alternative modalities (herbs, diet, Chinese medicine, energy medicine). Unlike conventional medicine, the integrative practitioner aims to identify the root cause of an illness by considering what thoughts, feelings, and behaviors may be contributing to it; and to help the client restore or improve their physical well-being by providing self-care practices and tools.

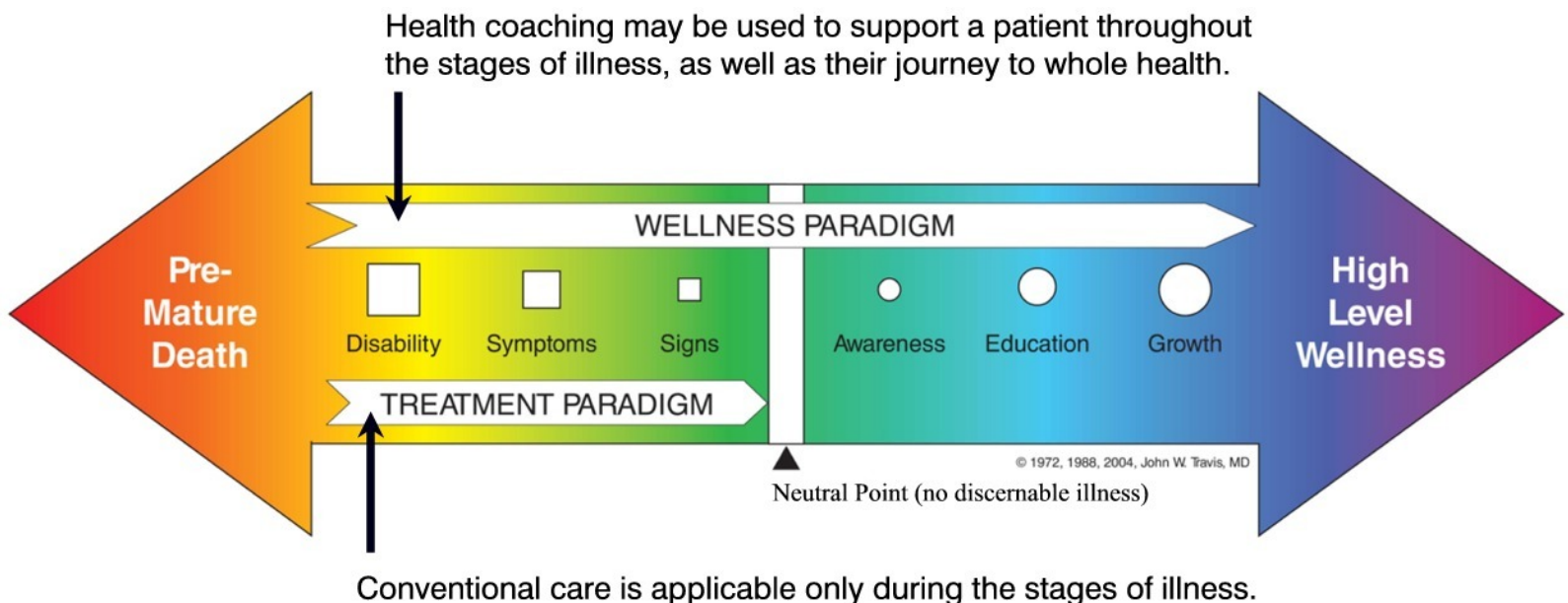
The future of healthcare depends on health coaches.  
The future depends on you.



