

JULY 2022 | ISSUE 34

Coaching Perspectives

THE ASSOCIATION FOR COACHING
GLOBAL MAGAZINE



Integrative approaches

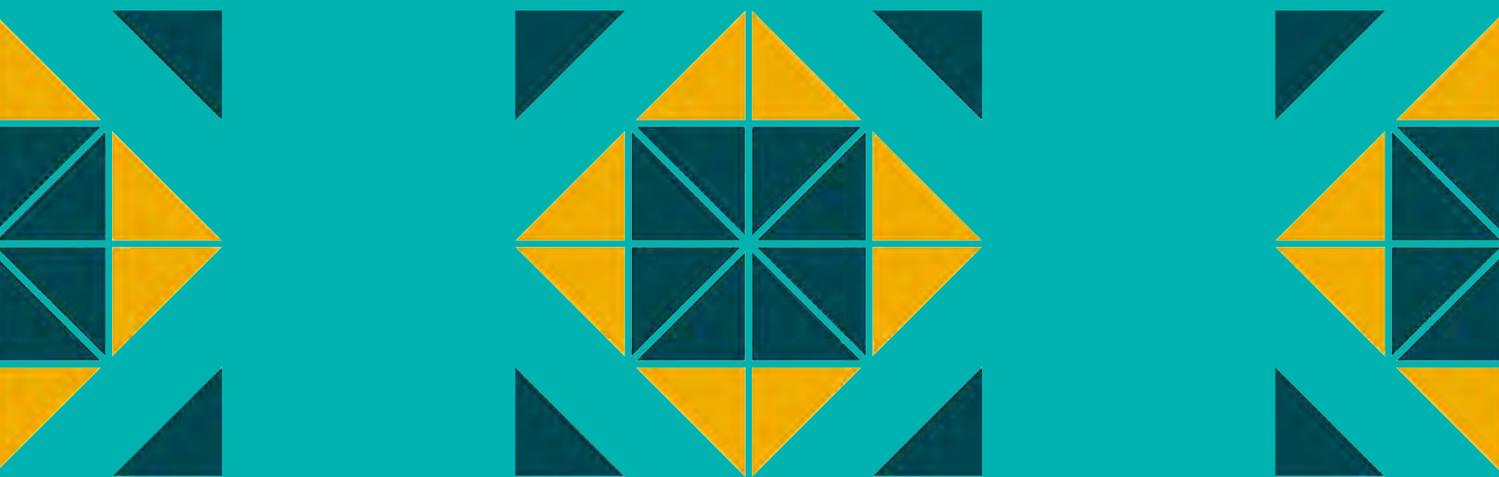
Integrating art, yoga, dance, archetypes, improv, apps and more into your coaching

Leader as coach: balancing performance, wellbeing and inclusivity

How to arrive at your own, unique integrated practice

New columns: the rise of team coaching and positive psychology





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'Choose your corner, pick away at it carefully, intensely and to the best of your ability, and that way you might change the world.'
– Charles Eames

How will you change the world? Through one intentional action at a time. How will you change yourself? Likely, the same way. In this latest issue of *Coaching Perspectives*, we invite you on a journey of self-reflection as you explore the myriad ways that integration enriches our coaching, leadership and the value we add.

In their exploratory Deep Dive, Paul King and Rachel Harrison invite you to consider your preferred approach to integration, and how – through embodying – we can ensure the optimum conditions for integration. Their thought-provoking and philosophical piece considers embodiment and archetypes as just two small parts of a kaleidoscope of options available to us for furthering our growth. Delightfully, they close with an invitation to ‘go play with the universe...’

We can integrate decades of neuroscientific research into our work with clients, the better to inform our ability to create safe spaces for them to do their best thinking. Through raising our awareness of these scientific breakthroughs – such as polyvagal theory, outlined in Kerry Cullen’s overview – we may apply this knowledge to how we ensure our own sense of safety and wellbeing in our practice and our reflection.

Knowledge that we apply in coaching sessions with our clients can of course be equally crucial in our own self-reflection and development. If you are working with clients’ mindsets and paradigms, with clients seeking transformational shifts in their lives, ask what mindsets and paradigms you are carrying with you in your coaching. If your clients are being held back, governed by these rules, which rules are limiting your own practice? Clare Norman invites us to integrate video review into our reflective practice – working with supervisors to discover and address our own blind spots – while Michelle Lucas and Liz Ford offer their own unique integration journeys through supervision.

While editing this edition it struck me that the process of integration (if process is even the right word) is never finished. It is a constant, continuous development of self and of practice; a continual reinvention of our ‘coaching way of being’, adding the useful, tweaking the outdated, removing the needless. It is growth through mindful assimilation and moulding. I am on my own voyage of discovery in this space, as I’m sure you are too. It is a voyage that will end only when we do.

Of course, we all have a choice as to what we’d like to integrate and how we’d like to do it, and this theme runs throughout the contributions to this edition. You as coaches know your values, your passions, your interests, your skillset, your talents. You know your clients and what will be helpful to them, their systems and the ecology. And you know that your role is to offer the whole of your being in service of your clients. Your integrated whole is complex, unique and so much greater than the sum of its parts. So integrate whatever you believe will be of benefit, authentically and with intent.

Warm wishes,

James Bridgeman

Co-editor

CONTENTS

JULY 2022 | ISSUE 34

COACHING LEADERSHIP

- Integrating high performance, wellbeing and inclusivity** 6
Sarah David and Lizzie Bentley Bowers
- Racial justice, equity and belonging in coaching: a report** 9
Charmaine Roche and Jonathan Passmore
- The power and possibilities of an integrated approach to executive coaching** 10
Sripriyaa Venkataraman
- Coaching and art: a winning combination** 14
Stefan Powell

COACHING IMPACT

- The elephant and the conductor** 18
Paul Heardman
- Group coaching: shifting from the individual to the collective** 22
Glain Roberts-McCabe

DEEP DIVE

- Integrating integration: go play with the universe** 24
Paul King and Rachel Harrison

COACHING IN CONTEXT

- Tequila slammer or G&T: how do you like your integration?** 30
Yannick Jacob
- Unlearning to coach** 34
Clare Norman

EMERGING TRENDS

- Exploring polyvagal theory** 36
Kerry Cullen
- The rise of teams at work** 40
Dr Declan Woods

THE WORKSHOP

- Integrating apps into your coaching** 42
Bernice Fabi
- The Alchemy of Coaching** 44
Ian Saunders, Paul Hedley and Ray Charlton
- Improv: thinking on your feet** 46
Julie Flower

COLUMNS

- The three C's of coaching** 48
Marie Faire
- How transformational coaches use integrative approaches** 50
Keith Merron
- Positive psychology coaching** 52
Christian van Nieuwerburgh and Robert Biswas-Diener

COACHING EXCELLENCE

- Supervision of supervision: research insights** 54
Lise Lewis et al
- Is supervision a safe space to explore integrative practice?** 57
Michelle Lucas and Liz Ford

REVIEWS

- Podcast reviews** 58
- Coaching Women to Lead** 60
- Coaching International Teams** 61
- Third Wave Cognitive Behavioural Coaching** 62

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THE LEADER AS COACH: INTEGRATING HIGH PERFORMANCE, WELLBEING AND INCLUSIVITY

Sarah David and Lizzie Bentley Bowers invite leader-coaches to consider what compassionate, brave steps they can take to help themselves and their teams navigate insecure post-pandemic times.

Leader-coaches are on the front line in the move from a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) world to a brittle, anxious, nonlinear and insecure one (BANI). We say 'front line' because leadership academics are turning to trauma and emergency crisis literature to draw parallels. As executive coaches of senior leaders, we have seen a significant shift in how leaders are expected to respond to this ongoing turbulence, including how they enhance and leverage their skills as leaders who coach their teams.

The question our leader-coach clients often want to explore is how the antidotes to a BANI world – resilience, empathy, mindfulness, flexibility and intuition – sit alongside high performance and profit. It feels like a 2022 'having it all' conundrum, especially given the battle to attract great talent and the shifts organisations must make as they recreate office environments.

This article offers leader-coaches three approaches to embrace as you straddle the demands of the markets, your organisations and your teams – as well as your own ideals and values.

We invite you to pause for a few minutes to reflect on the questions in each section, and notice what is going well and what might be different for you.

COMPASSION

Leading yourself: we notice that you can be intensely demanding of yourself, castigating yourself for an inability to respond to everything coming at you when objectively it would be impossible to do so.

To be more compassionate to yourself often means clarifying your priorities: in a world in which you cannot do everything, what matters to you most, today, this month, this year, this lifetime? What do you notice about the subtle or major differences between these different timeframes?

When you compassionately and objectively map out the complexity and number of challenges you encounter daily against what is actually possible with the time and resources you have, you create perspective. This common humanity creates self-compassion, which in turn creates clarity. By demonstrating a clarity of priorities, you are likely to model a wonderful imperfection of not trying to do everything. In doing so, you are likely to be even more empathetic to the challenges in your teams and increase both your and their resilience to BANI challenges.

Leading others: taking the time to widen perspective leads to the generation of more options and to more empathetic approaches to tackling problems. It also develops your ability to default to compassionate, rather than judgemental, thinking.

Building these skills in your teams generates the expansive thinking that is vital to fostering inclusive teams where respect, empathy and compassion create belonging. You could courageously widen your team's perspective by leading them to share where judgements of themselves or others has been problematic. From a place of courageous honesty, you can offer an opportunity to be compassionate, to step back from judgement and be curious, lifting their metaphorical gaze to notice:

- What else do I now see and hear and feel from this wider perspective?

- What was I missing?
- What assumptions was I making?
- What else is possible?

BRAVERY

With yourself: where are you choosing to be brave? We have observed an unsurprising but significant rise in our leader-coach clients wrestling with boundaries during the past two years. For example, the smartphone and its role as a boundary breaker, interfering with life and sleep. We have had numerous fruitful coaching conversations with leader-coaches about boundary setting. The wry smiles and sheepish confessions about phone use underplay just how challenging it can be to create a different approach when instant responses have become a cultural norm.

We invite you to consider what the smallest courageous thing you might be able to do to change your boundaries would be? What boundary is most badly affecting your wellbeing, whether its with technology, people or culture? What other small, bold step might you take today, in service of yourself and ultimately in service of others? We have seen that leader peer groups can be valuable places to explore this issue. You might also consider how brave you are being with yourself in your actions around inclusivity and belonging. What would be the smallest, brave step you are not yet taking around this? We encourage you to think big, start small and start now.

With your teams: this is an opportunity to harness the power of storytelling. Stories strengthen connection, foster emotions, increase a sense of meaning and purpose, and will bring people with you. Leading your team to tell their stories – of challenge, of achievement and of overcoming – builds connection and trust, and reminds teams of their resilience and strengths. You could invite team members to bring an object, image or piece of music – something that represents the teller of the story as they tell it. This easy-to-implement adaptation of 'show and tell' has a disproportionately powerful effect on connecting teller and listener.

Leader-coaches are using storytelling in teams as a way of building safe environments where members haven't felt included, like they belong or confident in what they bring and how they are seen. You can begin a meeting this way or – and this may be where the bravery of doing things differently comes in – dedicate whole meetings or away-days to it. We have seen a team transform not only their relationships with each other, but their connection to how far they have come and beliefs about what they now want to achieve. And you can remind your team that stories don't have to be Netflix-level dramatic to be valid, powerful or important.

Leading your team to tell their stories – of challenge, of achievement and of overcoming – builds connection and trust

ACTION

With yourself: many of the coaching conversations with our clients centre on a leader's ability to create space to think and reflect. Life is a result of daily actions, yet managing your sense of wellbeing and control when your environments are volatile can be a challenge. We have noticed that clients under pressure have landed on exploring their morning routines as a first step. Developing a clear and consistent path for the first couple of hours of the day and being intentional has a compound effect on the rest of the day.

What is one thing that you can be consistent about for this next week that would have a disproportionately positive effect on your sense of happiness? If you have a big, bold, ideal vision of what your daily actions could be, what is the smallest version that you could start now? How can you develop habits around actions that are intentional and in service of your overall aims, and less a collection of responses to others' needs? Who or what do you need to support you in this? What one thing might you start saying no to?

With your teams: how many times have you been part of such a rich conversation in a meeting that you took it right to the very last moment, or even ran over time? Or perhaps agenda items have borne little reality to the time available in the meeting?

Team members that are more willing to be brave with each other will take joint responsibility for closing meetings and conversations with clear actions, and clear owners of those actions. What will I/we/you do next? And who is responsible?

Agreement and accountability can be a useful motivator when there is a need to translate awareness, empathy and positive intent to something that actively and positively leads to a more inclusive lived experience for all.

In addition, leaders and teams that insist on making time for asking 'so what?' and 'what next?' make their meetings matter. They report greater efficiency, clarity and progress and less repetition and revisiting, which has an impact on efficiency and wellbeing. Through action, they feel more of a sense of control in the face of BANI challenges. We invite you to consider your current meetings and to take an action in relation to before, during or after the meeting that you know will transform how it feels for yourself and the team. This could even be abandoning the meeting.

MAKING PRIORITIES

The oxygen mask analogy is frequently invoked, but we notice it is still the case that too few leader-coaches prioritise attending to themselves in this demanding environment. We have seen that some of this is cultural and some of this is personal. Our encouragement is that we have seen that those who attend to their own wellbeing see an increase in team wellbeing, and that this also increases capacity for empathy, compassion and inclusion.

We offer these questions and prompts for reflection. It takes bravery to be compassionate and it demands change from most of us, but these three manageable steps can create a stronger oxygen flow for all.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Lizzie Bentley Bowers is an accredited coach working with senior leaders and teams who understand the far-reaching impact they have on both organisational outcomes and individual wellbeing, and who want to create and sustain environments in which they, their colleagues and their organisations thrive. She is skilled at supporting and challenging teams to understand and leverage their strengths, and to uncover what is getting in their way in order to increase wellbeing, trust and performance.

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Sarah David focuses on creating positive direction with leaders who want to make a difference. She partners with clients to clarify strategy, accelerate leadership impact and nurture positive culture. Having worked at executive and non-executive level in global and multi-site businesses, she is experienced in embracing complexity and working with leadership teams to find simple, impactful solutions. Sarah is a qualified lawyer with a strategy MBA, and is a master's-level coach with research focused on the role of leaders' mental fitness.

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RACIAL JUSTICE, EQUITY AND BELONGING IN COACHING: A REPORT

In 2021 **Charmaine Roche** and **Jonathan Passmore** produced a report on racial justice, equity and belonging in coaching with Henley Centre for Coaching. The below is a summary of their findings.

The research reveals a 'colourblind' attitude masking systemic racism as it is reflected across the coaching ecosystem. Drawing on data collected from BIPOC coaches, it presents a case for a move towards an anti-racist approach. Readers are invited to reflect on the work we each need to do to create the attitudes, policies, practices and structures that will help us all move forward on the path towards racial justice and equity.

The recommendations are highlighted below, and we invite you to read the full report at bit.ly/3bMfaaC.

The authors would like to hear about the impact the report has on you and, most importantly, the actions you have taken as a result. Please email your responses to co-editor Clare Manning at clare@associationforcoaching.com.

THE GLOBAL COACHING COMMUNITY

1. Coaching organisations commit to developing their own action plan to implement a DE&I approach, which reflects a commitment to diversity, social justice, equity and inclusion, and publish annual progress reports.

EDUCATION PROVIDERS COMMIT TO:

2. Creating mentoring schemes within their programmes for all students.
3. Developing recruitment plans to recruit BIPOC staff and students in a proportion approximately equal to that of the cities, regions or countries from which they recruit.
4. Reviewing course materials to include greater diversity of ideas and include training on diversity, social justice, equity and inclusion.
5. Providing bursaries or low-cost courses for socially disadvantaged groups.

PROFESSIONAL BODIES COMMIT TO:

6. Collecting data on the diversity of their membership, including race, and monitor this over time, taking action to create an inclusive and balanced membership reflecting the population of the cities, regions or countries that they cover.
7. Working with all partners, training providers and members to commit to diversity, social justice, anti-racism and equity.

8. Adopting a leadership role in the coaching industry to champion diversity, social justice, equity and inclusion at both a global and local level, reflecting this in conferences, events programmes and all materials from websites to accreditation and competency frameworks.
9. Collaborating towards a recognition of each other's coach and supervision training and accreditation, setting up approved prior learning schemes.

COACH SERVICE PROVIDERS COMMIT TO:

10. Providing training for their associates and employees on diversity and inclusion, with a specific reference to race.
11. Seeking to employ BIPOC associates and employees in a proportion approximately equal to that of the cities, regions or countries in which they are based.

COACHES, MENTORS AND SUPERVISORS COMMIT TO:

12. Seeking to broaden and deepen their understanding of diversity, social justice, equity and inclusion as part of their personal development.
13. Foster sensitivity to issues of diversity, social justice, equity and inclusion and be willing and able to both support and challenge clients to support the development of spaces – at work, at home and in leisure – where all are included.

INDUSTRY LEADERS

14. Leaders, from professional bodies to coach education programmes and coaching service providers, commit to seeking out BIPOC mentors as part of their commitment to the work they need to undertake at a personal level, and to enable them to do the work needed across the coaching system.

EVERYONE

15. We commit to creating a culture of accountability for our intentions: individuals, organisations and professional bodies will support each organisation in developing its own measurable targets and plan of action to fulfil existing or new diversity, racial justice, equity and inclusion vision statements.

THE POWER AND POSSIBILITIES OF AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO EXECUTIVE COACHING

Sripriyaa Venkataraman explores introducing yoga, artefacts, food and more into the executive coaching landscape to expand the horizons of leaders and create lasting change.

My association with executive coaching began in 2012 when I became an ICF-certified coach. As an executive coach, I was filled with a childlike excitement around the magical possibilities of coaching to enable change and transformation. I began my coaching journey as a co-founder and executive coach of Global Coaching Lab.

It was a rich learning experience in the first year, moving from a mere awareness of the coaching process to taking on the responsibility of helping leaders and managers discover solutions to their biggest challenges and dilemmas. Using business models and leveraging leadership frameworks helped me understand the true power of insights in coaching conversations.

While all this was exciting, I wanted to explore further. I believed in the deeper possibilities and potential of coaching. There was one question that confronted me time and again: how can I help leaders and managers connect with their emotions? Then, following on from that: how can leaders display greater emotional intelligence when they barely give themselves permission to explore the possibilities of positive emotions to transform their leadership?

The saying 'when the student is ready, the teacher arrives' is a powerful reminder of the serendipitous nature of life. An inner quest to better connect the dots, from my coaching to my coachees' transformation, led me to meet Philippe Rosinski in Shanghai in early 2014.

Although I was there for a three-day workshop to become certified in Philippe's cultural orientations framework, I was magnetically drawn towards his book *Global Coaching*.

Global Coaching approached leadership and coaching from an integrated and interconnected perspective. The approach blended Eastern principles with Western practices beautifully, providing an opportunity to be both inclusive and incisive in approaching leadership development. This was a key inflection point in my personal development as a coach and a holistic enabler, for sustainable growth and development, of both leaders and their business results.

My appreciation for *Global Coaching* resulted in our joint design of a workshop, *Global Leadership and Coaching*, with an integrated approach to leadership development and coaching. The workshop gave us the opportunity to explore the connections between neuroscience and the body, and discover the possibilities of the confluence of psychology, culture, art, music, dance and theatre to transform mindsets and behaviours in leaders. It also allowed us to design and present new narratives for leaders, helping them to connect the dots between their current performance, future potential and life purpose.

POWER AND POSSIBILITIES OF CONNECTING THE BODY WITH NEUROSCIENCE

Introducing a holistic, Eastern practice of yoga and exploring the possibilities of connecting strength, endurance, flexibility, balance and breathing to leadership and coaching was indeed liberating – and very illuminating for leaders.

As an executive coach, I could now help my coachees connect the dots across their body, mind and hormones in order to amplify their leadership impact.

Exploring the Surya Namaskar (Sun Salutations) yoga practice, a leader said: 'The strength in this sequence is making me understand executive endurance. As leaders we must work for extended hours and building strength at a physical level is giving me the mental strength and tenacity to give my best during these uncertain times.'

Exploring balancing postures on the yoga mat, another leader said: 'Oh, I am unable to hold the tree posture (Vrikshasana) and I wobbled; this tells me that nobody is perfect. I can now see how I can accept people the way they are. This is indeed a new way to look at the possibilities for my leadership off the mat.'

Exploring breathing exercises, a further leader reflected: 'By exploring breathing techniques, I can see myself using fewer fillers and my voice comes across stronger. The more I practise diaphragmatic breathing, the more I can see myself speaking more deliberately and with greater conviction.'

Over the last eight years, I have seen how leaders have benefitted immensely from the physical perspective in my coaching and leadership interventions.

When coaching integrates the appreciation of alternative approaches, the path to insights and change is accelerated

POWER AND POSSIBILITIES THROUGH USING ARTEFACTS

As a coach, understanding your coachee deeply helps you tailor your coaching approach to one that centres on their unique challenges and aspirations. Just like an iceberg has its visible and under-the-surface elements, helping coachees address gaps at both the visible and invisible levels becomes crucial for their transformation.

Understanding individuals through the artefacts that define their identity and purpose provides a wonderful opportunity for the coach to appreciate the lens through which the coachee perceives their journey ahead.

'The kitchen spice box defines my personality,' said a leader during our workshop. 'I believe in diversity at all levels. Therefore, the spice box showcases creativity to enhance collective results for my team and myself.' As a coach this provided me with insights to query the leader about their time and priority management during the peer coaching session. In their pursuit of creativity and variety, the leader lacked the time for deep work. And this was a moment of insight!

When coaching integrates the appreciation of alternative approaches, the path to insights and change is accelerated.

