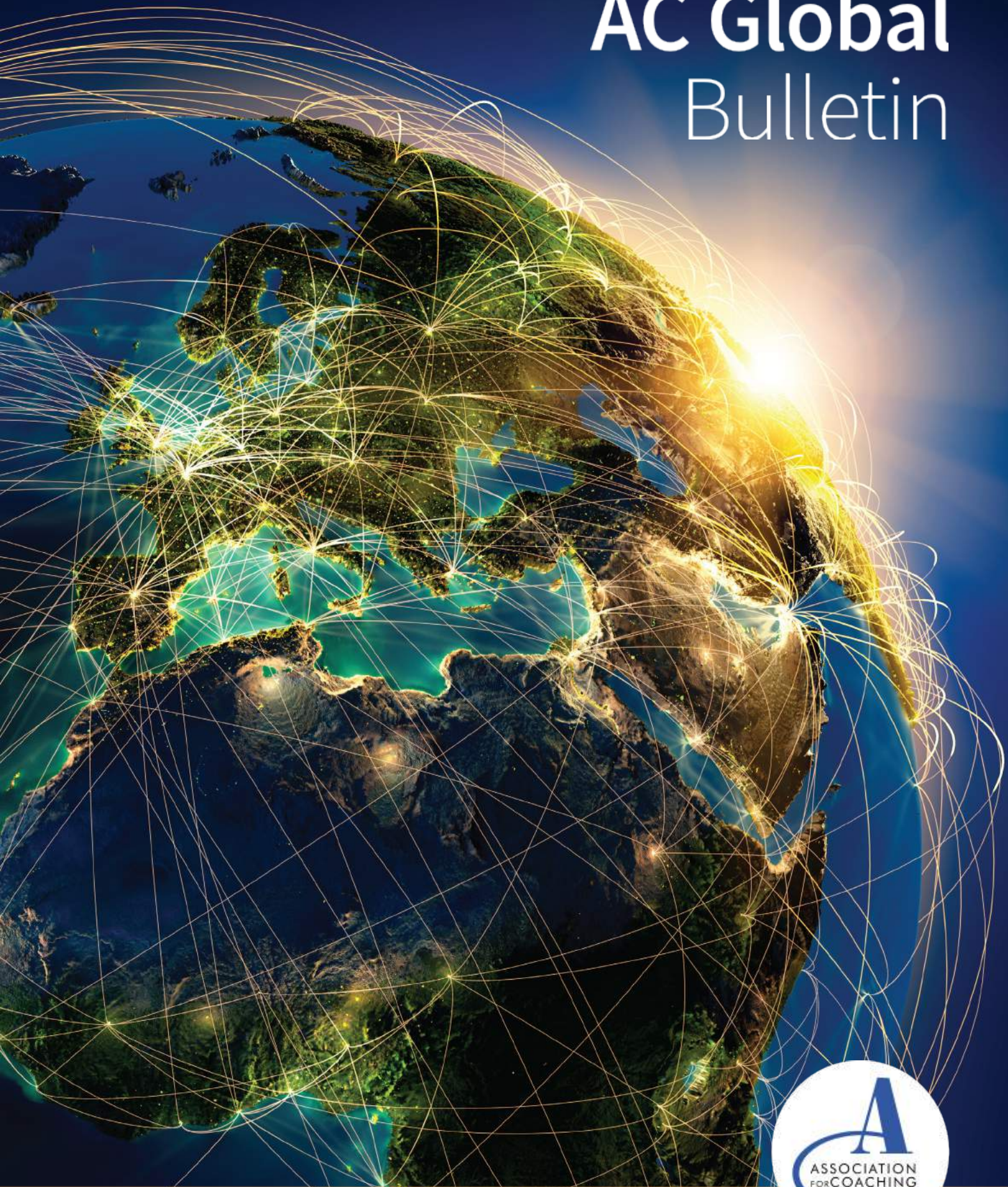


APRIL 2015 | ISSUE 5

# AC Global Bulletin



*"promoting excellence & ethics in coaching"*





APRIL 2015 | ISSUE 5

# AC Global Bulletin

## CONTENTS

<b>Editorial</b>	3
Sue Stockdale	
<b>COACHING IMPACT</b>	
<b>Making Risk the Teacher</b>	5
Ian McDermott	
<b>Economic Crisis and Self-Esteem</b>	8
Dr Avra Lyraki	
<b>INTERVIEW</b>	
<b>Think Courage, Not Risk: Interview with Marshall Goldsmith</b>	10
Sue Stockdale	
<b>EMERGING TRENDS</b>	
<b>Coaching Couples: Strengthening Employee Resilience and Performance</b>	14
Fiona Elder	
<b>The Risky Business of Horse-Assisted Coaching</b>	16
Lisa Rendell	
<b>RESEARCH</b>	
<b>Developing Managers for Sustainably Engaged Teams</b>	18
Emma Donaldson-Feilder and Rachel Lewis	
<b>GLOBAL COACHING COMMUNITY</b>	
<b>Dare to Care: Leading through Rapport and Bonding</b>	22
Riet Fiddelaers-Jaspers, Jakob van Wielink and Leo Wilhelm	
<b>COACHING AROUND THE WORLD</b>	
<b>Coaching In Brazil</b>	25
Cristina Berenguer Dantas	
<b>COACHING IN CONTEXT</b>	
<b>The Art and Science of Coach Selection</b>	28
Camilla Arnold	
<b>A Natural Curiosity</b>	29
David Finney	
<b>COACHING LEADERSHIP</b>	
<b>Coaching and Risk Coherence Using The Full Brain™ Approach</b>	31
Carole Gaskell	
<b>EXCELLENCE IN COACHING</b>	
<b>How Could You Improve Your Reflective Practice?</b>	35
Clive Steeper	
<b>To See or Not to See: The Case for Coaching by Phone</b>	38
Sherry Harsch-Porter	
<b>Coaching Groups via Teleconference</b>	40
Jon Williams	
<b>REVIEWS AND NEWS</b>	42
<b>AC IRELAND NEWS</b>	48



# Welcome to the Spring 2015 Bulletin

As the buds begin to open and Spring starts to emerge here in the UK, it reminds me of the vital role coaching has in encouraging others to flourish and be at their best.

In order to do this we have to be prepared to take risks; to step out of our comfort zone and face a degree of uncertainty. This applies to the coach, the coachee, the organisation and to the coaching profession at large.