# EVOLUTION OF HEALTHCARE



The graphic below, known as the illness-wellness continuum was developed in 1974 by Dr. John W. Travis and was intended to demonstrate how the absence of illness was not enough for someone to be called well/healthy. **It also demonstrates how a traditional health practitioner's role is applicable only during the "Treatment Paradigm", whereas a health coach may support someone through their entire "Wellness Paradigm".**



# What are the differences and similarities between Integrative Mental Health Coaching and traditional therapy?

INTEGRATIVE MENTAL HEALTH COACHING	THERAPY
Trained to support clients who, overall, are functioning well in their lives	Trained to diagnose and treat clients with mental health issues that hinder their ability to function
Uses a cooperative, co-creative approach with client resulting in a more peer-to-peer relationship	Directs client from a more clinical model and is generally seen as the expert in the relationship
Considers every aspect of client (mind, body, spirit, energy, emotions) and works with client to discover imbalances or correlations	Usually considers the mental health of the client as independent from body, spirit, energy
Main focus is on wellness and how to evolve	Main focus is on illness and how to cope or heal
Focuses on present and future	Focuses on past and present
Focuses on opportunities and solutions	Focuses on challenges and problems
Considers negative (shadow) aspects of the client as valuable parts of growth	Analyzes negative aspects of the client to determine their origin
Asks “where to go from here?”	Asks “how did you get here?”
Encourages self-work and self-exploration between appointments	Advises to follow only specific recommendations, if any
On-going communication between sessions is acceptable	Communication between sessions is generally only acceptable if a crisis arises
Incorporates the powerful skill of coach-client attunement as a healing element allowing the client a ‘felt’ experience	Mostly focused on solving problems and reprocessing past traumas and present distress. Some usage of coach-client attunement
Boundaries and ethical issues are highly emphasized and practiced	Boundaries and ethical issues are highly emphasized and practiced
Uses evidence-based strategies and techniques as they relate to mental health practices	Uses evidence-based strategies and techniques as they relate to mental health practices
Includes behavioral nutrition as it relates to optimal mental health functioning	May or may not use behavioral nutrition as it relates to optimal mental health functioning
Incorporates expertise on mind-body connections as they relate to healing chronic illnesses and pain	Sometimes incorporates expertise on mind-body connections as they relate to healing chronic illnesses and pain, depending upon the therapist’s training

# SELF-QUIZ

**To discover** whether you have the fundamental qualities of a successful integrative health coach, carefully consider each question, answering honestly about yourself, then tally up the points and find the matching outcomes on page 14. If you prefer to take this quiz online, [click here](#).

## **How would a close friend describe you?**

- 4 - Very good listener
- 3 - An equal opportunity talker/listener
- 2 - Attentive if the topic interests me
- 1 - I usually prefer to do the talking

## **When you are listening to someone...**

- 4 - I imagine myself in their place, experiencing what they are describing
- 3 - I try to focus and remember details of what they said
- 2 - Try to figure out what I should say next
- 1 - My mind tends to wander to things I need to do

## **When I contribute to society, it is usually by... (check only one)**

- 4 - Volunteering at a local charity or fundraising event
- 4 - Donating cash
- 4 - Spiritual/meditation for peace
- 4 - Helping individuals in my community
- 2 - I haven't gotten there yet

## **Which word best describes your level of involvement in the community**

- 4 - Advocate (supports the best interest of one or more individuals)
- 3 - Activist (gets involved with policy and social change)
- 2 - Pedestrian (will get involved if compelled to do so)
- 1 - Passive (does not get involved at any level)

## **When a friend tells me about a painful time they are going through, I usually...**

- 4 - Listen to them carefully and offer my support
- 2 - Tell them about a time that I had an even more difficult situation
- 1 - Tell them that I need to leave now
- 1 - Change the subject



**If I were to see an animal injured by the side of the road, I would most likely...**

- 4 - Stop and get them out of the line of traffic
- 4 - Stop and stay with the animal until animal control arrives
- 3 - Call animal control
- 2 - Keep on driving

**Most of your friends would likely say that**

- 4 - You are a sponge for knowledge and love to learn new things
- 4 - You get excited when you are about to learn something new
- 2 - You need to read more because you spend too much time on your phone
- 1 - You like to stay in your comfort zone and not have to gain new knowledge