POWER AND POSSIBILITIES OF PSYCHOLOGY

Coaching involves change across multiple levels of an individual – habits, behaviours, mindsets. As coaches, we are the enablers of

change. For example, we often ask our coachees how they propose to do something differently. Intellectually they come up with a few ideas, but not much change happens in the way they execute things. As responsible coaches it is important for us to draw perspectives from psychology, to help our coachees understand their conscious and unconscious minds and their behaviors better.

'Most of my team members are not able to think strategically,' said a leader repeatedly during our leadership workshop. Having had the opportunity to coach the leader later, I asked: 'Have you recently, or in the past, received any feedback from critical stakeholders about not being strategic?' The leader raised his eyebrows and agreed: 'How did you know to ask me this question?'

Having gained insights from psychology about ego defence mechanisms, I was able to quickly catch the leader using projection as a defence mechanism, and raised awareness of how the leader was viewing his team. This simple application of psychology helped the leader to change his mindset and improve his relationships with his team members. It was a powerful illustration of how applying psychology to coaching has the potential to create deep transformation.

POWER AND POSSIBILITIES THROUGH ART AND FOOD

Coaching that integrates all the possibilities of the brain can create a lasting impression in the minds of coachees.

Taking part in a collage-building exercise, a senior leader said: 'The simple act of reframing this activity from inside-out to outside-in, from us choosing the pictures to the pictures choosing us, has made this piece of art memorable and a source of inspiration and meaning for me every day.'

Another leader said: 'Until today, I only viewed art as a canvas and never thought about food as art. The food art meditation I was exposed to in this leadership and coaching workshop has opened my eyes to enjoying the rainbow of colours through food, and food certainly tastes better when I allow undivided time for it.'

During the Covid pandemic I had the opportunity to reconnect and coach this leader, and was happy to see him tell me: 'Even today, I ensure that my team members have enough time to enjoy their lunch and have set some team norms for this break time. It seems meaningless to just keep running from one meeting to the next. This time is sacred, and it will nourish our mind and body better.'

As coaches, it gives immense satisfaction to enable change at a systemic level. And it also shows how an integrated approach that draws inspiration from creativity can work on human beings at deep levels.

POWER AND POSSIBILITIES THROUGH MUSIC, DANCE AND THEATRE

As a classical Indian dancer, I have always been fascinated by the potent combination of music, dance and theatre to create experiences for audiences.

Until such time as I learnt to apply this to coaching, I believed I had not arrived as a transformative leadership coach.

As a coach, you may have experienced moments when you are stuck, and are not sure about which coaching tool will work best at that moment. In my experience, I always rely on the power and potential of the 'evergreen' archetypes.

Archetypes are personalities with possibilities that exist within all of us, and are seldom brought to the forefront consciously. As coaches, by taking inspiration from music, dance, voice and theatre we can help our coachees tap into emotions and understand their impact on their leadership.

A leader with tears in his eyes said: 'While I was practising the caregiver archetype through this lovely song, I felt sad that I have neglected the formative years of my daughter. I was so busy building the business that I now feel what I have missed. I am not going to do that ever again going forward.'

As a coach I could see the power of a simple tap into emotions and how it can create lasting change.

Through this article, I would like to showcase my gratitude to the integrated and interconnected approaches to coaching presented to me by Philippe Rosinski and his book *Global Coaching*, which is now available as a Global Coaching Masterclass.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Sripriya Venkataraman is the founder and COO of Global Coaching Lab. She is based out of Singapore and is an ICF-certified coach focusing on executive and cross-cultural diversity coaching. She leverages her background in Indian classical dance and theatre to help leaders tap into the power of archetypes to develop emotional, cultural and creative intelligences. She believes that people must tap into their self-belief, which led her to launch a portal for inspiration called www.instinct2inspiration.org in 2022.



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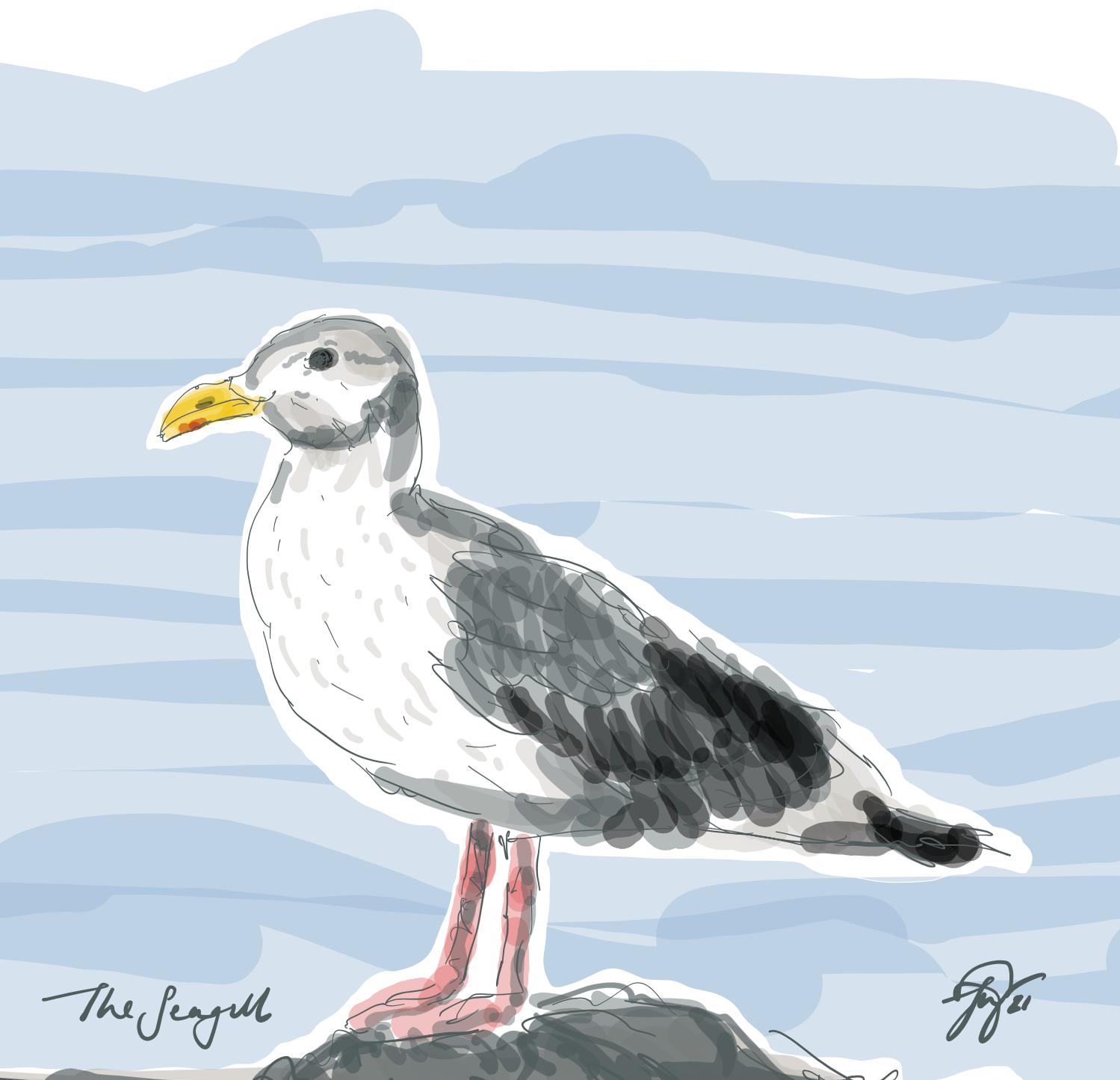


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COACHING AND ART: A WINNING COMBINATION

Stefan Powell has found creativity to be a trusted companion through life's twists and turns, supporting coaches and coachees to reimagine a different future.

Hello, I'm Stefan: a commissioned artist, barista trainer, coffee house owner and an executive coach with a successful coaching practice – The Little Boat IOW – based on the Isle of Wight in the UK.

For weeks on end during the summer I am fortunate to be able to swim in the sea, cook our evening meals from scratch on a barbecue on the beach with my wife, Becky, and to home-school my son and daughter, as well as work with some of the most amazing coaching clients you could ask for.

From the outside it sounds idyllic, and in many ways it is. I adore the sea, I love the Isle of Wight and I have wanted to coach for as long as I can remember. But six years ago I'd turned my back on coaching and the corporate world, at the very depths of despair.

This piece is written to tell you a little about how art brought me back to coaching, how it informs my practice and how it will become an even greater part of it in the future. Let's go backwards in order to go forwards.

It's June 2017 and I'm sat on a gravestone in the grounds of St Paul's Cathedral in London, a broken individual, calling my wife to tell her that I've contemplated ending it all.

I'd been working as a senior leader for a major bank (who were brilliant), but I'd placed too high an expectation upon myself and, alongside burnout, the implications were coming home to roost.

A year earlier I'd decided, after 15 years of coaching senior leaders, that I wanted to test myself by taking up a senior leadership position. It felt like an ideal way to 'sharpen my leadership axe', such that I would become even more useful to a client base in the future.

As part of the change, my family would move to the Isle of Wight and I would work during the week in London, enabling our children to grow up by the sea and my wife and I to enjoy beach walks and summer sun when I wasn't working.

FAST FORWARD...

Having handed in my notice, I received some emergency counselling as well as rest. Six months later, Becky and I were opening what is now regarded as one of the best coffee houses in the UK – The Freshwater Coffee House.

Being a barista full-time for the first year and a half, and managing the team on a daily basis, Becky created the menus and worked with me to develop our business strategy. The coffee house was winning awards and plaudits galore – but I couldn't help feeling a nagging doubt that I was missing something: a greater sense of purpose.

As time went on, I started to realise that I missed working with leaders and their teams, but my breakdown had left me shattered and low on confidence. Underneath it all I felt that my experience meant that I had something more to offer.

A SKETCH TO BEGIN IT ALL...

I mulled over what I could do to help the wider world for weeks. Then, one day, sat with a piece of paper, I started to draw: first a boat and then the words 'even a little boat with a big heart can cross a vast ocean'. The act of writing those words meant that the world

made sense, and I realised that I was the little boat with a big heart and that I could make a difference in a vast sea – all I needed to think of was where and how.

Tentatively I placed the doodle onto Twitter. It was so well-received that each week I started to create and share a new lesson the little boat would learn.

The comments, shares and requests to buy copies of my prints came in thick and fast and then, out of the blue, came a request for coaching: 'I love your posts Stefan and I think you mentioned that you used to coach – would you consider coaching me?'

Excited but scared, I took a deep breath, grabbed a piece of paper and drew a cloud with a boat bobbing on the waves beneath it. In the middle of the cloud I wrote the words 'if I were to coach again; what would I need?'

Having written down all the things I needed to take account of, a week later I was coaching again: a senior leader, with a massive remit. I breathed, did what I felt was right and reminded myself that I could do it. At the end of the session I asked how they found it. 'Amazing,' came the response. 'When can we have our next session?'

THE PRESENT: ART IN MY SESSIONS

Just over 18 months on, I've been blessed to coach many coachees from many sectors – all with the common goal of making a difference in the wider world.

During my coaching I've always drawn sketches that mirror the conversation, illustrate key points or represent the journey my clients will go on. Since returning to coaching, I've found even more of my clients have requested copies of my notes and drawings (for a small additional fee). While they might be the only one who understands them, they report that the visual cues have been incredibly beneficial.

In addition to drawing during the sessions, I've created pieces of art that visually represent the lightbulb moments that have taken place in sessions to share anonymously on social media. I know from feedback that I've received and from commission requests that they have helped my followers on Twitter and LinkedIn, widening the impact, and message, of my coaching.

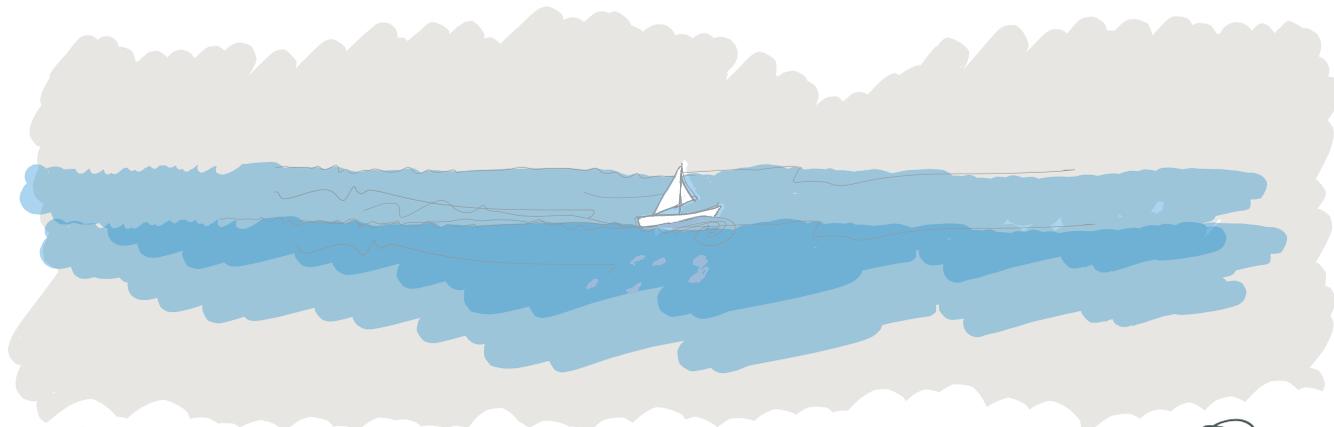
A NEW VENTURE

Six months ago, I opened a shop – The Little Boat IOW – some 10 doors down from our coffee house.

As well as an office for my coaching and a barista-training space, The Little Boat has also afforded me the opportunity to show my art in my own gallery space and I'm delighted that my combination of art, words and the ability to commission the same have meant most months I'm covering my rent in art sales alone. This has created a healthy book of commissions, which combine my ability to understand the feelings and emotions clients wish to invoke with a removal of the pressure for my coaching to 'fully pay the bills'.

Following my breakdown I have come to terms with the fact that I no longer have the energy or thick skin required to make the changes I'd like to make in the world by leading large corporate teams myself.

“Even a little boat with a big heart can cross a vast ocean.”



Even a little boat

July 2021

Instead, I've reached the conclusion that I too am 'a little boat' and that I can make the difference I want to make in our wider world by coaching those in a position to implement and lead real-world change. With this as my mission, I am now in the process of focusing my energy, skills and motivation into coaching 'good people who want to deliver great things' in areas including politics, science and the environment, with leaders and businesses who have the aim of making a difference to humanity and our planet.

gifts that we, all too often, keep separate and distinct from our coaching practice. In my case, I've found that my gift, my art, is a vehicle for change and that a picture really can paint a thousand words. What is your gift and how could you use it to support and accelerate your coaching practice?

If you'd like to know more about Stefan's art, books or the retreats he's creating, get in touch at hello@thelittleboatiow.co.uk.

THE JOURNEY OF THE LITTLE BOAT

With the little boat prints having been so well received, I am currently pulling together a book called *The Journey of The Little Boat* with a writer friend, John, that we're hoping will be ready for Christmas 2023. The intent is to create a book that resonates with young and old alike, with lessons and messages we can all relate to and share.

As well as the 'journey book', I am also in the process of creating a little boat coaching journal, which will include exercises, and spaces to draw for reflection and notes. It will act as a visual companion and compendium for my coachees.

On top of this, the plan is for 2023 to be a big year. I plan to use the little boat coaching journal as the foundation for three- and five-day retreats on the Isle of Wight. Working through their journal in group or one-to-one sessions in the morning, attendees will then create art, take part in outdoor activities and sea swims, and enjoy some great food and drink provided by our amazing team. I can't wait.

These past two years have reminded me that we have talents and

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Stefan is an award-winning singer and songwriter who runs an award-winning coffee house, The Freshwater Coffee House, as well as an art gallery and barista training school, The Little Boat, on the Isle of Wight. Stefan has been coaching professionally for over 20 years and has held various senior leadership positions. He is an AC member, and specialises in helping leaders of both organisations and causes achieve their greatest ambitions.

www.thelittleboatiow.co.uk

The Wheel

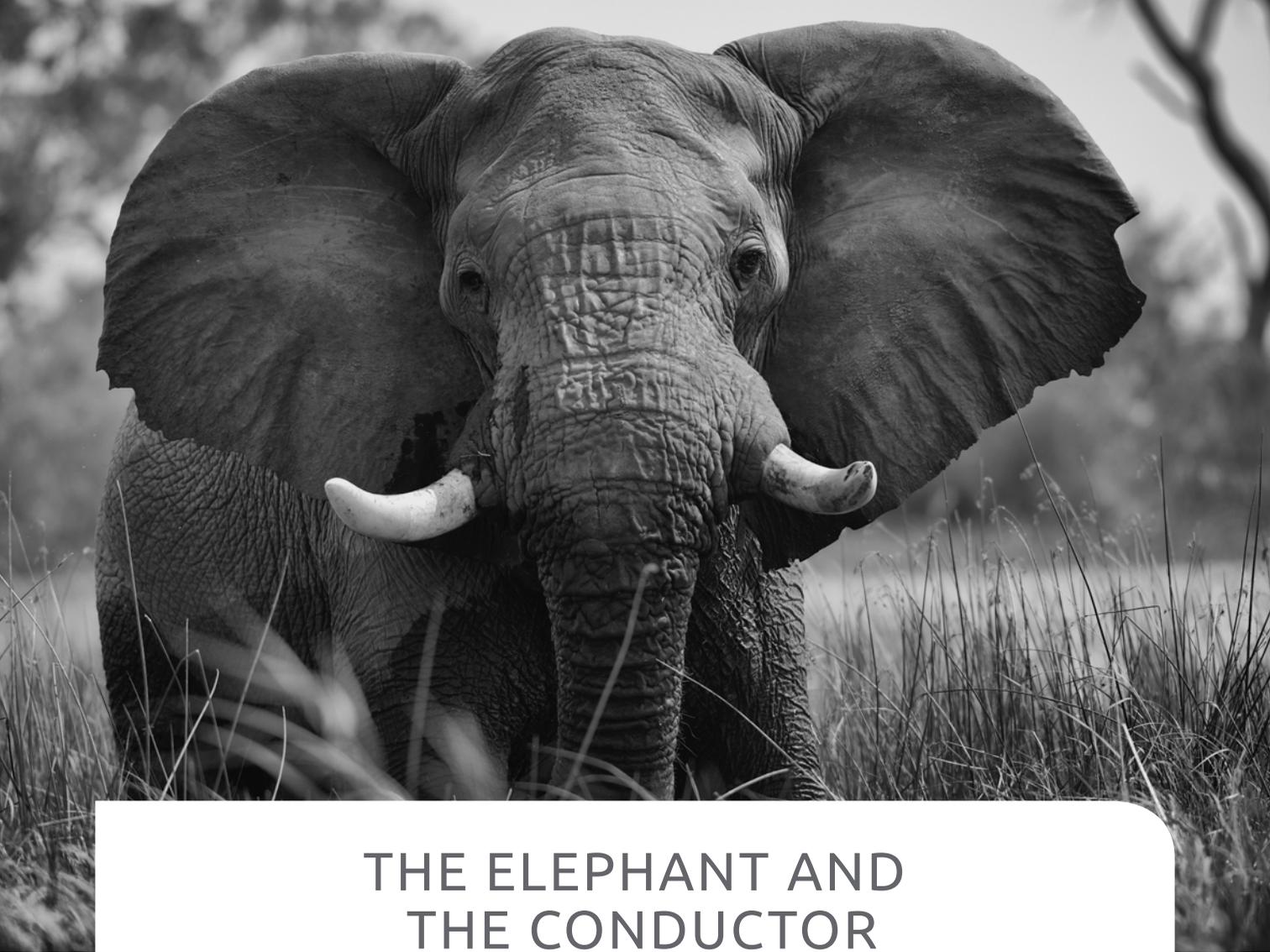
*It is empty
You have much
Reaching out. Touch
No attack so no defence
No theory so no argument
Just your truth
The empty receives
Just watch
The separation within without closes
Parts connect
Become one
Whole
Smile. Relief.
Joy!*

*Everyone has a piece of the puzzle
Part of
Whole but not fully whole
Clear but not fully clear
More pieces than a mind can imagine*

Neil Scotton

*How could they possibly come together?
No one could possibly know
Find my piece. Wonder. Wander.
Mine very different to yours?
No problem: just different parts of the one picture
Mine fits yours?
Smile. Relief.
Joy!*

*Settling into place together
My piece makes more sense
I see myself more clearly
I see you more clearly
I see the emerging picture
You see it too
We see it differently?
It is still the same
The whole picture is more than I can take in
No worry. I trust the artist.*



THE ELEPHANT AND THE CONDUCTOR

Paul Heardman explores trauma and the transpersonal in coaching.

'Is coaching just feeding western individualistic narcissism and self-absorption, which may be part of the root causes of many 21st-century human problems?'

Like all great coaching questions, this provocative challenge stopped me in my tracks when I first came across it in Peter Hawkins and Eve Turner's book *Systemic Coaching*.

It is unlikely many of us come into coaching to feed 'narcissism and self-absorption'. So why might that still happen? One perspective is to explore what unfolds when the client or coach, or both, are operating from the impact of trauma. A compulsive drive for achievement is a classic example of this, with heavy consequences in terms of burnout, both for individuals and for the planet.

Instead, if we coaches become both more trauma-informed and more transpersonal-aware we can offer an integrative, more systemic and less individualistic approach, well-suited for addressing our 21st-century problems.

TRAUMA: THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM?

How trauma shows up in coaching is becoming a hot topic. More coaches are now exploring ways to become trauma-informed. But others remain, understandably, nervous of the territory, worrying that it draws coaches into therapeutic areas for which we are unqualified. So why should coaches become more trauma-aware?

The short answer is that the impact of trauma is usually already in the coaching space. Our choice is perhaps simply whether to notice how it might be present, or to collude with not noticing. Both have consequences.