So **risk** is the theme for this edition. I find it such a fascinating subject because I believe it is the key to unlocking potential. Personally I have gained so much from taking risks both in my business and personal life, the results of which have taken me to work in a war zone, ski to the North Pole, and compete in Channel 4's *Superhuman*; as well as delivering motivational presentations, coaching and leadership programmes for interesting organisations all over the world.

From a coaching perspective risk-taking can range from being prepared to ask a challenging question, saying no to a potential client because you don't believe it's an ideal match (even when you could do with the revenue), embarking on regular coaching supervision, or admitting to your client that you don't know what to do next during a coaching session. It takes courage and regular practice to become more 'comfortable with the uncomfortable'. Yet it can be hugely beneficial.

So we aim to role-model this philosophy of risk-taking in the bulletin. There is a broad range of articles to provoke thought, provide insight and

extend your perspectives, so you might like to take a few minutes to sit down and reflect on your own approach to risk as you read them.

Our lead interview on the subject of risk is with **Marshall Goldsmith**, named no. 1 Leadership Thinker in the World, by Thinkers50 in 2011, and as America's Pre-eminent Executive Coach by *Fast Company* magazine. Also **Ian McDermott**, AC Global Ambassador for Innovation and Collaboration, explains how risk can stimulate alert thinking and behaviour.

We also explore some ways that coaching is being used in more risky situations, which include Fiona Elder's experience of **Coaching Couples**, Lisa Rendell's views on **Horse-Assisted Coaching** and Avra Lyraki's piece on **Economic Crisis and Self-Esteem**.