**When I have a problem that I cannot seem to easily solve**

- 4 - I love to try new solutions until I solve the problem
- 3 - I go to great lengths to research the problem until I have it resolved
- 2 - I forget about it and hope that it works out on its own
- 2 - I call my best friend to see if she has the solution

**When I am in conversation with a distressed friend that I care about, I tend to...**

- 4 - Lean forward, make eye contact and try to understand how they must be feeling
- 3 - Pay attention to my body language, my voice tone and my intuition
- 2 - Be thinking of how I can respond to help them feel better
- 1 - Change the subject and help them get their mind on something else

**In communicating with a teenager who tells you that his parents are 'stalking' him, you would likely**

- 4 - Lean in, sit with an open stance, listen and try to understand where he is coming from
- 3 - Explain that if his parents stalk him, it is because they love him
- 2 - Tell the teen that you had parents that were smothering also when you were a teen
- 1 - Try to convince him that parents don't stalk their children

**When someone doesn't agree with me, I tend to...**

- 4 - Be fine if they have a different point of view
- 3 - Realize that everyone is entitled to their opinions and beliefs
- 1 - Change my stance such that I agree with them
- 1 - Argue with them and explain all of the reasons why I am right

**In the past, if I have been let go from a job, I would most likely**

- 4 - Know that a better job is on its way to me
- 3 - Get busy and figure out how I can get another one
- 2 - Call my friends and let them know what a horrible workplace and employer I had
- 1 - Write a letter to the organization and tell them why they should hire me back

**If I am really tired or exhausted, but have told a friend I would meet her for dinner...**

- 4 - I would call the friend and explain why I am not able to make it
- 3 - Go for a little while and then excuse myself early
- 2 - Tell her that I am sick and cannot make it
- 1 - Go anyway even though I am exhausted

**If I were working in a busy office and found myself emotionally upset because of my pet that had recently died...**

- 4 - I would likely explain this to my boss and go home and take the next day off also to nurture myself
- 3 - I would likely explain this to my boss and go home
- 2 - Talk to the people in the office and tell them about my pain
- 1 - Make arrangements to go out drinking with some friends

**Most of my friends would likely say that they...**

- 4 - Trust me with their secrets
- 3 - Tell me some of their secrets, but make me swear that I will not repeat them
- 2 - Would tell me some things but not anything they didn't want others to know
- 1 - Definitely not trust me with any secrets

**Sometimes when I want to tell a friend something about someone else...**

- 4 - I would hesitate because I realize the importance of confidentiality and trust
- 3 - I would hesitate because I know I would not want this done to me
- 2 - I would hesitate, realizing that gossiping will bring me down
- 1 - I call them up and tell them all of the details

**Compared to most others, I believe that I am...**

- 4 - More sensitive than most to other peoples' feelings, noises, lights and smells
- 3 - Sometimes sensitive to other peoples' feelings, noises, lights and smells
- 2 - Sensitive to these but don't really care
- 1 - Not very sensitive to other peoples' feelings, noises, lights and smells

**In social situations, I tend to...**

- 4 - Sense from a distance when someone is sad
- 3 - Notice more details in my surroundings than others tend to notice
- 3 - Often get overwhelmed when many people are talking at the same time
- 1 - Mostly only feel what is inside of me

**Most people who know me, would say that..**

- 4 - They trust me and I come across as being truthful and honest
- 3 - Most of the time they feel they can trust me because I am truthful
- 2 - They don't have an opinion one way or another about my being truthful and honest
- 1 - I need to work on being more trustworthy

**I would say that I am honest in conversations...**

- 4 - Because even if speaking the truth is difficult, I know how to say it in a kind way
- 3 - Because I know that honesty pays off
- 2 - Only if I think the other person is honest also
- 1 - Unless the stakes are high

**When I have a goal in mind...**

- 4 - I tend to have great patience in waiting for it to unfold
- 3 - I realize that patience is part of success, and that keeps me from getting frustrated
- 2 - I will take shortcuts to make it happen faster
- 1 - I tend to get frustrated and want it to happen faster