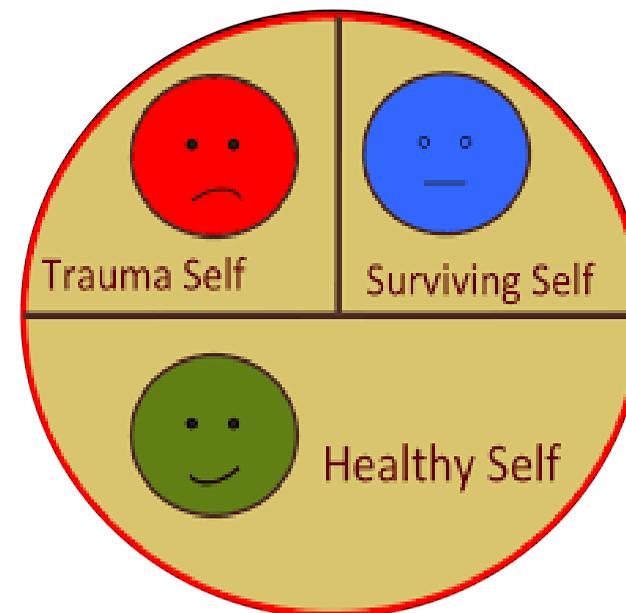
Doyenne of coaching Jenny Rogers argues that most clients we work with in coaching are likely to be carrying some imprint of trauma, which affects why they show up for coaching. To be effective as coaches, she suggests we need to understand how the shadows of the past are being cast in the present. Otherwise, we can be seduced into an overly future-focused approach where, crucially, we miss how trauma triggers compensatory 'survival-driven behaviours'.ⁱⁱ

*'Many who come into coaching, both clients and coaches, including those who appear highly successful, are traumatised'*ⁱⁱⁱ
– Julia Vaughan-Smith

This is not about working directly with trauma – that is not the terrain of coaching – but rather exploring how the legacy of trauma shows up in choices being made in the present.

Coaching and trauma specialist Julia Vaughan-Smith shares Franz Ruppert's eminently accessible model of the psyche^{iv} to show how overwhelm of the nervous system can lead to trauma, which is then pushed into the unconscious. To manage that, we develop survival parts to keep the trauma at bay. It is often these survival parts we then meet in coaching, in both our experience of the client and in our response to them. Relentless pursuit of goals, for example, can be a form of what the journalist and self-help author Oliver Burkeman describes as 'self-medication' – a way to fend off underlying anxiety.^v

However, Vaughan-Smith explains that true change cannot come from working at the level of survival parts. For that we must support our clients, and ourselves as coaches, to build greater access to our healthy parts.



Credit: Franz Ruppert

Normalising trauma as perhaps a near-universal human experience can help. We might draw a parallel with how Hawkins refers to ecology in coaching – it is not a matter of us bringing it in, but rather it is always present in the coaching space anyway. The question is simply whether we pay attention to it or not. The same applies to trauma. Do we make space for how it might already be shaping the coaching?

THE TRANSPERSONAL: ALL THAT WE MAY BE

Becoming trauma-aware also helps us tune into the transpersonal – what grandfather of coaching John Whitmore described as the doorway to a higher sense of purpose and to the deep interconnectedness of life.^{vi} Transpersonal coaching is a soulful way of working, allowing space for more than just problem- and solution-oriented coaching. It invites us to wonder, for example, how a client's 'stuckness' might signal what is emerging for them at a deeper level. As transpersonal trainer Roger Evans describes, 'symptoms are messages to be understood rather than problems to be solved'.^{vii}

This brings us up against a paradox, in that the more energy that is locked up in our survival parts, the less we have available to connect with the higher potential of the transpersonal – to become all that we may be. However, the more we work through survival-driven behaviours, the more this opens space to connect with our greatest potential and our interconnectedness. We can contemplate a more creative meaning of the crises that clients bring to coaching. We lessen the need to rush in with tools to 'fix', a response which itself may well arise from our own survival parts as coaches.

Conversely, being cut off from the interconnected nature of the transpersonal fuels the excess of individualism that Hawkins describes above. Much coaching still operates from this individualistic, non-systemic, paradigm.

'Wholeness is not achieved by cutting off a portion of one's being, but by integration of the contraries' – Carl Jung

BECOMING THE CONDUCTOR OF OUR INNER ORCHESTRA

Two coaching approaches that offer a more holistic lens are psychosynthesis^{viii} and internal family systems (IFS).^{ix} Both use parts work to support inner and outer transformation, and can be highly accessible ways for clients and coaches to navigate this territory.

Psychosynthesis offers the metaphor of human psychology as like a house. There are things in the basement, our lower unconscious, which we might repress, such as trauma. There is also the attic, our higher unconscious, where we connect to the transpersonal. The middle of the house, our everyday consciousness, has different rooms where we connect to different parts of ourselves or subpersonalities. For example, the inner critic or the impostor are familiar characters we meet in coaching. These can be survival parts formed to protect us from earlier trauma. Psychosynthesis provides

ways of working with these parts to identify the core need (which is often about safety), and through that to help clients access greater freedom and choice. In short, they become less beholden to the regressive power of these survival parts.

This chimes with Richard Schwartz's IFS model, in which he suggests that, day to day, we are often driven by 'manager' parts that try to keep us safe by protecting us from trauma and woundedness, held in what he calls the 'exiled' parts. In situations where we are particularly triggered, a 'firefighter' part might also step in to make doubly sure we are protected from re-experiencing the earlier wounding.

Through accessing qualities such as compassion, curiosity, connectedness and courage, IFS offers ways to help clients become more 'self-led' so they are less driven by managers, firefighters or the ongoing impact of an earlier trauma. Instead, becoming more self-led allows greater access to clients' full potential, and the qualities of the transpersonal.



Credit: Internal Family Systems Institute

Both psychosynthesis and IFS offer the metaphor of an orchestra and its conductor. Individual parts of us are like instruments. If one dominates or if another doesn't play its part, the symphony is discordant. If we just listen to the noisy part, such as the inner critic, we can lose sight of the truth that we are more than just that one part. So stepping back to see ourselves as the conductor of our own inner orchestra creates more spaciousness, awareness and agency over which parts we listen to.

'We work on ourselves in order to help others, but also we help others in order to work on ourselves' – Pema Chodron

WALKING THE TALK

Coaching from a trauma- and transpersonal-aware frame can be deep work. It underlines the importance of the personal work we do on ourselves as coaches, in order that we can hold this space for clients. Alongside all our coach trainings, qualifications and accreditations, what is our awareness of how the impact of trauma shows up in our own life and thus also in how we coach? What is our connection to the transpersonal? How well are we able to conduct our own inner orchestra? As Carl Jung reminds us, the parts we reject in ourselves are the same parts of our clients we will reject.

Holding appropriate boundaries – in terms of the contract with the client and our own competence – is at the heart of ethical and professional practice. Equally, when we collude, intentionally or not, with an avoidance of looking because of our own fears about those parts of ourselves, then we might indeed, as Hawkins contends, risk coaching becoming part of the problem.

But if we accept that the consequences of trauma are part of what fuels the ecological crisis, then building more trauma awareness in coaching becomes nothing less than existential.

To discover more about courses in psychosynthesis coaching visit psychosynthesiscoaching.co.uk/short-courses. Online training in IFS coaching can be found at bit.ly/3AD3wJC.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Paul Heardman is an APECS- and EMCC-accredited coach with an MSc in coaching and behavioural change. He is also a coaching supervisor and coach trainer.

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GROUP COACHING: SHIFTING LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT FROM THE INDIVIDUAL TO THE COLLECTIVE

Glain Roberts-McCabe shares her experiences of integrating group coaching within leadership development programmes – and highlights the roles and skills coaches need to adopt beyond one-to-one coaching.

To say that the past two years have been a strain for leaders and their organisations is an understatement at best. With the challenges of remote work, constant states of uncertainty and the ‘great resignation’ – all the while chasing ever-increasing targets – the brutal business reality is that the pressure on leaders is mounting. Skills development and behavioural change have never been more mission critical. Yet, when it comes to supporting high potentials and current leaders, is one-to-one executive coaching sustainable? Maybe it’s time for a rethink.

More and more companies are seeking scalable coaching solutions designed to bring coaching to a wider audience. Progressive organisations are shifting their focus to group coaching approaches in order to reach more leaders, more quickly, and to reap the benefits that come from a shared learning journey. The opportunity is ripe for the coaching industry to take the lead on supporting the learning and development of teams and groups.

GROUP COACHING CHARACTERISTICS

Group coaching shares many of the same characteristics as team coaching and, as such, often can cause some confusion within the coaching community. Yet, there are some very clear and specific differences between the skills required and the process of group coaching versus that of coaching teams. Let’s look at the hallmarks of group coaching.

Nature of relationships: in group coaching, members may not know each other beforehand (particularly in open enrolment programmes) and may not work together following the completion of their learning journey. Strong bonds are often built during successful group coaching programmes and may continue well after the formal programme has been completed – the sign of a great group coaching experience!

Peer-based: the peer nature of group coaching programmes is an important aspect to recognise. Group programmes thrive when individuals have some shared interests and can exchange experiences to facilitate collective learning. If a group is imbalanced in either experience or personal objectives, the learning of and overall satisfaction with the group coaching programme will be compromised.

Balance individual with group goals: group coaching participants will enter programmes with both shared and individual goals. This can make managing group coaching engagements more complex as coaches actively balance the needs of different individuals. It can be helpful to include a one-to-one coaching element to ensure individual needs are being met.

EXPANDED COACHING SKILLSET REQUIRED

Group coaches regularly dance between a variety of skills beyond coaching, including facilitation, education, advising and even conflict resolution. It’s a complex tango that group coaches need to do to help groups transition through the coaching experience. Here are four key roles that we want group coaches to embody. In addition, group coaches will invariably encounter various ‘choice points’ throughout the group coaching experience. Highlighted below are also a few questions to consider depending on the role being played.

1. **Coach:** contracting, active listening, powerful questions. All the hallmarks of great one-to-one coaching exist in a group environment as well. The nuance is to elevate these elements from individual needs to the needs of the group in co-creating group agreements, boundaries and working methods.

Considerations:

- Where is the group’s energy? What are you noticing as coach?
- What observations can you bring to the group?
- What is being left unsaid in the group that needs to be surfaced?

2. **Facilitator:** helping groups address issues together, keeping the group timing on track, managing group dynamics and establishing collective accountability for the learning agenda requires facilitation and well-honed meeting management skills.

Considerations:

- What are the fixed and the flexible components of your group coaching session?
- How will you recontract with the group around timing and outcomes?
- What are the ground rules and meeting protocols, and how will you encourage a sense of group ownership/accountability?

3. **Educator:** creating meaningful learning content or establishing a core curriculum that balances education and application – delivered with a coach-like approach – requires a fundamental understanding of adult education and learning design.

Considerations:

- What are the key learning objectives for this group?
- How will you make the content appeal to all learning styles?
- What actions are required before, during and after the learning discussion?

4. **Mentor:** providing guidance and experience that elevates the group’s learning as well as role modelling effective coaching practices for the group are often key.

Considerations:

- Where else is there wisdom in the group around this topic?
- What is my role in advancing their understanding of the concept/topic?
- How do I add enough value to the discussion, but not too much?

SUCCESS FACTORS FOR GROUP COACHES

The leap from one-to-one to coaching groups can be a tricky one to achieve. From our experience, here are the top five things to help you (and your group) succeed:

Focus on trust and psychological safety: participating in a group coaching experience requires that the group builds bonds. The group coach must work actively to create psychological safety within the group, ensuring group members feel that they can participate with candour. It is essential to take the time to build vulnerability and trust among all group members. Because groups are typically together for specific periods of time, this process needs to be done quickly.

Create shared agreements: group coaching programmes need to operate with a set of shared working agreements that allow the group to grow and develop together. The group agreements set the expectations for the learning journey, which support the culture of trust and vulnerability needed to have a successful experience. If group coaches miss this key step, once group norms get set they are hard to undo.

Build group accountability: accountability in group programmes is the responsibility of the group. Breaches of confidentiality (if they happen), lack of follow-through on commitments and ownership of the learning agenda are the responsibility of the group members, not the group coach. Group coaches need to facilitate the right conversations but not own the problems that may occur.

Balance between agility and process: the group coach needs to have the skills to move nimbly in and out of the conversation; to know when to challenge or push the group; to observe the energy of the collective; and to be able to drop in when appropriate. The group coach puts their skills honed as an individual coach to the test by pivoting between one-to-one questions and larger group enquiry questions, driving insight and action. Managing the coaching process, while adapting along the way, ensures that participants in group coaching programmes achieve the results that have been set within the programme.

Focus on group energy over individual energy: managing intergroup dynamics is a challenge. It’s not only about monitoring and exploring the collective energy of group members. Energy management and impact is also something that each group coach needs to assess on a personal level. Whereas in one-to-one coaching we can select our clients based on mutual fit, in group coaching we may be working with people whose approaches and styles don’t fit our own. Our biases and beliefs, and the judgements those create, are additional layers to coaching – whether groups or teams – that need to be continually explored. Coach supervision is critical in this regard.

With these key building blocks in place, group coaches create a shared leadership journey rooted in trust, insight and a collective commitment to creating a successful learning experience.

THE FUTURE OF COACHING

As global uncertainty and volatility continue to affect organisations, we propose it’s time for learning professionals to shift how they approach executive development to a more sustainable model – collective leadership development.

A well-designed group coaching programme that ties business objectives to programme goals delivers all of the benefits of individual coaching. Yet – from breaking down organisational silos to the richness of shared learning experiences to the unique ability to tap into the power of peer pressure to help group members hold each other accountable – collective learning also brings in additional layers and nuances that just aren’t possible in a one-to-one environment.

Based on 15 years’ experience of running group coaching programmes for high-potential leaders, we have seen the bonds and relationships that develop through the coaching process strengthen cultures, build leadership capability and boost engagement and job satisfaction. Group coaching can be a powerful strategy for progressive organisations looking to take their leadership capabilities to the next level.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Glain Roberts-McCabe is the founder and president of The Roundtable, a group coaching and mentoring organisation, and The Group Coach Academy, a group coach training organisation. Visit www.groundtable.com to learn more.

Integrating integration: go play with the universe

Paul King and Rachel Harrison explore the integrating and disintegrating landscape that we traverse, sharing definitions, ideas and perspectives – offered for your inquiry more as guidelines than rules, as Captain Barbossa in *Pirates of the Caribbean* described the Pirate's Code. We invite you to read into that metaphor what you will...

Each of us has a unique path and our own way of travelling, which is why we invite you into your own reflections when reading this article. Later we will take a few deeper dives into integrating embodiment and archetypes.

Whether you have stopped to consider what integration is or is not, you will likely have meanings, interpretations and even judgements you give to this word across a range of contexts; from the personal to your family, from your work to society. You may ask: how do I

know when I have integrated new learning or awareness? Or, how do we collectively bring more integration into our social life?

Most of us seek integration in some of the dimensions of our life, both inner and outer. What does the calling of integration tell us about ourselves? What are your answers? The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines the verb to integrate as 'to form, coordinate, or blend into a functioning or unified whole the act or process of making whole or entire'.



DEEP DIVE!

Parker Palmer, in his book *A Hidden Wholeness: The Journey to an Undivided Life*, opens his prelude with a quote from Leonard Cohen:

*The blizzard of the world
has crossed the threshold
and it has overwhelmed
the order of the world*

He goes on to say in his first chapter: 'Afraid that our inner light will be extinguished, or our inner darkness exposed, we hide our true identities from each other. In the process we become separated from our own souls. We end up living divided lives, so far removed from the truth we hold that we cannot know the integrity that comes from being what you are.'

Integrity here might be described as a return to our original condition, which is not one of perfection but one of wholeness. A joining of our inner and outer life, with an ability to embrace our individual and shared brokenness with compassion. The cracks and fissures becoming seedbeds for the new to arise and for our healing towards wholeness, individually and together – if we are willing to look and address the darkness. This takes courage and the resolution for us to maintain our light.

We are proposing integration not as a noun but a verb, integrating: a curious, ongoing embodied, receptive inquiry to the ever-changing way we 'come together' in multiple contexts. There is no completion, rather a constant flow of mutual learnings, of ensouling. As we develop a broader lens of perceiving we come to integrating through a receptive process of life-ing, allowing our active achieving to rest in a wider landscape.

APPROACHING INTEGRATING

We could consider two particular approaches to integration: first, the all-too-common constructivist/reductionist approach, and second the receptive/relational systemic approach, which we have here called 'rhythmos'.

The constructivist approach

Within this approach integration is a reflection on experiences. Through this, people build their own representations and incorporate new information into their pre-existing knowledge (schemas). Assimilation and accommodation are considered the processes of constructivism.

- Assimilation refers to the process of taking new information and fitting it into an existing schema.
- Accommodation refers to using newly acquired information to revise and redevelop an existing schema.

This approach is very much founded in our thinking function, useful and yet prone to omitting the relational complexity – not only of that which is the focus of the integration, but the system of which those parts are a part. Failing to consider the ecology of the inner and outer relational space frequently leads to a new arrangement, skill or way of thought not being integrated. This is why much learning and development, and indeed coaching, does not land. We are prioritising learning theory over embodied and systemic practices. The orientation is towards the acquisition of knowledge or schematic changes.

We may seek to integrate skills and knowledge to add to our life resources. Sometimes these sink into our identity, become embodied, experienced as deeply part of who we are. At other times they are worn, more like clothes: something we can do but something not a part of us. Acquisition is not integration.

It is not that there is no value in this approach, it is just not sufficient on its own. The background of coaching with roots in performance does not fully explore the dimensions of potential to the full.ⁱⁱⁱ Potential is often limited to goal achievement and considered in a narrow context. We are proposing that integration is an ongoing inquiry into 'potential' as a field 'as yet unknown', changing the idea of integration from a fixed view to that of a continuing evolving interplay.

A rhythmos approach

We refer to this new epistemology of integration as rhythmos. This word derives from the Greek basis of rhythm: pattern and motion in environment. Rhythmos is an ever-changing, continual reshaping in relationship with time and the relational field. The rhythmos lens considers particular qualities within the interplay of two basic principles, pattern and motion – metaphorically particle and wave.

- Pattern, reflecting form, structure and organisation. Centred and embodied.
- Motion, reflecting enacting and interacting. Living and working in multiple, complex systems.

The neuropsychiatrist Daniel Siegel offers what he calls a 'core truth': 'optimal self-organisation occurs when a system has two interactive processes – differentiating and linking.'^{iv} This for him is also a definition of integration. An integration, or integrating, that allows and honours separate parts to become specialised in what they do within the system and connects them to each other. There is distinction and identity that is not lost in the entwining creativity. In alchemical philosophy and Taoism, a 'third arose out of the combination of the two', often pictorially represented as the combining of masculine and feminine.

When a system becomes integrated it moves towards a harmonious flow, with an openness, sense of connection and an adaptive, emergent vitality. We can recognise this in choirs, dances or great performances of individuals and teams in sports, and in our own flow states. Whether observing or participating, we become present and connected into our own experience and with the greater context at the same time, the inner and outer in relationship, as per Parker Palmer. In expressing ourselves we change our context.

INTEGRATING EMBODYING

Integrating is an embodied experience. The body and its nervous system are our foundational base and, as Bessel van der Kolk says, 'the body keeps the score'^v.

Attention with awareness focuses energy and information flow, facilitating the creation of new neural pathways for integrating learning. As Donald Hebb famously said, 'neurons that fire together, wire together'. This enlivening experience is supported by being in our body-mind in particular ways, which are separately named but intimately intermingle. They help shape us towards our better

and integrating selves, ready and able to fully engage within, with others and with life.

Described in polyvagal theory terms, we are shifting the nervous system to a place where ventral vagal is the primary influence on state. (For more on polyvagal theory, see Kerry Cullen's exploration on p36-37). We experience ourselves as safe and connected, in contrast to the activated defensive states that operate with the important intent of ensuring our survival. This leads us to contract and focus down in body and mind and therefore feel in oppositional relationship with the people or context we are with. When in these defensive states, integration is not an option.

Slowing and pausing. When we move fast, we can do only what we already know. We move from one particle shaping to another; we do not notice the transitional wave and the learning. The brain can move to a solution very quickly, but the body learns and embodies slowly. It takes time to write those new pathways in the deeper embodied self. The sensory-motor system entwining as it does, in our action-orientated world we lose sensitivity.

Softening. Softening goes along with slowing. Together they enable heightened sensitivity to nuance and the possibility to identify the difference that makes the difference. We can more easily identify limiting patterns and reshape through enquiry, not fixing. In time and with practice we can move quickly and softly while maintaining engaged attention and awareness. Nuance is powerful. In embodiment, small changes in shaping, tone, texture and rhythm can bring about big differences in body, cognition, emotions and spirit.

Softening is a viable alternative to forcing, which so often happens in our pressurised lives and when we meet challenge or resistance. In that beingness we tend to harden, contracting in body and mind and finding ourselves in oppositional engagement rather than mutual emergent learning. In softening there is a flowing of energy and, in that, a notable relaxed power.

Allowing. This is such an important co-creative collaborator with our intentionality to make things happen. A balancing of acting and receiving, masculine and feminine energies, yinyang of life. Too often we find people stuck in the try-hard mode, something our society engenders. Tightening in body and mind we may feel strong to ourselves, but we lose sensitivity and choice.

Variation. Here is the essence of play and curiosity, which is so effective in creating new neural pathways around whatever our attention and intention are focused. Exploring variation, we develop a body-brain of flexibility and adaptability. Integration is not a single option pathway, integration is multivarious responsiveness.

Spaciousness. When we are at our best and feeling more integrated within and without, we feel more spacious. Spaciousness is enhancing and we can embody this deliberately by opening our energy field, our awareness and perception. With this opening we extend what it is possible to notice, relate to, do and be. To open in this way, we need a sense of grounding stability.

Imagination. In embodiment work, imagination and vision take us into the body as well as out of the body. We can imagine qualities we want to embody. We may not know how to create ease

or confidence in the moment, but imagination can lead the body to such desired states. Freeing the mind frees the body, and freeing the body frees the mind. What qualities would you like to invite into your vision of possibility on your integrating journey?

States of being. Hope, enthusiasm and compassion are helpful allies animating our presence. We can draw similarly on archetypal energies to evoke resourcing states of being (see page 27).

Centring. The above qualities of the body-mind are brought together in the idea and practice of being centred. Centring is an alignment of structure and energy. A linking of differentiated parts in a coherent whole. An embodying integrating of cognition, emotion and intuition – the intelligences of head, heart and gut, the physical structures of head, ribcage and pelvic bowl. A common idea of centring is a withdrawal from our environment and a centring within oneself. In this approach, centring is within the relational space of our environment. We open in a spacious and engaging way to what is, bringing forth from our equanimity clear perception, compassion and confidence.

These qualities of embodiment bring a fluid emergent aesthetic to the flow of life, one that is seen and felt by others, inviting a creative and integrating conversation space.

None of the above enablers are found within excessive stress and fatigue, states of beingness that are so prevalent and rampant today. Our capacity for learning and integration within self and with others is reduced, perhaps even switched off.

Integration starts close, in the body, and extends beyond the personal into our environments and further still into the collective.

THE SECOND COMING

*Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.*

Within the first verse of William Butler Yeats' poem *The Second Coming* we hear the call to hold our centre, and to really listen to (and coach from) the wider story.

Holding centre is a particular feature of embodiment practices that are founded on the martial arts, such as the leadership embodiment work Paul teaches – which was developed by Wendy Palmer^{vi} – or the work of similar teachers like Richard Strozzi-Heckler and Paul Linden.

Strozzi offers a nice description of engaging the 'widening gyre': first, centre inside oneself through breath and posture, then turn to face what is, extend your field of energy and attention to include what is present, step towards it with your centred presence and blend with what is before you. Get ourselves together first, then act. So often action steams ahead, out of balance, dysregulated.

AN ARCHETYPAL LENS

Through body-mind practices we start to understand there are often different embodied states that reflect the stories we hold. This is a vital understanding towards embodied integration. Through recognising our multiple-patterned stories we gain practical insights into why the movement towards the goals we desire is or is not possible. The goal is often causal to our desire and need to integrate.

A way into getting to know these underlying patterns of our human nature and experience is to enter dialogue through an archetypal lens. Here we are moving between the personal consciousness and the collective consciousness, those inherent deep patterns that transcend time and culture. They deeply inform not only the character we present to the world but the way we approach all we do. They are often invisibly 'running the show', according to authors Laurence Hillman and Richard Olivier.^{vii}

They may appear as a semi-autonomous parts of us, often bringing inner conflict. In this form they may demand attention, characterised by our physical shaping, idiosyncrasies and compulsions. The archetype has us, rather than us having it. In these states we may move towards polarisations, an over emphasis, exerting a character of 'too much' or a withdrawing character, underplaying 'too little'.

The better we understand these archetypal expressions and the more consciously we use them, the more integrated we can be in our approach to life and work. Our work is to bring them into their fullest and optimal expression. Below is a synopsis of 10 of these archetypal patterns, based on the work of Olivier and Hillman in their book *Archetypes at Work*.

TEN ARCHETYPES

ORDER

The Sovereign: values order through a sense of direction and purpose in life; they are not afraid to be bold. Brings generosity and courage.

The Strategist: values order, structure, planning, mapping direction and organising. Brings focus and boundaries.

RELATIONSHIPS

The Nurturer: values relationships, time to reflect; engages in full-body listening; empathetic. Brings care, supporting the development of others and self.

The Lover: values beauty, aesthetics and relationships on equal footings. Brings passion and value, self-worth and net worth.

CREATIVITY

The Dreamer: the sensitive visionary; values creativity, inspiration, imagination, experimentation in the imaginal, and exploring what is possible; holds paradox and lateral thinking.

The Storyteller: will synthesise different threads and ideas, weaving them into coherent narratives, inner and outer. Brings excellence to communication and quick thinking.

CHANGE

The Renegade: values change through disruption and invention. Brings vitality, breakthrough and liberation.

The Transformer: values change through slow, deep regeneration; is able to let go of what is no longer needed and stay with emerging mystery. Brings the gift of profound and deep change.

ACTION

The Warrior: values action – assertively and decisively, challenging when needed, harnessing energy for the pursuit of the goal. Makes things happen.

The Explorer: values adventure, seeking truths. Their outer action often discovers inner knowledge and wisdoms. Brings enthusiasm and progress.

As coaches we may favour particular archetypal approaches ourselves, which influences our coaching style. Developing an understanding of our approach and increasing our ability to flex can be enabling for the client-coach dynamic as well, and help us understand how we can further facilitate integration with the client in and beyond the session. Knowing what automatically 'runs the show' and bringing this to light can enable clients to find different approaches to experimentation in life.

Whole-system grounding or centring is a foundational practice when working with an archetypal approach. Finding our centred neutral base unhooks the mind and relaxes the body, bringing flexibility and choice. Trying to shift to new ways of being from default patterning sets up tensions in the body. From neutral we can learn to access archetypes through an embodied process and bring forth the gifts that will sustain future possibilities.

Case study: an exploration of the inner tensions between two archetypes

Deborah wanted to move forwards with a particular project in her work life, something deeply meaningful to her. She had all the skills required to achieve this, yet she could not gain traction, constantly distracted by seemingly other 'more important' events. She recognised a protective, 'too much' Nurturer archetype: deferring to care for others was important for her own regulation. Through centring, what surfaced was the conflict in her body. The Explorer and the Nurturer held a pattern of invisibility and protection, seen in the way she braced herself, leaning back. Through somatic shifts and dialogue with these two inner voices they became synergistic rather than antagonistic. What was distinctly noticeable was how her voice changed, and how previously invisible help seemed to appear as she became coherent.

Roberto Assagioli, who founded the psychological movement of psychosynthesis, emphasised the possibility of progressive integration or synthesis through a process of harmonisation, bringing the characters within into conversation.^{viii} Joan and Roger Evans distilled Assagioli's work into a five-stage model^{ix}, starting with *recognition*. By recognition they meant noticing the postures and behaviours present when an inner figure takes charge. Each of these inner figures has a particular way of viewing the world, influencing our perceiving. Through *acceptance* we discover a little more, withholding judgement. Without acceptance, a desire to separate, discard, resist or polarise can surface. Next, we consider *coordination*. As we coordinate we seek to understand deeper needs and expressions. Listening, a form of softening dissolves feelings of isolation and in the process brings forth cooperation. As we move into *integration*, we bring this part into relationship with other parts of ourselves, thus reducing inner conflicts.

Finally, we move towards *synthesis*, a harmonising of wholeness. Values and expressions of the higher self, our soul, become fully embodied. We may experience grace and feelings of expansiveness, and be moved to act from a place of deep knowing.

Societally we may value particular archetypes more than others and, in this process, we may become hooked by the expectations of circumstance and go against the archetypal influence that would be most beneficial – or resort to the default that feels safest. In doing so, we miss a valuable opportunity for integration.

An example: the Strategist and Warrior are often highly valued in the world of work, the strategist having a plan and the warrior taking action. These might also be an individual's go-to archetypes, either through perceived necessity or training. We may notice our client is urgent to learn and apply, but the desire to 'get going' may be an interference. Bringing in the creative forces of the Dreamer (imagination, lateral thinking, paradox) and the attentiveness of the Lover or Nurturer would bring in slowing and listening.

INTEGRATING IN OUR ENVIRONMENTS

We take a moment here to pause and acknowledge the wider context. What does integration mean to the disenfranchised in society? Do diversity and inclusion, climate policy and equal rights really extend to integration, to a systemic relational wholeness? There are of course many more such questions to be practically and philosophically addressed.

In *Steps to the Ecology of Mind* the cyberneticist and profound systems thinker Gregory Bateson writes about grace in the larger meaning of the word, saying that 'the problem of grace is fundamentally a problem of integration' and that, 'for the attainment of grace, the reasons of the heart must be integrated with the reasons of reason.'^x

Our capacity for integration is influenced and shaped in part by the way we co-regulated (or we might say integrated) with our significant carers in our early years. As we move through life, integration is founded in relationships and the relational space, the way we connect our hearts to other hearts. The pediatric neurobiologist Dr Andrew Curran neatly summed this up at the end of a workshop on the brain and nervous system at work: 'if you don't have their hearts, you don't have their brains.'

This embodied relational integrating is our starting point. Nora Bateson speaks of integrating as 'the way things come together' – always in a process of mutual learning, which she refers to as symmathesy.^{xi} And as Margaret Wheatley says: 'relationships are all there is. Everything in the universe only exists because it is in relationship to everything else. Nothing exists in isolation.'^{xii}

Rachel's first NLP teacher would conclude a session with 'go play with the universe', an invitation to see what learning looks like in the everyday world and to integrate this into your everyday life.

Have fun, improvise, play and experiment.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Paul King is co-founder, with Marie Faire, of The Beyond Partnership. He has been working with integral, holistic and embodiment approaches, connecting personal development to larger system change, for more than 30 years. He has delivered embodiment-based workshops and coaching across Europe and in North America and Asia. His experience includes inner-game coaching, leadership embodiment, spiral dynamics, feldenkrais (movement re-education) and polarity therapy. He is an NLP trainer and teaches tai chi and qigong.

Rachel Harrison is the founder of Learning Frequencies, which emerged as a ground-space to explore more broadly the ways we learn and evolve. She is a consultant and leadership coach working with individuals through to whole system processes. With over 20 years' experience, Rachel has a postgraduate certificate in psychosynthesis leadership coaching, is a Barrett Values consultant, and is trained in archetypes at work and circling leadership, a relational practice. She has an MA in transpersonal arts and practice and is a yoga teacher. Psychospiritual and embodied approaches influence her work.

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TEQUILA SLAMMER OR G&T: HOW DO YOU LIKE YOUR INTEGRATION?

Drawing on tangible metaphors and conceptual frameworks for integration, Yannick Jacob walks us through various ways in which coaches may bring together different skillsets, schools of thought and approaches to practice.

In 2019 I married into a Mexican family, so let me say this right from the start: please don't 'slam' tequila! It's borderline blasphemy for a mezcal lover. However, as a metaphor for drawing out some of the key differences in integration styles, drinks work quite well. Let's jump in!

TEQUILA SLAMMER OR G&T?

Personally, I like my integration well-mixed: a blend of quality ingredients, each barely distinguishable as they merge into a rich conversation. Think 'quality G&T' (or a non-alcoholic cocktail of just the right juices, if you prefer) and you get the idea.

Others, like my friend and colleague Nash Popovic, founder and programme leader of the MSc in integrative coaching and counselling at the University of East London and originator of this specific metaphor, prefer to work sequentially and apply different ingredients one after the other, like the classic tequila slammer: salt, tequila, lemon.

Now, while I am saying that no one should be wasting a good tequila that way, when it comes to coaching there isn't generally a better or worse way to deliver your integrative way of working with your clients. It's a choice. And making the right choice depends on the context in which the work takes place, the desired outcome and your personal preference.

MY PROBLEM WITH 'INTEGRATIVE PRACTICE'

It seems to me that the majority of coaches and therapists I meet work 'integratively' – but when I ask them to tell me a bit more, they often struggle to frame their particular style, or how exactly the various elements of their training, or schools of thought that influence them, find their way into how they work with their clients.

I have met 'intuitive coaches' who tell me they draw on a wide range of influences and techniques, and do so by going with the flow and letting their intuition guide them. While I appreciate the importance of intuitive practice, at times this feels like an excuse not to think about what they're doing or how and why their work is effective.

Coaching is inevitably integrative since it draws on many of the same skill sets that other practices such as therapy or mentoring use, and it can at times be somewhere between difficult and impossible to draw clear lines between schools of thought, or to place a particular technique firmly within one theoretical lens. But, for the sake of developing our field (and your professional practice), it's important that we think more carefully about how and what we integrate.

Let's explore!

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY 'INTEGRATION'?

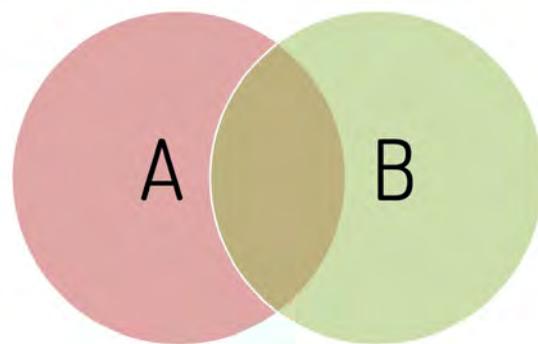
First of all, what do we mean when we say integrative practice? It's a complex question, and essentially every practitioner necessarily needs to find their own answer in terms of what they are bringing together.

Arguably (and I want to include a well-deserved nod to Mick Cooper at this stage, who's been writing about integration through a pluralistic lens and whose writing and talks have inspired some of this article's circular models and terminology around integration) the client should have a say in what we integrate. The argument is that a resourced client knows how best to work with them effectively, and they may have had touch points with various forms of facilitated learning and growth already, so it's worth asking them what they need.

We may find that we integrate elements of coaching, therapy, counselling, mentoring, consulting, teaching or any other form of helping-by-talking. We may integrate various methodologies such as body work, positive psychology interventions, working with strengths, meaning-centred coaching, NLP, performance coaching using the GROW model, or phenomenological inquiry. We may also draw on different schools of thought such as existentialism, gestalt, cognitive-behavioural psychology or ACT.

For example, take a coach who bases their work on CBT principles. At the very core of the practice they combine two psychological theories into the integrated cognitive-behavioural psychology (see Figure 1).

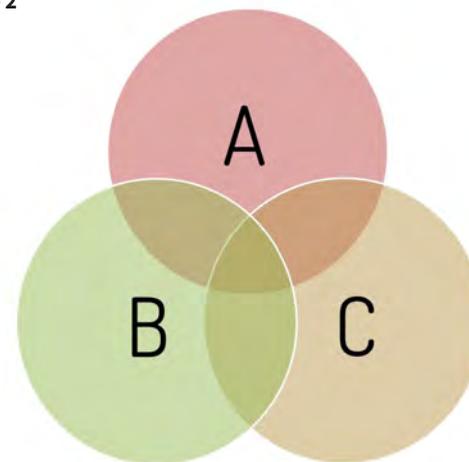
Figure 1



THEORETICAL INTEGRATION

When applying cognitive-behavioural principles in coaching, they will be drawing on cognitive psychology (A), behavioural principles (B) and coaching practices (C), creating cognitive-behavioural coaching (CBC) in the process (see Figure 2).

Figure 2



You can also apply this type of integration to coaching itself. Consider Christian van Nieuwerburgh's three-factor model of coaching, where the integrated elements are a) coaching skills, b) a process to manage the conversation, and c) a coaching 'way of being'. These three elements are blended together to create an approach to learning we call coaching (while leaving plenty of space for how this may be done exactly, depending on how we define or frame each of the elements).

Trying to integrate coaching, consulting and therapy in this way may be more challenging, since (depending on how you define each practice) there may be some assumptions that are mutually exclusive. You can't suggest a solution to the client and at the same time hold a belief that the client has the best answers, at least not without a degree of conflict.

ECLECTICISM

This is where a coach may take an eclectic stance towards integration. Utilising tools, techniques and practices as and when the context seems appropriate, without necessarily being committed to any underlying principles or philosophy (see Figure 3).

Figure 3

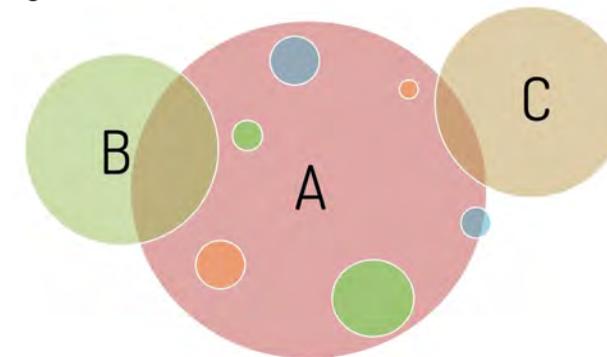


An example of this is when a coach switches professional 'hats', perhaps at the end of a coaching session, as to offer advice, make a suggestion or share their experience. Or perhaps the coach starts off a coaching relationship focused on a SMART goal and works in a facilitative way; along the way the client asks for some mentoring and, since the coach has learned that they had been in a very similar situation in a previous job, they offer their experience. During the following session they discover that the real obstacle stems from a traumatic experience in the client's past, so the coach utilises their background as an EMDR therapist and runs an intervention to help the client free themselves from the emotional attachment, while ending the session by co-creating a clear action plan to navigate their next meeting with their line manager. Since there's 10 minutes left in the session, the coach uses an 'empty chair technique' to really bring this situation to life. At the very end it feels right to offer some parting advice and encouragement. Quite an eclectic mix of techniques and approaches, applied without a commitment to an underlying framework or philosophy.

ASSIMILATIVE INTEGRATION

Coaches who connect strongly with a specific underlying philosophical or theoretical framework may find a form of assimilative integration most attractive (see Figure 4), where a range of approaches or techniques are being applied within a grounded foundation for their work.

Figure 4

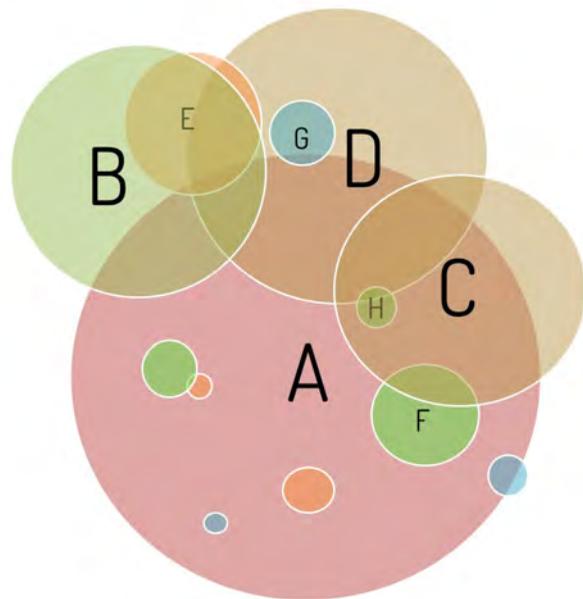


EVERY INTEGRATION IS UNIQUE

During my own professional development journey this form of integration has been happening organically and resulted in something like Figure 5. I had come out of a master's degree in applied positive psychology (B), with a keen interest in, and love for, psychotherapy and counselling (C), but was looking for a philosophical foundation – a way to understand the human condition, and one into which I could integrate my coaching skills, and techniques, tools and practices from other schools of thought. I found this foundation in existential philosophy (A). I decided to study an MA in existential coaching (in itself a form of theoretical integration – see Figure 1), and in this process established a solid understanding of coaching (D) as well as an eclectic range of tools and techniques from other approaches and learning: e.g., some CBC techniques (F), gestalt's empty chair exercise (H), working with strengths (E) or the GROW model (G).

There are many other elements that would deserve to be in this model (Figure 5), but the graphic is busy enough already and I decided to refrain from diluting the argument by getting lost in the detail and complexity of what is and isn't adding a note to my blend of integration.

Figure 5



SPACE ROCKETS?

Beyond circular models, there are many creative ways to illustrate particular styles of integration. In fact, metaphors from real life or moving images may do a much better job of bringing your style of integration to life.

An example of this emerged during my training as a coach supervisor: 'rocket supervision' is a blend of supervision, coaching, mentoring and existential work (in the grey area between coaching and therapy).¹

The idea behind the metaphor is to imagine a rocket being launched into orbit, illustrating a person on their journey towards becoming a coach. Orbit is the point in time where the coach's practice and business have been established to an extent where they have found their place and are comfortable floating along their trajectory and maintaining professional standards. At the beginning of the journey coaches tend to need a large fuel tank (training, books, lectures, learning materials, generally more directive resources) and on this journey coaches also benefit greatly from mentoring (delivered by those who are on a similar path but further ahead). Once the coach is in orbit, they may jettison the fuel tank (the mentoring and teaching component of rocket supervision) and focus on supervision and coaching to maintain orbit. Coaches continue to learn, but without needing a huge boost, unless they are looking to change the trajectory of their work or explore the depths of the helping-by-talking universe.

Coaching is inevitably integrative since it draws on many of the same skill sets that other practices such as therapy or mentoring use

Arriving at some form of theoretical conceptualisation will not only feel more grounded when you work with your clients, but it may also result in you being able to present a tangible framework to your clients so that they may understand how you work. You can then engage in an informed contracting conversation about how the two of you will be working together, which offers the opportunity to co-create the coaching engagement even more. It will also allow other coaches to understand and learn from your approach and ultimately help to grow and expand our profession.

Here's to the future. And I believe the future of coaching is integrative.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Yannick is an existential coach (MA), positive psychologist (MSc), coach trainer and supervisor, course director of the accredited certificate in integrative coaching and the former programme leader of the MSc in coaching psychology at the University of East London. He's the host of the *Coaching Uncaged* podcast and teaching faculty for Animas Centre for Coaching, the International Centre for Coaching Supervision and the School of Life. His book, *An Introduction to Existential Coaching*, was published by Routledge.

1. You'll find a brief animated video explaining the rocket metaphor at rocketsupervision.com.

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Clare Norman invites us to start recording our coaching sessions in order to uncover and reshape the mindsets that shape our practice without us realising.

Imagine for a moment that your mindsets, beliefs, paradigms and scripts are your operating system. Just like our phone upgrades its operating system periodically, we humans need to do the same.