**When someone is telling me a story about something that happened to them...**

- 4 - I usually sit and listen intently as they tell me the story
- 2 - I usually listen with patience unless they are hesitant and stumbling over their words
- 1 - I usually listen with patience unless I don't think the story is true
- 1 - I usually listen with patience unless they are emotional, then I try to change the subject

**“To serve is beautiful, but only if it is done with joy  
and a whole heart and a free mind.**

**- Pearl S. Buck**



## STRONG CANDIDATE

Score: 74 to 88 points

Your responses to this survey indicate that you are a **strong candidate** for becoming an Integrative / Holistic Mental Health Coach. As you probably already know, succeeding in this profession takes a strong desire to help others, good listening skills, healthy boundaries and compassion for self and others.

In addition, you must have a desire for knowledge about health and wellness, and have abilities to problem solve and communicate effectively, even under challenging circumstances.

Having an open attitude for diversity, honesty and harmony, are also required. Exceptional personal self-care, developing trusting relationships, as well as enhanced sensitivity and patience are key to success in this profession.

Many of those who have a successful career as an Integrative Health Coach feel that their skills are innate, that they were born for the role. Your responses on the survey suggest that you most likely feel that way, too. The qualities are already in you, and can be further strengthened through training and guidance.

## LIKELY A GOOD CANDIDATE

Score: 58 to 73 points

Your responses to this survey indicate that you are **most likely a good candidate** for becoming an Integrative / Holistic Mental Health Coach and you possess many of the core qualities for success in this career.

Some of these qualities may require further development. As you review the traits/qualities below, complete a self-assessment and circle the qualities that you would like to improve upon.

- strong desire to help others
- good listening skills
- compassion for self and others
- ability to maintain healthy boundaries
- thirst for knowledge about health/wellness
- abilities to problem solve
- ability to communicate effectively
- open attitude for diversity, honesty and harmony
- exceptional personal self-care
- ability to develop trusting relationships
- enhanced sensitivity
- patience

This is a good place to start the discussion should you decide to call for an interview.

## What's the next step?

If pursuing this profession is something you are truly interested in doing, please contact Dr. Wendy Nickerson for a free phone interview at 1-480-684-4476.

## MIGHT BE A GOOD CANDIDATE

Score: 43 to 57 points

Your responses to this survey indicate that at this time you **might be a good candidate** for becoming an Integrative / Holistic Mental Health Coach. The reason for further consideration is that your responses on the survey suggest that some qualities come more naturally to you than others, and some of the necessary core traits and skills would require further development in order for success in this career.

If you know yourself well, you likely already realize what changes and areas of personal development would need to occur.

Please give this some thought as it will help pave the way for a productive phone interview, should you decide to pursue the program.

## NOT A GOOD MATCH

Score: 26 to 42 points

Your responses to this assessment indicate that at this time, a career as an Integrative / Holistic Mental Health Coach is **not a good match** for you.

Like every profession, it takes a specific personality, skill set and interest to be truly successful. Your traits and skills are, no doubt, going to serve you well in another profession. If you feel you are being called to serve others, know that there are many opportunities outside the coaching field that are still based on integrative / holistic health.



# Are you ready to become an integrative health coach?



To start the Nickerson Institute program, simply fill out the online application form. You'll be notified within 48 hours, and if you would like, a phone call can be scheduled with Dr. Nickerson to further discuss the program and answer any of your questions.

**Apply now**



## Still have questions about the IHC training program?



Dr. Nickerson would be happy to speak with you directly and answer any questions you may have. Or she can put you in touch with previous graduates of the program to get a student's perspective. To arrange an appointment, please submit your information on this contact form and be sure to include a number where you can be reached.

**Request a call**



Dr. Wendy Nickerson  
1-480-684-4476  
training@nickersoninstitute.com



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*of*  
***Integrative Health Training***

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