During my time observing more than 250 coaches, conducting between them close to 1,000 hours of coaching, I have noticed that the operating systems that guide them are getting in the way of them being the best coach they could be.

I am looking out for the competencies that these coaches demonstrate, but underlying these competencies is a complicated operating system that can make or break the demonstration of coaching mastery.

So, while I can give feedback to these coaches on the way they show up externally, it's the inner work that is really necessary to get them to make those external behaviour changes stick. As the educator and author Stephen Covey says: 'If you want small changes, work on your behaviour; if you want quantum-leap changes, work on your paradigms.'ⁱ He goes on to say that when you change the way you see things (your paradigms, mindsets, beliefs, scripts), it influences what you do (your habits, your behaviours, your coaching) and the results you get.

IT'S NOT ALL ABOUT SKILLS

As I provide this mentor coaching to coaches, I challenge them to focus on the mindset that underpins the skillsets – all in the context of my definition of coaching: 'a joint endeavour to move beyond known thinking to discover new thinking that energises the thinker to change.'¹

This guides my philosophy that coaching:

- is a partnership;
- moves beyond known thinking, because that known thinking has kept the person stuck in place and will continue to do so if we stay in that space with them;
- is about discovery;
- leads to new thinking, because this leads to new ways of being and doing;

- and energises change – the very point of coaching – which makes it different from any other conversations we might have in life.

I share this because it underpins the mindset shifts that we need to make if we are to become extraordinary coaches.

If I were to lay out a few scripts or beliefs that are contra-indicators for the above, and ones that I see externalised in the way that coaches show up in their coaching, we might recognise some of them:

These are just a smattering of the 83 mindsets that I see playing out in coaching sessions, and that I have written about in my upcoming book. Those on the right of the table (opposite) certainly give the thinkers a feeling of being listened to like never before, but they don't necessarily support new thinking and sustainable change.

COACH OBJECTIONS

You might push back, saying that the people you work with expect you to give them ideas and solutions. Yes, perhaps they do, because that is what they are used to at school, at university or at work: people telling them the answers. According to research cited by Adam Grant in *Think Again*, when asked, students invariably say that they preferred the lecture format where they were given all the answers compared to experiential formats of learning, in which it was much harder for them to figure out the answers for themselves. But in terms of what actually stuck, they learned more when they experimented and thought for themselves.ⁱⁱ We know this to be true, and yet we still slip into the service provider persona.

You might also push back about interrupting, because your parents may have taught you that it's rude to interrupt and that the thinker will find it intrusive. But you are there to enable them to access new wisdom, and you can get to that wisdom without the backstory. That's something you need to believe in to make this behaviour switch.

HOW TO IDENTIFY PROHIBITIVE MINDSETS

One way to identify our own operating system is to listen to or watch recordings of our coaching and identify what mindsets underpin our words and actions. It's good to listen to how we match up to a set of

Useful mindset	How this shows up in coaching
We partner	We co-create and, within that, my role is to hold the process. Theirs is to do the thinking because they are creative, resourceful and whole. ⁱⁱⁱ
We move beyond known thinking	I interrupt their story to check whether it is useful to them to say it out loud, or whether they might wish to skip the story to get to new thinking.
We are on a quest to discover and neither of us know the answers	Everything I do or say suggests that this is a unique individual in a unique situation, which no one has ever encountered in exactly this way before. I am comfortable in them not knowing.
New thinking	My questions, observations and invitations to experiment in the present take them deeper, peeling the onion to get to new thinking. We move vertically beneath the surface and this provides us with answers that we would not have discovered had we worked horizontally towards solutions.
To energise change	Their new awareness (of the root cause, their beliefs, values, feelings etc.) will take them to new experiments. They are a scientist, testing new ways of being.

coaching competencies, but to sharpen that skill we must first decide which mindsets need to shift to enable us to make maintainable changes to our coaching.

Listening to recordings of our coaching is 'reflecting in action' (albeit still after the action) rather than 'reflecting on action' – on what we think we did.^{iv} Reflecting in action is more effective, because it gives us evidence of what we actually said or did rather than what we remember (or don't remember) we said or did.

Think of this as similar to video analysis by elite sportspeople. They will always watch themselves back to identify where they could fine-tune their mindset and their skill. If we wish to be even higher-calibre coaches, we can take a leaf out of sport's book and include this same 'reflection in action' within our reflective practice.

Even more powerful is to listen/watch with a trained mentor coach who can help us to identify those useful and not-so-useful scripts that we have learned from our parents, teachers, peers, workplaces and coach training. We may be blind to them as they are so ingrained in who we are.

When will you start recording your coaching and reflecting in action rather than reflecting on action?

It's likely that you have objections about privacy, but in my experience most people, when asked for their permission, are happy to be recorded and for that recording to be shared with a mentor coach.

The recording can be incredibly useful to them as well, to listen back to their thinking. So, I encourage you build this into your continuous professional development. You will be staggered by the amount of learning and growth.

Contra-indicated mindset	How this shows up in coaching
I am a service provider	Master and apprentice: I fill the gaps in their creativity, resourcefulness and wholeness. I (inadvertently) disempower them and infantilise them with my words and actions as I invite them to act like a consumer.
I must be a good listener	I allow the thinker to tell the story, the context, the chronology, even when they know it already and are simply filling me in.
They come to me for my expertise and my answers	I have answers. I ask leading questions that take the thinker to those answers. I may even give them my answers directly.
Talking out loud is goodness	We sit in dialogue, often going around in circles, getting stuck as the head's wisdom isn't enough.
To energise change (I [Clare] believe all coaches have this desire to energise change)	(As a result of all of the above and other limiting mindsets, the change is often not sustainable or transformational).

Think of this as unlearning, if you like. Unlearning the mindsets that are holding you back as a coach, and replacing those mindsets with new beliefs that allow you and the people you work with to shift up a gear or two.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



With over 20 years of coaching experience, Clare Norman is highly sought-after by other coaches and coach training companies as a master mentor coach. Clare looks to continually sharpen individuals' coaching edge and upskill mentor coaches so they can deliver high-quality feedback to their coaches-in-development. Her laser focus on mindset shifts and her knack for spotting marginal gains has made her a go-to person for coaches looking for mentorship. With an international following, Clare is making a difference to the world of work via the professional application of coaching.

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EXPLORING POLYVAGAL THEORY AND ITS APPLICATION TO COACHING

Kerry Cullen reflects on the importance of understanding how the autonomic nervous system works and invites us to befriend our own nervous systems for the good of ourselves and our work as coaches.

I came across Stephen Porges' polyvagal theory (PVT) a few years ago when I received a medical diagnosis that was potentially life threatening. PVT and its suggested practices provided me with a compass to navigate this difficult period, and has since transformed the way I coach. In recent years, polyvagal theory has mainly been applied in therapeutic settings, and the majority of the participants on the training course I did were psychotherapists. However, the theory and the practices are now starting to gain traction in the coaching world – and for good reason.

The acronym VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous) is often used to describe the modern-day landscape. PVT provides insights into our underlying physiological responses, helping us interact with our nervous system and become more resourceful as we navigate such landscapes.

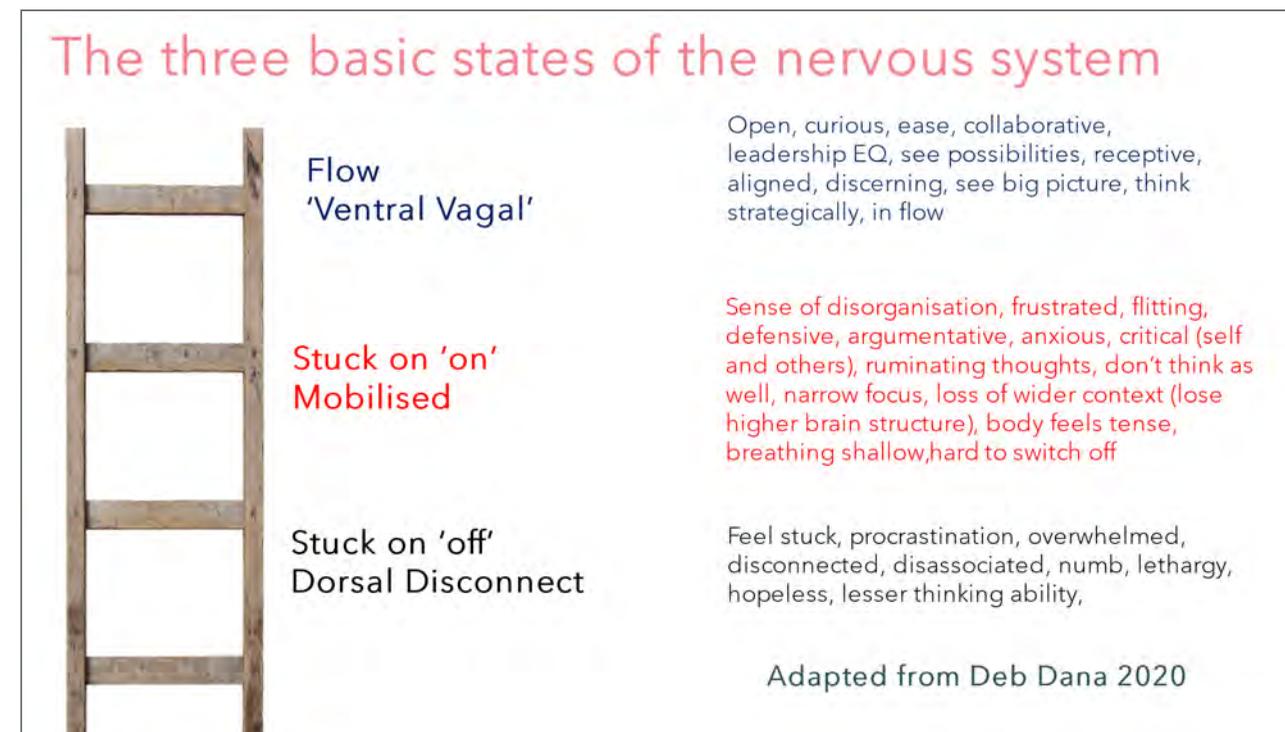
So, what is it? PVT provides a paradigm shift with regards to our understanding of the nervous system. Traditionally, we have thought of the sympathetic branch of the autonomic nervous system (ANS) as bringing our energy up and being responsible for our 'fight or

flight' response, and the parasympathetic system as being the 'saviour' of the nervous system, restoring calm and equilibrium. Porges posits that the parasympathetic nervous system is made of up two functionally different branches – the ventral vagal and the dorsal vagal, and that the dorsal vagal is part of the nervous system's adaptive defence response.¹

The three branches or states of the ANS operate as a hierarchy, which Deb Dana has illustrated through the analogy of a ladder:

'If you want to improve the world start by making people feel safe'
– Stephen Porges

Figure 1



The theory proposes that our ANS is always reading our internal and external environment for cues of safety and danger in a process called neuroception. This is a conversation that goes on below our level of conscious awareness. Porges says that 'the nervous system doesn't do appropriate, it just does what it does to keep us safe.'² I have found this to be an incredibly powerful frame to turn to when our nervous system's adaptive defensive response stops us from showing up as we want to.

A number of years ago I was presenting to a senior group and froze: I could not speak and my co-presenter had to take over. After it happened, I kept experiencing feelings of shame and I doubted myself when I thought about it. This is something that psychologist and author Tara Brach describes as 'the second arrow' – the thoughts we have after something negative has happened that are often worse than the event itself. Knowing that my nervous system was just trying to keep me safe helped me to be more compassionate towards myself and be more accepting about what happened. I have also found this very helpful for coaching clients. One client found huge potential in reframing her burnout experience, moving from seeing her body as letting her down to seeing it as keeping her safe.

From a biological perspective, PVT is centred around the vagus nerve, known as the wandering nerve as a result of its path from the brain stem to our frontal cortex, face, eyes, ears, chest, heart, lungs and right down into our abdomen and digestive system.

As the ladder in Figure 1 shows, when we feel safe our nervous system is in flow (ventral vagal). We feel open and connected with the world, our heart rate is regulated, we have access to our peripheral vision and our frontal cortex is online. This is the place

where we can do our best thinking, better see possibilities and think strategically. As coaches, when both us and our client are in this state we have the best possibility of achieving the best coaching outcomes.

I believe we intuitively know this: making a client feel safe, settling in, perhaps starting with a breathing exercise. I think in many ways PVT just makes scientifically explicit what we implicitly know. From a nervous system perspective, coregulation describes how two persons' nervous systems connect on a certain level, finding safety together through the reciprocal sending and receiving of signals of safety. It can also be that your nervous system picks up cues of danger from someone (remember, it is not governed by the rational part of your brain: it could be that a characteristic of someone reminds you of someone you felt unsafe with in your past). The times when we are actually safe but in which we perceive a situation as unsafe are known as neuroception mismatches. Of course, there are also times when the perception of danger is a match with reality and hence completely appropriate and necessary for our survival.

When we start to perceive more cues of danger than those of safety we begin to move down the ladder, mobilising for action and triggering our fight or flight response. In this state, we can get stuck on 'on'. We hear things differently; we are primed for sounds of danger and even 'neutral' voices can be perceived as dangerous. Our focus narrows, our heart rate increases, we might feel flighty and our thoughts begin to churn. Sleep can become difficult and we can feel like we can't switch off.

When I was dealing with my diagnosis and I was 'mobilised', I would ruminate about who would look after my kids if I was incapacitated or if I died. I also found it hard to focus and I was irritable.

We build resilience by developing strategies to befriend our nervous system and move back up the ladder

Porges' theory proposes that when we experience more cues of danger than safety we will slip even further down the ladder, into being stuck on 'off' (dorsal vagal). This involves the parasympathetic nervous system (previously not thought to be involved in the stress response). This is our oldest form of protection in evolutionary terms. Think about a mouse caught in a cat's mouth: it will play dead. Dorsal vagal is an adapted response to playing dead – we disassociate, we feel numb, we feel disconnected, we feel alone. It is characterised by a loss of muscle tone that can be seen in the posture and face. It can easily be mistaken as a 'calm response'. Once, my son went missing (he was 11 at the time) on a mountain for several hours. Before we found him, a policewoman told me that I seemed very calm. In reality, I was having a dorsal response of overwhelm and I was disassociated. I can also think of examples when I too have misread a dorsal response as calm in others.

I spent a lot of time stuck on 'off' after my diagnosis. It is worth noting that these states are not buckets. We experience different flavours and intensities. For example, a dorsal response is not restricted to feeling totally immobilised. It can also be experienced through drifting off and thinking about something else when you are having a challenging conversation with someone, or zoning out in a meeting that has gone on for too long. This is very relevant from a coaching perspective. If a coaching client goes quiet and seems lower in energy, they could be feeling overwhelmed and slipping into a dorsal response.

For us as coaches, I also think it is relevant to know that simply too much of anything – something too soon or something not enough – can manifest as a cue of danger for our nervous system. In other words, if we have too many clients back-to-back, not enough breaks or simply too much going on, we can find ourselves slipping out of ventral vagal (where we do our best coaching) and slipping down the ladder to sympathetic or dorsal, where we will be less present to our clients.

Deb Dana says that 'we are always somewhere on the ladder'; in our humanness, there will be times when we will be acting from a dysregulated state. She also says that a resilient system is a flexible system. In other words, we build resilience by developing strategies to befriend our nervous system and move back up the ladder, thus enabling us to bring ventral energy to difficult situations. When dealing with my diagnosis, this meant spending time in nature and coregulating with people that I felt very safe with. I remember I had the privilege of spending a day with the wonderful Nancy Kline, author of *Time to Think*. Being in her presence I was able to come up the ladder into ventral vagal, and from this place I could access a new level of curiosity and better start to see possibilities: what about getting a second opinion? What about collaborating with my neurosurgeon to do this? That's just what I did – and this course

of action resulted in a very different outcome. For us as coaches, the more we can cultivate our ventral vagal the more we can offer coregulation to our clients.

Will PVT become a cornerstone of coaching in the future? I believe so. PVT is currently being used to inform many other fields, particularly those related to health and education. I heard recently about research currently being conducted in midwifery that has found that if a mother in labour interacts with a dysregulated midwife, or even a dysregulated receptionist at the hospital, her oxytocin production can stop and the birth process can be affected. This research is looking into how to create a PVT-informed environment for birthing mothers, ultimately creating more safety in order to promote better birthing outcomes.

To quote Stephen Porges: 'If you want to improve the world start by making people feel safe.'

I leave you with some questions for your top pocket:

- How might you increase cues of safety for your clients?
- What if you knew that your autonomic nervous system has only ever been trying to keep you safe? What would it be like to befriend your nervous system?
- What brings you a sense of connection? What brings you ease? Joy? What makes your heart sing and how can you orientate more towards it?
- Given that too much of something can in itself be a cue of danger for our nervous system, how can you honour your natural rhythm as a coach? Are you taking breaks when you need them? Are you honouring your need to recharge?
- How might things be different if you changed your lens to see a 'difficult client' as dysregulated?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Kerry is a chartered business psychologist (BPS) who has been coaching for 20 years. She aspires to create a coaching environment where people can come home to themselves. Her works spans the public and private sector and she works internationally. She loves exploring new edges in coaching, and discovering and training in polyvagal theory felt like coming home to herself. Kerry is jointly launching an inaugural polyvagal course for coaches with Sandra Dunsmore, under the auspices of Deb Dana. Details can be found at kerrycullen.com.

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THE RISE OF TEAMS AT WORK

Dr Declan Woods introduces the Association for Coaching's new team coaching competency model, making the case for a renewed focus on developing teams in the workplace.

The time for teams at work has arrived.

Conversely, teams in the workplace are not new and have existed in organisations for decades. Interest in them peaked in the 1980s with the promise of high-performing teams. Sadly, this potential wasn't met and many teams – then and now – underwhelm and underperform.

It is not surprising that teams seem to have got lost in the intervening period, with more individualistic cultures dominating. So why the resurgence of interest in teams now?

The shine has gone off the notion of individual heroic leaders, with organisations finally catching up to the fact that they are now just too complex to be led by any one person. Teams can meet this need by providing collective leadership drawn from a diverse membership.

Beyond this, teams have long been the chief means by which people at work are organised and tasks carried out, plus the mainstay through which performance is delivered. Put simply: when teams perform, so do organisations. While many teams don't perform as expected, they nonetheless possess huge potential, which firms are now looking to leverage for success.

FACTORS DRIVING THE USE OF TEAMS

Traditional drivers around globalisation, technology and the like remain alongside newer ones: strategies needing to keep up with fast-paced market conditions; employees (particularly Gen Z) demanding more autonomy; the growth in knowledge work (over execution of work); and the need for knowledge to be pushed out from corporate centres to the furthest point at which work is carried out. These factors all hail the ascendancy of teams – and, with them, organisations looking for ways to support teams and improve their effectiveness.

There are many ways of doing just that: teambuilding, development, training, consultancy and facilitation to name the most common. Where

team coaching fits into this smorgasbord of offerings is the place of a future article, but suffice to say many of these interventions are not meeting the needs of teams fully, leaving a gap for team coaching to address.

THE TEAM COACHING MARKET

The AC's interest in team coaching grew from two drivers: its members and the market. Many AC members were already working with teams and seeking formal recognition of their work in this area, or were looking to move out of the saturated individual coaching market.

While there is limited data available on the size of team coaching market, a 2018 valuation by Heidrick Consulting estimated it to be \$26,437,500, and anecdotal evidence points to it having grown since. Successive Ridler reports on the state of the coaching marketplace support this view, with the last report highlighting that 76% of organisations have increased their use of team coaching to support increasingly global, dispersed and fast-changing teams.¹

Many teams have been formed or reorganised during or since Covid-19 lockdowns, and many have been grappling with hybrid working since. These factors suggest the growth in the use of team coaching by organisations looks set to continue.

DEFINING TEAM COACHING

Returning to the second driver for the AC's concentration on team coaching, many of its organisational and corporate members were turning to the AC for guidance on how to support their teams and reported widespread confusion over what team coaching is (and isn't) and what good practice looks like.

Team coaching was a gap in the AC's line-up – until now. The AC has spent the last three and a half years exploring the field and its recent, and ongoing, work has sought to bring more clarity to a confusing

picture. This work included creating definitions of what constitutes a team and what team coaching is, in order to help educate members and the wider market.

The AC defines a team as 'collaboration between a recognised group of people drawing upon individual capabilities and strengths who are committed to working together inter-dependently to achieve a common purpose and collective performance and learning goals.'

This definition underlines the importance of people relying on each other while working together to achieve collective outputs. They (and others in the organisation) identify as being part of a particular group and harness individual contributions for the benefit of the whole team.

The AC defines team coaching as 'the application of coaching skills while working with a whole, intact team over time to improve inter-dependent members' abilities to work together collaboratively to achieve the team's collective purpose, potential and performance.'

This definition emphasises that coaching skills are at the heart of team coaching. While this should be self-evident, the use of such skills seemed to be lost in many team interventions. This description also shows the focus on the whole team. This does not ignore or downplay the role of the individual team member, rather it encourages practitioners to focus on the overall team. It reminds us that, like people, teams develop over time, and that one-off interventions (like awaydays or off-sites) are more often sticking-plaster solutions at best.

TEAM COACHING COMPETENCIES

We wanted to understand how team coaches work with teams more fully and so extended our research. We carried out extensive desk and secondary research on teams and team coaching, followed by interviews with dozens of team practitioners globally. We codified the themes that emerged from the interviews before validating these qualitative findings and then arranging them into coaching competencies with practice indicators. The result was a team coaching competency model, which can be found on the AC website.²

A future article will expand on these competencies and explain how practitioners can use them to guide their work with teams. For now, we hope you find them educational and instructive.

TEAM COACHING ACCREDITATION

A further outcome of the AC's studies into team coaching practice is an accreditation scheme in two parts: one for individual team practitioners, and the other for team coach training programmes. Details can be found on the AC's website.

Teams are complex, messy and constantly changing. The aspiration behind the accreditation scheme is to help providers create team coach training programmes that equip practitioners with the knowledge, skills and confidence to work with this messiness, and for these attributes to be recognised through individual practitioner accreditation.

We introduced this accreditation scheme to AC members and coach training providers in a series of webinars in May this year.

Feedback received so far is positive and encouraging:

- 'I am thoroughly impressed with the breadth and depth of the competency framework and the pragmatic and flexible approach to assessment.' *Coach training provider*
- 'I am impressed that the team coaching competencies are concise, inclusive and practical.' *AC member and team practitioner*
- 'A brilliant innovation.' *Organisational member*

I am confident we are on the right track. Work continues to develop detailed applicant guidance and forms, and we expect these to be ready

in the late summer. Applications will be open from 1 October. For more information, please contact the AC's accreditation team.

THE FUTURE OF TEAM COACHING

Team coaching is in its relative infancy. It is where one-to-one coaching was twenty-something years ago: real understanding about it and when and how to deploy it is low; it is made available to the few rather than the many; it is used (often but not exclusively) to address dysfunction; and approaches and practices vary highly and are offered to differing quality standards and price points.

All markets follow a similar trajectory. Team coaching's is no different. As it matures, there will be more clarity about when to use it for best effect, it will be accessible by all teams and used to help them realise potential and to leverage strengths, and while techniques will remain diverse there will be more certainty about which to draw upon to achieve defined outcomes. In general, standards of practice will have improved.

By definition, team coaching entails working with a larger part of a system and has the potential to have a significant impact on it. Over time, team coaching will become a far more mainstream intervention in support of organisations' teams and, I predict, will become as large as or larger than the executive coaching market.

TEAM COACHING IN COACHING PERSPECTIVES

What does this all mean for Coaching Perspectives?

I am delighted to say that team coaching will become a regular fixture in this publication. We want to go further than addressing dilemmas encountered while coaching teams to covering teams more widely. From now on, we will be dedicating a section in each issue to the subject of team coaching.

We intend to present material on a range of team coaching topics, reflecting the wide diversity of thinking, approaches and practices. This is where we need your help – and contributions. Please send us your ideas and requests on areas you would like to see featured and, better still, offer to contribute articles yourself.

Join me as a fellow pioneer in this growing field.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Dr Declan Woods is the global head of team coaching standards and accreditation with the Association for Coaching, and CEO of teamGenie®, a company specialising in team design, coaching and development.

1. Reports of 2012, 2014 and 2016. See ridlerandco.com for more information
2. bit.ly/3arJdUJ



INTEGRATING APPS INTO YOUR COACHING

How might apps enhance your coaching?
Bernice Fabi shares her experiences of incorporating an array of them into her coaching work.

The iOS App Store launched in 2008 with 500 apps. Today, there are in excess of seven million apps across iOS and Android platforms, extending to every genre and niche. An astounding 88 billion apps were downloaded in 2021. Just count the number of times you pick up your phone in a day, or look around the next time you're seated in a restaurant. Young and old are absorbed in their smartphones. Our current world is connected via app technology.

Traditional one-to-one and group coaching approaches offer tremendous value; however, we also need to consider where people actually spend their time if we want to connect with a developing world. Let's explore the benefits of app integration into private, group and B2B coaching. Notice I didn't say replace. The focus here is on evolving your client experience in a new way.

CUSTOMISE YOUR CLIENT'S JOURNEY

There is an astounding number of apps currently available. As a personal health enthusiast, my favourites have been MyZone (which has kept me on track for over 10 years in my fitness journey) and MyNetDiary Pro for the occasional macro-management check-in. Whether you create an app specific to your own coaching practice, collaborate with an existing programme or offer app suggestions to your clients based on research and fit, customising allows a tailored approach for each client. App suggestions may include daily focuses, motivation or recorded meditations (Calm and Headspace have my personal recommendation, although there are usage fees). Many apps offer exercises, journaling, trackers, timers, scanners and so on. The options are endless. Be familiar with those you recommend by using them yourself.

PROVIDE TRAINING

Timed release of weekly videos and shorter daily audios or reflections is an excellent alternative to online courses. Face it, most of us have a habit of reaching for our phones at the sound of each morning's alarm. Instead of scrolling social media first thing, I've made it a habit of opening my positive intelligence app, PQ, for a two-minute daily focus mindful practice. Training modules have been my go-to partner for car rides, housework and gardening.

CREATE AN ONLINE COMMUNITY

The pandemic has left us yearning for connection, especially with more individuals choosing to work from home more regularly. Being part of and leading an online pod has been a tremendous experience for me from both a participant and leader perspective. Intimate connections have been created with my clients, with them sharing and asking questions in a supportive environment where everyone has a common interest and desire to grow. I also enhance this experience with virtual meetings where I can personally encourage the community bond and offer a taste of live coaching to the group.

REACH YOUR CLIENTS EASILY

Apps ease the challenge of connecting with busy clients. Recorded live video sessions or short reel-type videos allow clients to listen at their convenience. You may consider broadcasting private support for clients via voice chat. Your personalised attention as a coach can boost morale and productivity, and offer inspiration. In doing

so, you'll improve client and employee retention in regards to your practice and within organisations.

CREATE CONSISTENT ENGAGEMENT AND/OR OFFERS AND CHALLENGE

One of the best indicators of client engagement in coaching is the feedback I receive from their progress. As a coach, I'm committed to helping my clients with habit formation and holding them accountable. Skill mastery and lifestyle change are truly embodied with daily practice. Badges, recognition levels and banners can all keep a client moving forward and celebrating their successes.

PROVIDE AN ACCOUNTABILITY CHANNEL

In my experience, a lack of accountability is the biggest reason for a lack of progress. My clients have found WhatsApp and the chat option in the PQ app easy and informal ways for me to check in to offer encouragement and keep them on track. My clients have reported that accountability through connection with peers also helps momentum.

In summary, coaching apps have tremendous merit. However, I caution you to create and/or incorporate apps always with the client's or organisation's benefit in mind. I also consider my credibility and expertise to be represented in the face and content of the app programme and alternate apps I suggest. All apps are tools, not replacements for the client's relationship with you as a coach, which is so beneficial and imperative to their success and your reputation. Regardless of what tools you use, I also encourage you to never lose sight of the value of personal delivery and of making every experience, regardless of your business scale, a positive one.

Special thanks to Evie Stamps and Nicole Brooke for their time and feedback

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Bernice Fabi is a certified personal and empowerment coach who is passionate about helping women and young people embody their highest potential. Bernice applies the neuroscience-backed principles of positive intelligence, an app-based mental fitness programme, into her coaching for a truly life-changing experience. An eager and curious student of life, Bernice has an innovative coaching approach and brings an array of experience to her practice, including a lengthy career in banking and business lending, and as an entrepreneur, Junior Achievement leader and – most notably – a wife, mum and life enthusiast.



‘ALCHEMY HAPPENS WHEN A COACH INTEGRATES EFFECTIVELY’

The Alchemy of Coaching team share some models from their coach development guides to help us integrate development into our ongoing journey as practitioners.

A coach's development journey rarely happens by chance, in much the same way that effective coaching rarely happens by luck. Both require thought, time, effort and resourcefulness. At the heart of the Alchemy approach is the belief that successfully integrating

everything a coach knows, all their experience and learning, is an essential part of a coach's development. We have written a set of 20 guides to assist coaches with their development, and here we share two models that highlight the importance of integration.

Our first model, the SOCK-I diagram, has integrating at its centre, underlining the importance of a coach using and integrating everything they know about themselves (self), their clients (other), their context and their knowledge. All four of these satellites surround integrating, and need to be appreciated, understood and used skilfully for effective coaching to occur. We find it most valuable to use the SOCK-I diagram as a tool to aid preparation for a coaching session and subsequent reflection. Preparation – where we give time, attention and thinking to each of the four satellites and then consider how they might be integrated – provides a foundation on which to base a session and diverge from as the session develops. Reflection considers how each of the satellites came into the session, what learning you can take from it, and what might be missing or in need of greater attention in the next session.



Figure 1: the SOCK-I model

Our second model is the journey towards mastery. Our definition of mastery is ‘being able, in real time, to be aware of and understand what is going on, and be able to make informed choices as a result of this awareness.’

In this model integration is again a key theme. The six outer circles represent critical aspects relating to the journey towards mastery. A clear sense of purpose and intent gives a coach's development journey structure and direction, avoiding a sense of it being ad hoc or haphazard. Through this it becomes possible to integrate development across all aspects of this model, on areas and with activities that matter to you and are therefore more likely to aid your development. We developed this model because we observed many coaches giving focus to only one or two of the outer circles of the model, meaning their development risked becoming narrow and they risked missing out on development in other key areas. We frequently use this model to prompt coaches to consider whether they are spending the right amount of time on each of the elements. While development is unlikely to occur in every element at the same time, nor occupy the same amount of effort, without integrating every element outlined in the model a development journey is less likely to proceed effectively.



Figure 2: The journey towards mastery model

The 20 guides have been divided into two sets of ten. Each guide covers a bite-sized chunk for a coach to use in their development. The first set covers the fundamental areas that all coaches need to appreciate and regularly develop – from asking what is at the heart of coaching through ‘who am I when I coach’ to individual learning. The second set looks more closely at particular topics, including individual difference, the importance of language and continuing professional development.

Throughout the guides are questions and exercises aimed at facilitating development. A summary of all the guides is available at alchemyofcoaching.com/development-guides.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



The Alchemy of Coaching team – Ian Saunders, Paul Hedley and Ray Charlton – draw on their many years of coaching experience to design and deliver coach training programmes and coaching, for both individuals and organisations. All their associates are graduates of their coach development programme, ‘In search of wisdom and mastery’. They are passionate about using their experience for the benefit of others and have written many articles, guides and tools – all available via the Alchemy of Coaching website. They include a monthly discussion paper entitled *Base Metal*. They are all AC accreditation assessors, which they recognise as enormously valuable CPD.

THINKING ON YOUR FEET

Julie Flower believes that learning from improv – unscripted, improvisational theatre and comedy – can help leaders and coaches thrive in uncertainty.

In an increasingly fast-paced, uncertain climate, leaders need to find ways to adapt and innovate to deliver excellence for their clients and beneficiaries, and to enable their teams to thrive. Coaches, in partnering with clients to navigate complexity, play a vital role in disrupting existing thinking and supporting shifts in behaviour. Improvisation (or improv for short) offers powerful principles and practical exercises for both client learning and coach development, harnessing the potential of integrated practice to address the challenges and opportunities of the modern leadership environment.

IMPROVISATIONAL LEADERSHIP IS VITAL FOR THE FUTURE

Improv can be described as ‘creativity, adaptation and innovation under time pressure.’ⁱ The circumstances under which leaders, teams and organisations need to improvise have attracted increasing research attention over the last two decades, as rapid global change and volatility have made traditional forms of management and planning less relevant.ⁱⁱ The global pandemic, and geopolitical and economic uncertainty have sharpened the need for leaders and teams to adapt and innovate.

In an uncertain and rapidly changing environment an adaptive approach to human development and change is more relevant than ever, and it is in this context that professional coaches are working.ⁱⁱⁱ While recent emphasis has been on leadership survival, those who thrive in uncertainty demonstrate high engagement, initiative, a forward-looking mindset, innovation and collaboration.^{iv}

Coaches have an important role in the development of the skills and behaviours needed to operate effectively in uncertainty: ‘the need for deeper self-awareness, psychological flexibility, deep collaboration, curious conversations and co-creation is growing.’^v

POWERFUL EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Improv is a form of unplanned collaborative performance based on core principles, including ‘yes, and...’ (creatively building on ideas, rather than blocking), active listening, experimentation and embracing ‘failure.’^{vi} Improv training exercises are designed to build the trust, safety, emotional connection and creative collaboration needed for strong performance. They have found resonance and popularity within leadership and team development as powerful, and enjoyable, forms of experiential learning.^{vii} Experiential learning may also play an important role in the way in which coaching works as a development intervention.^{viii}

The application of improv exercises in the workplace has, until relatively recently, lacked a strong empirical underpinning.^{ix} However, several studies include positive findings with respect to the development of flexibility of thinking, collaborative behaviour, climates for innovation and psychological safety.^x Given the skills and behaviours needed to thrive in uncertainty, perhaps improv is ready to have its moment in integrated leadership development and coaching practice?

COACHING IS INHERENTLY IMPROVISATIONAL

Coaching, as a dialogic, client-focused practice, can be viewed to some extent as an improvisational activity, involving ‘highly interactive relationships where a dynamic exchange of questions, thoughts, ideas and solutions occurs.’^{xi} The coaching literature and professional competency frameworks recognise the need for coaches to develop skills, behaviours and ways of being that are associated with effective improvisation, including presence, strong working relationships, co-creation, flexible action and active listening. Coaches recognise the many improvisational moments within coaching, even if they do not commonly use the term.^{xiii}

Findings from studies within therapeutic clinical social work suggest engaging in improv theatre training could be a powerful continuous professional development intervention for practitioners. Findings relevant to coaches include increased flexibility, open-mindedness, therapeutic presence, self-disclosure and self-awareness.^{xiv}

My recent interventional research into how coaches experience engaging in improv exercises offers promising findings with respect to:

- the development of coach presence (including emotional self-awareness and empathy);
- the strength and speed of relationships;
- a desire to be more experimental, creative and playful within coaching;
- and the potential for direct practical application within coaching encounters.^{xv}

THE POWER OF INTEGRATED PRACTICE

Coaching is a relatively young and eclectic profession, drawing on a range of philosophies and disciplines, and benefiting hugely from the integration of evidence-based learning and practice. Given the modern leadership context and the increasing evidence base around the benefits of engaging in experiential improv exercises, the time is ripe to take improv more seriously. Improv can be great fun, and it can offer leaders, teams and coaches the chance to develop their self-awareness, relationships and skills in a safe, creative and experimental environment.

Here are three examples of practical improv exercises that are simple to use and offer powerful learning for leadership and coach development. Using a simple reflective framework – such as ‘What? So what? Now what?’ – as part of the debrief will help to maximise the self-awareness and learning.^{xvi} Enjoy experimenting!

TO BUILD CONNECTION AND RAPPORT

The quality of human relationships is fundamental to improv. Exercises to build rapport and establish mutual understanding and connection can be rapid and powerful tools, including in the virtual space.

What you just said

In a pair:

- One person makes a statement from a place of truth. E.g., ‘I love going to watch my football team on a Saturday afternoon.’
- The other person listens and responds with: ‘What you just said is important to me because...’, connecting with something that is true for them. E.g., ‘because one of my earliest memories is going to the football with my grandad’ or ‘because I find being in crowds energising.’
- Carry on back and forth or begin with a new statement each time – listening, building connections and learning more about each other.

TO DEVELOP CREATIVE THINKING AND SPONTANEITY

Many improv exercises encourage thinking on the spot to see ordinary scenarios in new and creative ways, disrupting patterns of thinking.

Five alternative uses for...

In a pair or small group:

- One person holds up an everyday object.
- Another person invents five alternative uses for the object (with no requirement to stay in the realm of the ‘rational’).
- Others should offer positive encouragement as each idea is suggested.

TO ENCOURAGE COLLABORATION AND CO-CREATION

‘Yes, and...’ is a fundamental principle of improv, supporting ‘building’ rather than ‘blocking’ behaviours and the collaborative development of new ideas. It can also generate motivation and excitement about working together in new ways.

‘Yes, and...’ collective reminiscence

In a pair or small group, with an order of speaking established:

- One person begins with a statement about a positive (but imaginary) achievement of the pair or group. E.g., ‘Remember the time we built the world’s tallest building out of jelly?’
- The next person builds on what they have said with: ‘Yes, it all began [a sentence about how it started]’.
- The reminiscence continues with each player building on the last suggestion with ‘yes, and...’ to tell the story.
- Continue until, as a pair or group, you have told the story of your success!
- This could then be repeated using a real goal or vision, looking back and reflecting on how it was achieved.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Julie Flower is a leadership and team development practitioner and coach, with a specialism in systems leadership and integrated improvisation. She is an experienced improv performer, including with the award-winning Improbotics group, exploring AI and human interaction. Julie is an external tutor in coaching at Henley Business School and the co-editor of *Coaching Tools volumes 1 and 2*.

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THE THREE C'S OF COACHING: AN ETHICAL INTEGRATION

But is it coaching? **Marie Faire** takes on another of the unquestioned articles of faith in coaching in her latest column.

In the last 20 years the professional coaching community has become somewhat obsessed with defining itself. More recently there appear to be heightened sensibilities and competition between varying professions that offer 'interpersonal, talking help'. It is not therefore surprising that those engaged in coaching, the newest of those professions, have succumbed to the search for the Holy Grail – a conclusive definition of what coaching is and isn't.

'But is it coaching?' is something that I have spent many hours exploring with students and supervisees as a trainer and supervisor of coaches.

Over the nearly 40 years that I have been involved in change work with individuals, the field has grown and differentiated. Any accreditation with which I am familiar will at some point test for the applicant's understanding of 'the profession' as distinct from other professions.

For instance, much is written about the distinctions between coaching and mentoring; between coaching and counselling; and between coaching and therapy. Clearly there are some situations that would be better suited to a particular helping strategy. However, the search for a precise definition of what any given practitioner does presupposes that we could produce definitions that would be isolated and separate, and is of primary interest to those who are the practitioners.

I am of the opinion that by far the majority of our clients couldn't care less. They want to know we are capable of assisting them in getting from where they are now to where they want to be, and all too often they don't even seem to check that out.

All of the helping professions use the same core interpersonal skills and require some of the same competencies. There is far more overlap than there is difference, both in what is done and regarding the issues that can be usefully supported.

To be perfectly frank, in my less-considered moments there is a part of me that does ask: 'who cares what we call what we do as long as it works?'

I would like to suggest that a more fruitful discussion would concern how we determine professional practice rather than define what it is.

To this end, I suggest that there are three vital ingredients in the process of deciding whether to work with a client – the three C's of professional practice – contracting, competency and client's best interest. The best metaphor that I have for this is the legs of a three-legged stool. Without any of them, our safe practice falls over.

CONTRACTING

Much has been written about the importance of getting the contract right and then delivering what has been agreed.^{i,ii}

Questions

Is what we are working on what we agreed we would work on?

If not, is it appropriate and in our gift to re-negotiate the contract?

It may be that we have the professional competency to do what is needed and it would be in the client's interest, but if it is not contracted for (or re-contracted for) then we have no business going there.

COMPETENCY

Every professional body at some point defines the competencies required of that profession. Turning this on its head, I suggest we ask the professional to use their 'internal supervisor'ⁱⁱⁱ to check their own competency, including their capability and capacity for doing the work.

Questions

Am I competent enough to deal with this issue?

Do I have the capacity to address this issue appropriately?

If I am not competent (skill) or do not have the resources (time, energy) then do I need to refer?

CLIENT'S BEST INTEREST (AND THEIR WORLD)

Every client is part of a system, and we need to ensure that what we do attends to the client's best interest in the ecology of that system.

Questions

Is it appropriate for this client to work on this issue with me?

Is it appropriate for this client to work on this issue in this context?

Just because I can, it doesn't mean I should. This may be the contracted issue and I am competent, but it may not be right to proceed: an example of where this might arise would be if both the coach and coachee worked for the same organisation and the issue is of a deeper or personal nature.

And if in doubt about any of these, take the dilemma to supervision.

Like the stool needs all three of its legs, we need all three competencies in place if we are to avoid falling over and if we are to be professional practitioners of whatever we call ourselves.

This is an updated version of an article first published in issue six of the AICTP Journal, November 2013

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HOW TRANSFORMATIONAL COACHES USE INTEGRATIVE APPROACHES

Keith Merron invites us to consider the importance of integrating different modalities within a framework if we hope to support coaches on a transformational journey.

A man woke up one day to discover he was trapped in a 10x10x10ft wooden box with no windows and only one door. Inside the box was nothing but the old, beaten-up chair upon which he sat, and he felt overwhelmed with despair and emptiness. Outside the box was the rich fullness of life, replete with love, family, friends, purposeful work, and all the successes and joys that are part of our earthly lives.

The man sat on the chair, paralysed by the deeply disturbing, yet vague, sense that during the night a group of dangerous men had abducted him and informed him that he must live the rest of his

life inside this box. They said they would give him enough food to survive, but that if he ever tried to escape he would be killed immediately by the armed men, who stood outside the door day and night.

The man struggled with his thoughts. Was the threat real, or was his mind playing a trick on him? Was he destined to live trapped in the box for the rest of his life? Did the mere possibility of living a free, fulfilling life make escape worth the tremendous risk? He sat in gut-wrenching fear, unable to decide what to do.

Too often, our personal paradigms bind us in a no-options way of thinking. Within such a mental box, we make choices and live out our lives. While constricting, over time the box becomes familiar and comfortable. We know its contours and its boundaries.

Although the potential for a splendid, freedom-filled life exists outside the box of our paradigms, dangers lurk as well – or so we fear. We worry about losing our sense of certainty and stability, our very identities, or that others might ridicule or reject us. We worry about becoming failures. Our inner abductors ‘protect’ us from these possibilities and simultaneously block us from identifying a more expansive set of choices.

Everyone is in a box of some kind. Living a fuller, more satisfying life requires that we expand beyond the narrow confines of that box. When someone comes to you and asks for help, they desire – and at the same time fear – real change. Helpers often prescribe a solution without thinking too deeply about it, one based on their personal experience. And yet the person’s situation is likely to be a confluence of individual factors, multi-faceted and bordering on the intractable. Quick and easy solutions to problems are unlikely to stick, no matter how sensible they seem. A deeper breakthrough is needed.

The beginning of the breakthrough occurs when the person realises that their problem has been created within the personal paradigm through which they relate to the world. If the paradigm created the problem, and the paradigm is invisible to the person asking for help, then the coach’s job is to help the client see their paradigm. Einstein said it well: ‘You can’t solve today’s problems from the same level of thinking that created them.’ Once someone sees how their problem (their box) was created, then images of an enduring solution can start to become available.

Then comes the hard part. Too often, we believe that insight and even catharsis are enough. These may be necessary, but they’re not sufficient to produce enduring change. Old habits rarely die easily. Change requires diligent attention and effort.

Because of all of this, it makes no sense to believe that, as a coach, one can apply a singular process and expect consistent results. If the goal is to train someone on a particular behaviour, then you can do it with a singular approach. If the goal is to be a thought partner as a coach, you can simply ask sensible questions. But if the goal is to coax a transformation out of and with the client, it seems folly to believe that this can be done simply and easily. You might succeed every now and then with a singular approach, but that would be barely sustainable. Why? Because the forces that create our patterns are quite complex and often different for different people. We can reduce the explanation of our paradigms to a set of principles. Even then, paradigms are knotty beasts and require deftness, acuity and diligence to untie. Once unknotted, a lot is required to change them, and even more to solidify them into a more enduring transformational outcome.

So, what approaches would do the job? This is not so easy to answer, but I will offer a few thoughts towards this aim. No matter what approaches or methodologies you use, you will need to be guided by a framework. And the framework needs to be transformational in its orientation. Carl Jung, the father of transformational psychology, offered one that he referred to as an alchemical process.¹ Few know about it, but it is worth looking it up. In my book *The Art of Transformational Coaching* I offer a seven-

step process. There are others out there. No matter what, you can’t just go in there with a few ideas; a methodology or framework that makes sense as it relates to shifting paradigms is needed.

Once guided by this framework, there are several approaches that can be helpful at different places along the transformational journey. Here are a few, most of which I deem as crucial:

1. Those that are somatic in nature are crucial to help unlock the deeper feelings that are embedded in our bodies.
2. A deep understanding of trauma, both shock trauma and developmental trauma.
3. An understanding that we are made up of different parts of ourselves, and that they interact and interweave. This understanding is best exemplified by internal family systems theory and voice dialogue.
4. Cognitive behavioral therapy approaches.
5. Understanding of how beliefs form and can be shifted.
6. Understanding how habits form and change.
7. Rogerian approaches to therapy.
8. An understanding of different personalities and how they affect a person. I’m partial to the Enneagram of Personality model, but others can be helpful.

These are but a few approaches. Suffice to say, many if not most of these need to be in the transformational coach’s toolbox for that coach to be successful. They are taken out and used in different places. You know the proverb: ‘when you only have a hammer, everything looks like a nail.’ If true, then when you have multiple tools you are not looking for anything. You are more able to see the person as they have been, as they are and as they might become. Being a transformational coach is not for everyone. It is only for those that steep themselves in multiple modalities and then integrate these modalities within a framework for the transformational journey.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Keith is the founder and managing partner of Leadership Pathways, a consulting and leadership development firm dedicated to helping organisations achieve high performance and industry leadership. He has more than 37 years of experience of assisting executives and managers. He received his doctorate from Harvard University, where his studies spanned human and organisational development. He has published numerous professional journal articles and is the author of six books on human and organisational change. Twice yearly he offers a workshop to coaches on the subject. Learn more at artoftransformationalcoaching.com.

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POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY COACHING: TRENDS AND DIRECTION

Welcome to our new regular column from **Christian van Nieuwerburgh** and **Robert Biswas-Diener**, exploring the increasing integration of coaching psychology with positive psychology.

As people passionate about positive psychology coaching, we are excited to witness the current surge in interest in the topic. We believe that the growing popularity of positive approaches is, in part, a reaction to the global pandemic. It used to be that wellbeing was an adjunct topic found in one-day trainings or as a footnote mentioned briefly when learning about coaching. Global distress has elevated wellbeing to a topic of primary importance and, increasingly, a focus of workplace policy. Our intention is to use this column to discuss aspects of this fascinating topic. We will share our learning, explore newly emerging concepts and skills, and articulate the links between positive psychology and coaching.

Why is it important that we talk about this? And why now? First, the theme of this issue of *Coaching Perspectives* is integration, and positive psychology coaching is a perfect example of the integration of two distinct fields. It uses the research, theory and assessments of positive psychological science to inform traditional coaching practices. Second, we believe that positive psychology coaching is useful in that clients like it. We have conducted research that suggests that clients enjoy and benefit from a focus on strengths and other positive topics. We live in a time that is desperate for positivity. We are hungry for it. War, fascism, illness and injustice are pronounced features of our contemporary lives. Without being naïve, or diminishing the legitimate hardships of these problems, it makes sense to us that some attention to positive topics can act as a buoy through hard times.

WHAT IS POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY COACHING?

Let's start by being clear about what we mean by positive psychology coaching. Positive psychology is the scientific study of positive aspects of human thinking, feeling and behaving. It includes topics such as generosity, happiness and resilience. Positive psychology is also an applied science, meaning that it emphasises the practical application of research results. We think that positive psychology and coaching are natural bedfellows. We have defined positive psychology coaching as 'a managed conversational process that supports people to achieve meaningful goals in a way that enhances their wellbeing'.ⁱ If you are like many of the coaches we have spoken with, you might be thinking to yourself that that's what you do already! Certainly, positive psychology coaching is, at its heart, coaching. It will look and sound a whole lot like the coaching you do. Even so, it makes sense to ask how positive psychology coaching is different from 'coaching as usual'. In response, we have set out several key characteristics:

- Positive psychology coaching is informed by the science of positive psychology. As the science of wellbeing and optimal functioning, we would argue that it is necessary for coaches to be aware of theories and research from positive psychology and incorporate this learning into their professional practice. For example, awareness of theories of wellbeing can be helpful in supporting the coach to ask better questions. What's more, by aligning with science, positive

psychology coaching becomes a dynamic approach. We discard old practices or adopt emerging tools as new evidence dictates. This means that positive psychology coaching will keep changing and innovating. We argue that it is the responsibility of coaching to keep abreast of new developments.

- Positive psychology coaching explicitly emphasises wellbeing. Where most forms of coaching are concerned with client goals, positive psychology coaches place that goal within the context of wellbeing. This is helpful in avoiding a 'goals at any cost' mentality. This emphasis also offers blanket permission to address the wellbeing of all stakeholders involved in the client's goal.
- Positive psychology coaching is about capitalisation rather than remediation. Although all coaches are interested in client development, it is surprising how often coaching leans toward the negative. Attention to weaknesses, self-limiting beliefs and obstacles are just three examples of coaching working to remedy an ill. By contrast, positive psychology coaches emphasise strengths, hopes and other positives upon which clients can capitalise. This is not to say that we ignore or prohibit discussion of negative topics; we simply do not invite it. People sometimes refer to this approach as a shift from 'what's wrong?' to 'what's strong?'

Positive psychology coaching might be even more than this. We acknowledge that, although we think about these topics every day, we are still learning. In our private conversations, we have banded about other possible distinctions. Is positive psychology coaching unique in the way that it treats emotions? Are science-informed approaches to 'meaning in life' a differentiator? Is there something unique in the formal assessments emerging from positive psychology? We do not know. Mostly, we have dismissed these considerations but we are open to the idea that we will articulate further differences in the future.

THE INTEGRATION OF POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY AND COACHING

With the theme of integration in mind, we'd like to conclude with some thoughts on how positive psychology and coaching are integrated. Fifteen years ago, during what we might think of as 'positive psychology coaching 1.0,' the integration of these two fields was clumsy. In large part, coaches transported the tools of positive psychology – notably so-called positive interventions such as listing three daily gratitudesⁱⁱ – and used them with their clients. The other most common integration was to employ positive psychology assessments such as those that identify character strengths.

In the intervening years we have achieved greater sophistication. It now seems obvious, for instance, that prescribing positive interventions runs counter to the non-prescriptive nature of coaching. As a result, there is an increasing acknowledgment that positive interventions are not the best use of positive psychological science in coaching. Instead, we argue for four specific avenues by which coaches can integrate this science:

- Research-guided questions: rather than teaching clients about wellbeing and other frameworks, coaches can use their expert research knowledge to inform better questioning. In fact, researchers and coaches share in common a love of questions. For instance, a positive psychology coach could ask: 'how does your need for autonomy conflict with your need for connection?' Or, 'what is easiest to accept about yourself?' Or, 'what are you working on mastering these days?' Each of these questions is derived directly from Carol Ryff's framework of psychological wellbeing.ⁱⁱⁱ
- A deeper understanding of the coaching process: one definition of coaching is that it is engaging a client in self-directed learning. Learning is, itself, a positive psychology topic. Coaches can improve their practice by better understanding how learning occurs, about

the role of emotion in learning, about the benefits and perils of 'a-ha' moments, and other topics related to learning.

- Using research to change the coach, rather than the client: all coaches agree that there is a certain coaching way of being. Someone might call it the coaching mindset, others might think of it as the coach's presence, or how the coach shows up. No matter the label, professionals largely agree on the types of qualities included: curiosity, empathy, flexibility, humility and so on. We suspect that any quality you could name in this category is a researched positive psychology topic. This means that coaches who understand the results of studies can modify and improve their own ways of being as a first step in the application of positive psychology.
- Using formal assessments: the advent of positive psychology has seen the development of a number of formal assessments with sound psychometric properties. These include assessments of strengths, curiosity, flourishing, meaning, hope, hospitality among other topics. These assessments can be used as before-and-after-measures, to identify resources and to gain a deeper understanding of these concepts.

We are grateful to you for your interest in this topic. And we hope that this column will be an opportunity for us to share innovative practices and our learning with people who share our passion for positive outcomes.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Prof Christian van Nieuwerburgh is professor of coaching and positive psychology at the Centre for Positive Psychology and Health at RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences, global director for Growth Coaching International – a coach-training provider for the educator sector – and principal fellow of the Centre for Wellbeing Science at the University of Melbourne. He is an academic, researcher, executive coach and consultant interested in the integration of coaching and positive psychology in educational and health settings. He has published widely in the field, regularly speaks at global conferences and has given presentations and delivered training across the world.

Dr Robert Biswas-Diener is a thought leader in positive psychology coaching. He holds a doctorate in psychology, and frequently publishes research on topics such as happiness, hospitality, teaching and coaching. Robert loves to apply his background in psychology to the coaching endeavor and is eager to add nuance to and improve coaching practice. He has trained coaches at Positive Acorn for a decade and has run workshops for professionals in 25 countries. He lives in Portland, Oregon, USA, where he draws or rock climbs every day.

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SUPERVISION OF SUPERVISION: RESEARCH INSIGHTS

Is supervising supervisors any different to supervising coaches? A group of six supervisors reflect on their experiences of group supervision of supervisors and outline key learnings from this practice.

Over four years ago, six supervisors got together to shape and research 'supervision of supervision' as part of a special interest group within the Global Supervisors Network. Previously, an international survey was analysed and a set of hypotheses drawn from the results. This informed the initial set-up of this study.

Phase 1 consisted of six sessions; one supervisor of supervisors; one external researcher, who had access to all session recordings; and four supervisors within the supervision group. Phase 2 was shaped differently. We adopted a rotating facilitation structure within the peer group, which now incorporated the phase 1 supervisor and external researcher as peer participant supervisors. This change affected the dynamics and had relational implications, which we observed and reflected on as part of our ongoing work.

Interestingly, in Phase 1 the group did not behave as the researcher had expected based on the hypotheses and there were dissonant views as to the outcomes of the research. Following phase 2, to capture the insights from each of us, a decision was taken to explore our individual narrative

with regard to the original hypotheses. These individual pieces were then shared and explored collectively within our supervision of supervision group and within the wider global supervisor community.

OUR OBSERVATIONS

1: Supervision of supervisors is more complex and requires more sophistication and maturity than traditional supervision from the professional conducting the activity.

Damian writes: Supervision of supervision requires not only more experience, but also that you are able to demonstrate specific competencies. But what are these competencies?

Supervisors as supervisees may need less normative/developmental supervision, and more emphasis on reflection and awareness of the ongoing work of self as instrument. There may be a higher resourcing function depending on the level of experience of the supervisor.

Sophistication: working with other supervisors offers the opportunity to share a body of knowledge (theories, models, concepts, frameworks) that

facilitates the process of reflection. In supervision of supervision, when both professionals are trained as supervisors, there is an opportunity to go to a greater level of depth in the work. This depth requires both colleagues to be willing to be vulnerable based on a trusting relationship. It requires the abilities to work with complex variables and integrate the information to provide new meaning.

Maturity can be related to proficiency and wisdom, the ability to apply ourselves in our work, using our body, mind, emotions, soul and energy to make sense of the experiences. It requires self-knowledge and ongoing attention. Supervisors of supervisors are role models, influencing the work that supervisors will be doing with coaches, which in turn may impact coaching clients.

2: The more experienced the supervisor having supervision, the more they share power and play an active role in deciding models and techniques and leading the conversation.

Julia writes: During phase 2, there was a tangible sense of sharing and collaboration using an alternating leader. Our agreement for the contracting was that we would 'do' supervision in the way we would naturally with our own clients to see a variety of different styles. Sometimes it felt more like a facilitation or leadership role; some preferred to work emergently while others preferred casework as a vehicle. Are there also differences in supervision of groups compared to one-to-one supervision?

EQUALITY AND SHARING AND BEING IN A PEER GROUP

Vulnerability and fear versus power and authority emerged as themes. It took us time to get past forming, storming and norming and onto the performing stage. Respect in this type of setting is obviously necessary... but was there tension as well? Did we explore that enough? The contracting seemed to take an inordinate amount of time. Was this avoidance or a perfect example of supervision of supervision itself? How deep did we go and could we have gone deeper? Perhaps we were tentative on occasions.

From a personal perspective, I keenly felt vulnerability and fear in phase 1 as the main supervisor. Impostor syndrome... we all recognise it. I kept a journal, and what's interesting is the journey and how different I felt in phase 2 with the pressure taken off by being part of a peer group.

Supervision of supervision versus supervision of coaching feels very different for me, both simpler and more complex simultaneously. But whether we have the scientific evidence to prove that is another question. That needs further exploration.

3: While supervising supervisors, there seems to be a greater sense of ethical responsibility.

Natalia writes: Ethical responsibility in group supervision on supervision has been an evolving matter, one that grew in depth and complexity as the group evolved, roles changed and relationships matured.

Dealing with the relatively uncharted territory of group supervision on supervision meant the group initially tackled more mundane, yet important, contractual matters: scheduling, session duration, roles and responsibilities, and safe keeping and distribution of session recordings. This co-existed with a sense of 'interference' of the research piece. During the first year, contracting would accompany us in every session.

There was comfort in having one supervisor managing the time and preparation, and the role of the external researcher became like that of another participant.

Ethical responsibility in phase 2 took additional meaning in the ways in which the group participants experienced each other: not only were we leading the supervision sessions, but relationships had changed within the group. The lead supervisor and the external researcher were part of the group. Relationships were deepening, and new challenges emerged.

We also saw complex relational patterns emerging. The group developed a way to deal with frustrations – using humour and sarcasm at times! Reflections started to surface around the richness of diversity in the group. We became a group of experienced supervisors supervising each other, accepting that the work is not easy, accepting frustrations, but also challenging each other and not falling into collusion... and yet not always knowing what was holding us in the group.

Our commitment to tell the coaching community about our work felt very different from the first year. This time, we became 'one' very easily, with almost no rehearsal at all of our presentations to the supervision practitioner global community. This was a manifestation of our increasingly ethical responsibility towards the profession.

Is there a greater sense of ethical responsibility when supervising supervisors? Yes, there is. It is systemically deeper and more complex because what goes on in a supervision group work has more impact and more outreach, and we hold each other responsible.

4: In supervising supervisors, there is a higher level of complexity in managing boundaries.

Lise writes: Reflection: we didn't define boundaries within the group and presumably personal definitions influenced our perceptions and behaviours. The group appeared to engage in dialogue encouraging an emergent working model, one gained through respectful exchange and exploration. Questions arising with this approach:

- Are boundaries fixed, flexible, mixed or something else?
- Whose definition of boundaries is most beneficial?
- What boundary considerations are essential and non-essential?

SUPERVISION OF SUPERVISION PRACTICE

At the beginning, we considered:

- How might existing relationships influence engagement?
- What conscious or unconscious assumptions, biases and expectations existed?
- What role might power play?
- How will each of these things 'show up' within this group of experienced supervisors?
- How willingly would we voice personal preferences?
- What was tolerated and resisted?

Expectations differed from welcoming an emergent process to wanting a specific focus for sessions; lengthy reviews about contracting oscillated between being essential and tolerated. Was this good practice or ambivalence about boundary management? Collaborative decisions about session design were inconsistent:

- When and how does the supervisor contribute to the dialogue?
- How does taking an 'authoritative' stance with experienced supervisors engage the supervisee and their stakeholders?
- What consciously/unconsciously created individual boundaries to transparency and openness?
- What could be the impact of challenge fracturing a professional relationship or friendship?

As the group matured:

- The level of trust and psychological safety grew.
- We stayed together even though the going wasn't always smooth.
- We relaxed our personal boundaries.
- We found our voice to say what previously was unsaid.
- More thought-sharing developed as we acknowledged time to feel psychologically safe in supervision of supervisors.

SYSTEMIC INFLUENCES

We noticed the wider system (Covid etc.) was important. What impact did this have on behaviours? Did our personal issues impact us, softening the boundaries? We realised that we didn't venture too far outside of ourselves!

5: Supervision of supervision is not different from supervision.

Michel writes: What we have experienced during the sessions can be summarised as follows:

- There was a very high level of shared knowledge and understanding of the supervision process. Explanations about what we were doing or trying to do were minimal.
- Familiarity with supervision tools was such that we didn't have to be explicit.
- Analysing cases was not the main focus of the sessions, but was instead our own functioning as a group and how we were contracting was at the center of our discussions.
- Working in emergence was preferred to using the power of a tool.

Although these might be seen as key differences between supervision and supervision of supervision, it can also be seen as just another way of reflecting on the practice.

EXTENDING BEYOND THE SUPERVISION OF SUPERVISION GROUP MEMBERS

Jo writes: In July 2021, to extend our inquiry beyond the six immediate members of the group, we returned to the birthplace of our research: the Global Supervisors Network (GSN). GSN sessions are attended by a range of professionals with backgrounds, experiences and ideas as diverse as those that attend, and we opened the discussion into this wider group.

We invited those present to tune into their own experiences as supervisees, or as supervisors, and consider what they each believed needed to be developed within the supervisor as they became a 'supervisor of supervisors'.

Thoughts focused on the internal development of the supervisor and considered maturity and experience; the ability to explore one's own relationship with power and humility; and the continued development of the supervisor's self-awareness, capacity for being vulnerable and willingness to take risks. Challenges were highlighted: how might we measure 'wisdom', for example? Colleagues raised the ability to be in relationship and work with the space between those in relationship.

Context was also considered, with it being noted that the ability to work with systems and complexity was key, as was an openness to the wider spiritual realm; greater ethical awareness; and a responsibility for ethical maturity in the developing professional field – especially given that the practice of supervision operates within an unregulated profession.

The wave of dialogue moved from a focus on personal and professional knowing, through the relationship and into the systems and context for the work.

Supervisors engage in the development of other supervisors, who in turn work with coaches. Supervisors of supervisors are then both accountable to, and in service of, themselves, their colleagues, the profession and – perhaps most importantly – the people who choose to engage coaching services. It is for these members of the public, leaders from communities through to global corporates, that our service needs to be of the highest standard we can deliver.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Jo Birch leads international learning programmes through which coaches become supervisors and stretch beyond. Working on the edge of 'what is known', Jo is an active contributor to professional discourse, a regular journal contributor, editor of *Coaching Supervision Groups* (2022) and co-editor of *EMCC Mastery Series, Coaching Supervision* (2019). jo@jobirch.co.uk



Natalia de Estevan Ubeda is a coach and supervisor with a master's degree from Oxford Brookes University, where she was the recipient of two awards for her research on supervision. Natalia's published research includes work on AI ethics, mental health in coaching and generational differences in the supervisory system. Natalia is a former board director of EMCC UK.



Damian Goldvarg has 30 years of experience in executive coaching and leadership development, working with individuals and organisations in more than 60 countries. He is a master certified coach, and accredited supervisor (ESIA), and received his PhD in organizational psychology. He is also the co-author of eight coaching books.



Lise Lewis works globally as an executive coach (EMCC MC) and coach supervisor (EMCC ESIA). Her company offers EMCC EQA coach/mentor training at three levels and EMCC ESQA/ESIA supervisor training. She is a winner of an EMCC supervisor award; an EMCC global immediate past president and currently a special ambassador; and an author and international speaker. www.blueskyinternational.com



Julia Menaul has a background in learning and development and has been running her own coaching practice since 2001. Julia is an AC-accredited master executive coach, and a member of both the British Psychological Society and EMCC. She is a qualified supervisor; she has been supervising coaches since 2006 and supervising other supervisors since 2010.



Michel Moral spent most of his career in an international environment as a manager and executive in Europe, the Middle East and Africa. In 2003 he created a coaching and supervision practice. He currently supervises coaches (EMCC ESIA) and coaches executives, executive teams and organisations (teams of teams). He also trains supervisors (EMCC ESQA).

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IS SUPERVISION A SAFE SPACE TO EXPLORE INTEGRATIVE PRACTICE?

Michelle Lucas and Liz Ford reflect on their own supervision journeys and suggest we use supervision as a place to experiment with different ways of working.

In their book *Further Techniques for Coaching and Mentoring*, David Megginson and David Clutterbuck describe four stages of coach development, moving from being focused on models, through being process-driven and then philosophy-based, to developing an eclectic perspective, where the practitioner is able to draw on a wide range of techniques and approaches to suit the client context. Here we discuss how reflection and supervision have helped us develop and integrate different ways of working into our practices.

Michelle: I've noticed that how I use supervision has changed over time. To begin with I had no idea how to get the best from my supervisor, almost always bringing her my 'problems'. An indication, perhaps, of the anxiety many of us face as we begin our coaching journey. This prompted a change of emphasis, specifically contracting to look at what I did well and understanding the origin of those skills.

Four years later, with a growing interest in transactional analysis (TA), I sought out a TA supervisor who could both help me reflect on my work and help me integrate new models and concepts. Actually, that wasn't such a bright idea, as trying to understand material that was beyond my awareness and using concepts that I had yet to understand was not a good combination!

My independent reflections were becoming more thematic and I was beginning to understand that I needed to work on myself in order to be in the best shape possible for my clients.

With a growing portfolio of group supervisees, I felt the need to engage in group supervision for myself. I found a group with systemic emphasis – another area of interest. Additionally, I continued individual peer supervision in a chain arrangement, which brought a less UK-centric perspective to my reflective practice.

My relationship with my individual supervisor spanned about five years. In considering where to go next, I wanted a supervisor who thought differently and who could stretch me to think differently too. The outcome was to reach out to an existential practitioner whose work I admired. We are now enjoying exploring deep and shallow, dark and light conversations prompted by life issues and by my responses to client work.

Perhaps my first experience of supervision makes me more vigilant to how it serves me now. I noticed quickly when my sense of equity in my group supervision was being jostled and I made more deliberate choices about what I chose to bring (and not bring) to supervision.

This prompted me to establish formal peer group supervision with other supervisors, and my sense of equity has since returned.

What's been interesting in my own journey is an increasing desire to be the architect of the supervision I receive. As my practice has matured and become more complex, the more I have sought out new and different perspectives to build breadth into my reflective practice and in turn to bring breadth to my client work.

Liz: Since my initial gestalt-based training, I have developed my style and approach through exploring subjects of special interest. This started with a supervision session where the coach and I worked with metaphor. This was so impactful that I went away to learn more about working with metaphor, a journey that took me into clean language, emergent knowledge, creative techniques and working outdoors.

More recently, I have been part of a reflective practice group that offers many different ways of thinking about my work. I am very visual and love working with pictures, so I've enjoyed consciously choosing methods that I might not be naturally drawn to or have not worked with before. One such method is using poetry. I've found that focusing on the words and the emotions they stir in me has brought a different type of insight to my work.

Choosing different ways of working isn't always easy and requires me to be willing to sit with a degree of discomfort for a while, giving time for thoughts to settle, resistance to dissipate and insight to emerge. Learning to be comfortable with not knowing and understanding where my resistance comes from during different types of activities has helped me develop a higher level of patience and acceptance in my client work. In turn it has helped expand my capability and capacity to understand and work with resistance in others.

Engaging with different approaches and practices reminds me how my supervisees might feel when trying something new, and also of what their coachees might experience. It reconnects me with a sense of vulnerability, which is so important in helping me meet my clients where they are and be alongside them. It has also helped me discern which models and methods to integrate into my practice to offer flexibility to my clients, while also staying true to my authentic self.

We have both found that supervision is a great way to develop coaching capability, offering opportunities for new ways of working, reflecting and being. What might you want to experiment with and how could you do this within your own supervisory relationships?

Suzy Hunt and Lisa Robyn Wood from *The Coaching Cast* podcast reveal and review their top picks.

SUZY'S CHOICE

THE COACHING ACADEMIC WITH DR REBECCA J JONES: COACHING WITH ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

31 min, 29 Oct 2021, Apple Podcasts

The Coaching Academic podcast is focused on translating coaching-related theory into practice. Each month, we learn of a new piece of cutting-edge research, which through discussion translates into suggestions to aid your coaching.

Dr Rebecca Jones is a coaching researcher and associate professor in coaching at Henley Business School and someone I have been following on LinkedIn for a while. I came across this podcast back in 2018 when I was training for my coaching qualification and looking for a podcast to support my professional development in coaching, but in a bite-size format.

In this episode, Jones discusses with Dr Holly Andrews a paper called *Coaching with Artificial Intelligence: Concepts and Capabilities* and what its findings mean for the future of coaching.

It starts by introducing the idea of AI coaching: when a machine acts as the coach rather than a human. They use the example of time management to bring this to life. For example, in the instance of a coachee struggling with time management, the AI coach would ask questions from a set list on time management.

The pair then go on to discuss how the idea of an AI coach can be divisive: can a machine ever replace a human coach? It's a question I certainly hadn't ever thought about before. One great point they raise is that AI coaching does have the potential to make coaching more accessible and affordable for all, which is surely a good thing?

Upon exploring the limitations of AI coaching set out in the paper, there is some great discussion specifically on the role of AI in the first stage of the coaching model: problem identification. A robot won't be able to understand someone's intention, nor make connections between body



language and what the coachee is saying. It doesn't have the ability to go 'digging', a benefit of coaching in its form today.

The pair go on to detail how the report suggests that AI coaching can have a role in supporting coachees, creating SMART goals, prompting a coachee's creativity and visually creating outputs from the coaching process for the individual to take away. Finally, it can also have a role in supporting coaches in professional development and supervision.

A fascinating listen.

Our top five podcasts for you to check out this issue

1. Secret Leaders with Dan Murray Serter
2. Daily Pep! with Meg Kissack
3. Power Hour with Adrienne Herbert
4. The Coaching Academic with Dr Rebecca J Jones
5. The Perfectionism Project with Sam Laura Brown

Available on Apple Podcasts and Spotify

LISA'S CHOICE

POWER HOUR WITH ADRIENNE HERBERT: ENERGIZE WITH SIMON ONG

46 min, 10 May 2022, Spotify and Apple Podcasts

Adrienne Herbert's *Power Hour* podcast is centred on one question: what could you achieve if you dedicated just one hour each day to improving yourself and your life? Each episode features different guests, ranging from leading coaches, creatives, change makers and innovators, who share their routines, daily habits and rules to live by.

In this episode, Adrienne speaks with coach, public speaker and author Simon Ong on the topic of energy.

I first met Simon through our coaching school and have followed him for a while. I have been attracted by his positive but practical outlook, and his consistent energy when engaging and supporting others – both fellow coaches and clients alike.

In his episode of *Power Hour*, Simon shares insights and ideas from his new book, *Energize: Make the Most of Every Moment*, which introduces the art and science of energy management.

Speaking with Adrienne, Simon declares the importance of good quality sleep in maintaining productive and effective energy levels that enable us to achieve our goals.

Not exactly rocket science, and yet my experience is that we're rubbish at doing what is often the most obvious and best for ourselves! It's as if the obvious and easy isn't interesting enough to occupy our attention, so a reminder is always helpful.

Simon shares a great technique for aiding sleep – treating bedtime as checking into a hotel room every night. Simon explains: 'we want to ease into sleep rather than just jump straight from work or whatever you're doing to sleep, because what happens is that it takes longer for you to get into sleep if you haven't got a routine in place.'

Simon found that, on asking friends when the last time they had a proper rest was, many responses included descriptions of being abroad, away from home or on holiday. Simon encourages us to mirror this experience by creating a bedroom environment that we want to spend time in – like our hotel bedrooms are on our trips away – turning them into relaxing, comfortable, peaceful places that contribute to an



effective sleep state. This could involve removing clutter and simplifying the space to prioritise its primary purpose.

'We tend to think, when it comes to personal development and goal setting, that we always have to add more into our routine,' adds Simon. 'But actually the reality is that if we want to make progress faster it is less about adding more, and more about doing less of the behaviours, the habits and the things that are stopping us making progress.'

ABOUT THE REVIEWERS

Suzy Hunt and Lisa Robyn Wood are experienced commercial leaders, qualified coaches and the hosts of *The Coaching Cast* podcast. In 2020, working from their sheds, bedrooms and kitchen tables, the pair sought a place where they could go to feel supported and less alone at work. Unable to find what they were looking for they created *The Coaching Cast*. Suzy and Lisa hunt down the conversations no one else is having in the working world and raise them in a lighthearted but insightful way.

You can listen to *The Coaching Cast* on Spotify, Apple Podcasts and Google Podcasts. Visit thecoachingcast.co.uk to learn more.

BOOK REVIEWS

COACHING WOMEN TO LEAD

This is an up-to-date, practical and informative guide for coaches, HR practitioners and women who want to flourish working in corporate environments, says Sue Stockdale.

The 'sophomore slump' describes the instance when a student's second year effort fails to live up to the relatively high standards of their first year. I was initially feeling nervous that this book might fall into this category, but it most definitely does not. *Coaching Women to Lead (2nd edition)* stands out as a shining example of getting past this phenomenon, and is bursting with new insights and relevance for the post-Covid business environment.

At the beginning of the book the business case for coaching women leaders and arguments as to why it is necessary are clearly laid out. For a coach seeking to work with corporates, they may find this chapter helpful for framing a conversation with a potential client, given that there are plenty of facts and evidence to refer to.

I do like a book with a clear structure, which this one has, because it makes it easy to navigate. This structured thinking also shows up in chapter three, which outlines the life stages of a woman's career – from starting out, through the child-bearing years, onto senior management and finally into a board position. I found this helpful from a coaching viewpoint, considering that these transition points are often where coaching support is of greatest value.

As I read the book, I found myself switching personas – from coach to HR practitioner to senior woman leader – and thinking about what would be helpful from that reader's perspective. From the coach's viewpoint, there are helpful questions that could be used with a coachee to develop self-awareness or reframe thinking about behaviours. The HR practitioner will likely find chapter nine useful, as it is focused on how to develop a women-friendly organisation. And for the aspiring woman leader, or even a seasoned one, chapters five and six provide summaries of conversations with female role models, mixing 'I wish I'd known' reflections with details on 'here's what I'd like to know about how to develop as a leader' – with the nuance placed on being a female leader.

The data is all based on solid research conducted for this book in association with the London School of Economics, and I particularly liked the fact that the authors went back to re-interview the original women 'role models' from the first edition, released more than 10 years ago, to discover how, and if, their views had changed.

TITLE: *Coaching Women to Lead: Changing the world from the inside (2nd edition)*

AUTHORS: Averil Leimon, Francois Moscovici and Helen Goodier

PUBLISHER: Routledge

PUBLICATION DATE: 2022

PAPERBACK PRICE: £20

ISBN: 978-0-367-67786-2



I regularly coach senior women executives myself and took heart from the fact that the messages being conveyed in this text seem to match my own experience with clients. They brought some additional insights that will enrich my coaching with women in the future.

Finally, it is heartening to read how much positive change there has been in the numbers of women on boards since the original publication of this book in 2010. I imagine that, if coaches, HR practitioners and women leaders themselves take heed of the valuable content in this edition, the book will contribute to an even greater proportion of women leaders reaching their potential in years to come.

ABOUT THE REVIEWER

Sue Stockdale is an AC-accredited master executive coach and coaching supervisor. She has been a coach for over 20 years, working with senior women leaders in business, elite sport and not-for-profit organisations in more than 15 countries. Sue has written and co-authored nine books, including her recently published memoir, *EXPLORE: A Life of Adventure*. Sue hosts the 'Access to Inspiration' podcast, ranked by Listen Notes as one of the top 10% most popular shows globally.

www.suestockdale.com

COACHING INTERNATIONAL TEAMS

An easy-to-read book of around 100 pages that provides great nuggets of information for coaches and leaders, says Clive Steeper.

The skills required for coaching international teams are ones that I have been using for many years as a business leader, and Dr Morgan's book provided me with flashbacks from my own career, living in the USA and southeast Asia leading teams based in different countries.

One of the key tenets of *Coaching International Teams* is learning to speak plainly and without jargon. This was something I learnt while working overseas, and is reinforced even today by some of the international peer groups I coach. Interestingly, I still observe that many leaders use jargon unconsciously, and assume that their colleagues from other countries will understand what they are talking about!

Morgan's five building blocks of inclusion concept is built on research she has undertaken, which provides substance to the concepts described. Morgan has done a great job of making this book light and easy to read while also providing great nuggets of information and suggestions that no doubt will be great stimuli for readers.

The building blocks of inclusion for international teams are categorised by Morgan as linguistic collaboration, inclusive mindset, meta-level thinking, empathy and intercultural collaboration.

The book's structure reflects these five blocks and provides a series of strategies that will help the readers both orientate themselves to the key messages and find ways to address any constraints they may face when using each concept.

I liked that each chapter starts with the chapter aims and finishes with useful takeaways. Within each chapter there are regular activity suggestions for international teams, lists of points for consideration and questions to ask during scenarios that may arise. Many of the questions for international teams could be insightful for the reader as points of self-reflection. To this point I would suggest to both coaches and coach supervisors that this book could be used as a powerful reflective tool in our own development at any time, not just when one is involved with international teams.

While this book is fundamentally built around working with international teams, it also struck me that much of it will be useful for anyone who is working with diverse groups or different cultures – both internal and external to an

TITLE: *Coaching International Teams*

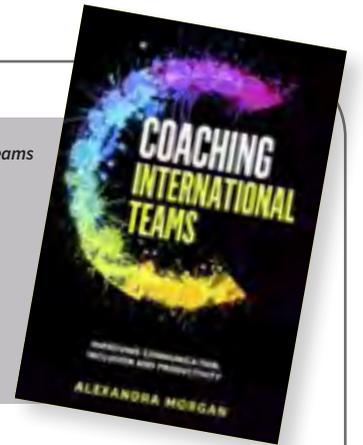
AUTHOR: Alexandra Morgan

PUBLISHER: Econcise

PUBLICATION DATE: 2022

PAPERBACK PRICE: £10

ISBN: 9783903386068



organisation – because it challenges one's thinking and behaviour in a subtle but effective fashion.

While it may seem obvious that humour and anecdotes may not always be successfully understood in all cultures, Morgan reminds us in nearly every chapter of the dangers associated with making assumptions, and how those dangers are to be avoided. She draws the reader's attention to the vocabulary we use, and why it is important to ensure that what has been communicated is played back by the recipients to confirm understanding.

Morgan also makes some powerful points around what I might call cultural due diligence and working practice approaches. So often there is more than one solution to a cultural nuance, and those variants offer the opportunity for sharing and embracing difference, and creating more powerful collaborations.

For coaches wishing to expand their capabilities to coach international teams, this book offers them a great framework to use. It is well worth reading and keeping close to hand.

ABOUT THE REVIEWER

Clive Steeper is a qualified executive coach and coaching supervisor with over 2,000 hours of coaching experience. Prior to becoming a coach Clive enjoyed a successful career as an MD/CEO, growing a number of international businesses in the UK, the USA and southeast Asia. He competes in motorsport and has been a championship winner in sports prototypes five times. Clive is co-author of four popular business books: *Risk, Motivation in a Week, Cope with Change at Work* and *The Personality Workbook*, and is a regular contributor to *Coaching Perspectives*.

THIRD WAVE COGNITIVE BEHAVIOURAL COACHING

Mihaela Diaconu welcomes the arrival of a textbook that balances evidence-based research with practical frameworks, flowing with ease between coaching and psychology.

This is a well-researched textbook that provides tonnes of value from the very beginning. It is structured around the evolution of cognitive behavioural coaching, taking us through its three waves, and includes very useful snippets from neuroscience. As a textbook it has a clear evidence-based focus, is a collaboration of many authors, and shares a rich collection of scientific literature and references. At the same time it remembers that the audience are coaches, who are working with coachees in real life, and as such provides easily applicable frameworks and models. It has illustrated processes, tables comparing and contrasting the parallels between coaching and therapy, case studies and 'questions for further reflections' with guides at the end of each chapter.

The various techniques are drawn from different types of therapies, including:

- Compassion focused therapy
- Acceptance commitment therapy
- Dialectical behaviour therapy
- Schema therapy
- Motivational interviewing
- Mindfulness

Mindfulness has a full chapter, and that is refreshing, with it currently having a high level of controversy as to when it is useful and in what context. Jonathan Passmore, Katherine Finlay and Simon Barnes take us on a journey towards clarifying a lot of that through existing studies and data.

While it is at its core a psychology textbook, it is very good at explaining the meaning of all constructs, thus becoming a fantastic educational medium for coaches who aren't psychologists. Equally, it does a great job of supporting therapists, counsellors and psychologists who aren't coaches to understand how their therapy area translates or lends itself to coaching practice. I found this dual ability very useful from an evidence-based practitioner perspective.

In the name of professional ethics, and for clarity, the authors are mindful to highlight what kind of professional coach

TITLE: *Third Wave Cognitive Behavioural Coaching (Contextual, Behavioural and Neuroscience Approaches for Evidence-Based Coaching)*

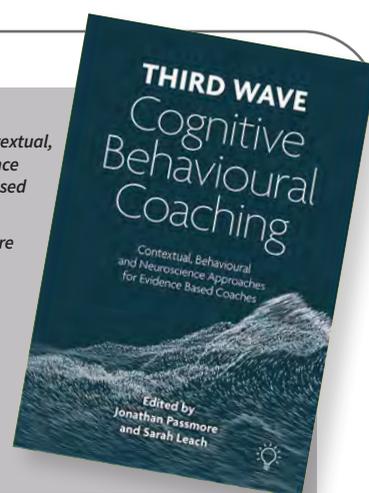
EDITORS: Jonathan Passmore and Sarah Leach

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might be most suited to using a specific approach. For instance, while explaining the schema coaching method, the author Iain McCormick clearly outlines that only 'coaches trained in clinical psychology who have undertaken a schema therapy training' could actually use this method.

It is excellent to see a very useful addition to the collection of evidence-based textbooks for coaches, and one that sets a further example of coaching being a mature profession, as well as providing hands-on toolkits for the practitioner coach and posing insightful questions for the future of the approaches used in this space.

ABOUT THE REVIEWER

Mihaela Diaconu is a psychologist focusing on leadership, people and organisational development/effectiveness. Mihaela's mission is to support humans to flourish at work and build thriving workplaces and communities, using business psychology principles, one conversation, one experience, and one process at a time. She is a certified corporate and executive coach, and a certified business psychologist. She has an MSc in organisational psychology, is a fellow of the Chartered Management Institute, and has an extensive background in operational, project and product management. She is a British Psychological Association psychometrics test user.

August

Wednesday 3 August

18.15 BST/ 19.15 CEST/ 13.15 EDT
UK Virtual Event

Honouring The Emotions Of The Climate Crisis - *George Warren*

Thursday 4 August

16.00 SGT
Singapore & Malaysia - Virtual Solution Focus Coaching

Thursday 4 August

19.00 CET/ 18.00 BST
Nordics - Virtual Virtual Cafe

Tuesday 23 August

17.30 AEST Arrival for 18.30 AEST start
Australia NSW/ACT - Sydney
The Intersection of Development & Play in Experiential Learning - *Greg Lourey*

Wednesday 24 August

08.00 AEST
Australia
Corporate Roundtable - An exploration of Coaching

Wednesday 31 August

18.15 BST/ 19.15 CEST/ 13.15 EDT
UK Virtual Event
The More Clients Method - *Rachael Watt*

September

Thursday 1 September

16.00 SGT
Singapore & Malaysia - Virtual
Creating Sparkling Coaching Moments for Employees

Thursday 1 September

19.00 CET/ 18.00 BST
Nordics - Virtual
Virtual Cafe

Friday 2 September

10.00 CET/ 09.00 BST
DACH (Germany, Austria & Switzerland)
- Virtual
Community Cafe

Thursday 8 September

18.15 BST/ 19.15 CEST/ 13.15 EDT
UK Virtual Event
3 New Tools for Leadership Coaching in a Post-Pandemic World
- *Lucy Mullins & Sonya Shellard*

Wednesday 14 September

18.15 BST/ 19.15 CEST/ 13.15 EDT
UK Virtual Event
Coaching the CNBC - Above and Beyond Plan B
- *Juli Angelis*

Wednesday 14 September

09.00 BST
Ireland - Virtual
Virtual Cafe

Wednesday 21 September

08.30 BST
Ireland - Virtual
Corporate Roundtable
- Corporate Only Event

Friday 23 September

TBC
UK Virtual Masterclass
The Art and Science of Team Coaching
- *Dr Krister Lowe & Pim Harder*

Wednesday 28 September

09.00 BST
Ireland - Virtual
Virtual Cafe

October

Friday 7 October

10.00 CET/ 09.00 BST
DACH (Germany, Austria & Switzerland)
- Virtual
Community Cafe

Wednesday 12 October

09.00 BST
Ireland - Virtual
Virtual Cafe

Wednesday 19 October

16.00 EST
USA
Your body is your Brain
- *Dr Amanda Blake*

Thursday 20 October

19.00 AEST
Australia Queensland - Virtual
APAC Discovery Series
- Scaling Team Coaching

Wednesday 26 October

09.00 BST
Ireland - Virtual
Virtual Cafe

November

Friday 4 November

10.00 CET/ 09.00 BST
DACH (Germany, Austria & Switzerland)
- Virtual
Community Cafe

Wednesday 9 November

09.00 BST
Ireland - Virtual
Virtual Cafe

Wednesday 23 November

09.00 BST
Ireland - Virtual
Virtual Cafe

December

Friday 2 December

10.00 CET/ 09.00 BST
DACH (Germany, Austria & Switzerland)
- Virtual
Community Cafe

Wednesday 7 December

09.00 BST
Ireland - Virtual
Virtual Cafe

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The Association for Coaching (AC) is one of seven leading coaching professional bodies who have signed a **global statement committing to collaborative action** on the climate change and biodiversity crisis.



With our Organizational Membership, you can **'gift'** your coaching students with a one year membership, enabling them to benefit from being a part of the AC's thriving global community.

We offer Corporate Membership to **organizations building a culture of coaching**, providing world-class events and connections to nurture your internal coaches.



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