From an international perspective, Cristina Dantas gives us her view of **Coaching in Brazil**, and there is an interview with **ex-hostage negotiator Professor George Kohlrieser** from IMD in Lausanne on how getting more comfortable with grief and loss can be beneficial for leaders.

You will find some practical pieces too that outline the risks and benefits of different facets of coaching. Camilla Arnold from TXG gives us her view on **the art and science of coach selection**; Dr. Sherry Harsch-Porter dissects **the do's and don'ts of telephone coaching**,



and Jon Williams does likewise on the subject of **coaching groups via teleconference**.

And for some challenge you can ponder along with Clive Steeper on **ways to improve your reflective practice**.

I hope that as a result the Global Bulletin will cause you to review how you define risk and how it influences your work.

Enjoy the read – and do let us know your views or comments on the articles. The AC group on LinkedIn is a good place to share your thoughts.

Our next issue is themed on **Innovation**. We look forward to receiving your ideas for articles and reviews.

Sue Stockdale

Deputy Editor, AC Global Bulletin



*Photo by Logan Brumm*

## WHAT BOOK HAS SHAPED YOUR COACHING?

There are many influences on how we develop as coaches, and often none more so than a book we have read. In our next edition, we want to feature Bulletin readers along with a short summary of a book that has been instrumental in shaping your coaching practice.

Please send in the following information:

Title of Book

Author

In what way did it shape your coaching practice?

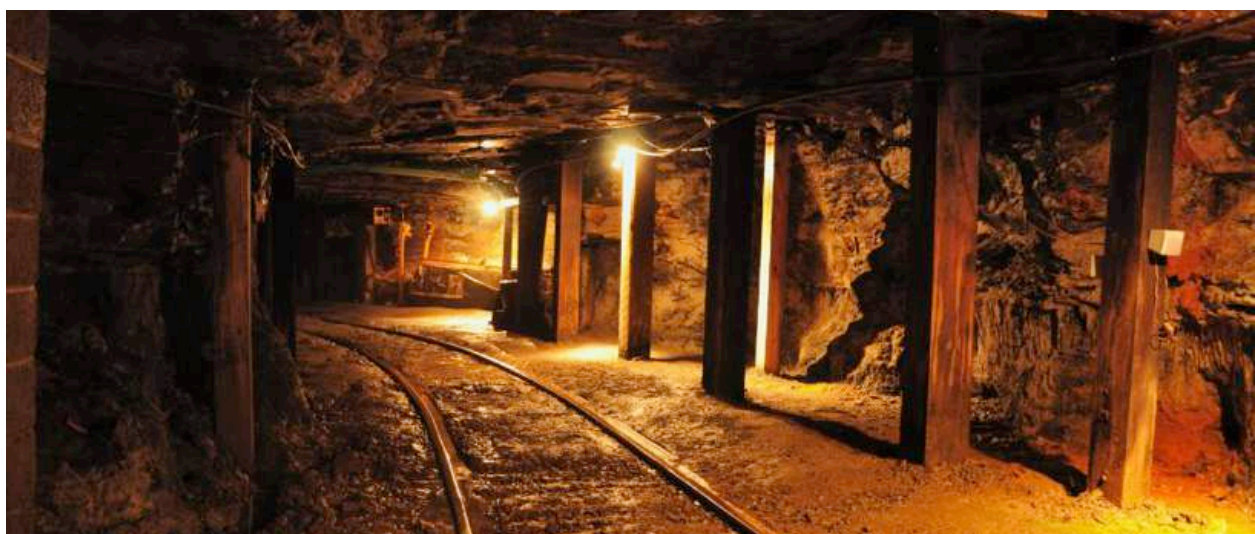
Why you would recommend it to others?

This should be a maximum of 200 words, and be sent along with a hi-resolution photo of you, and the book cover to [editor@associationforcoaching.com](mailto:editor@associationforcoaching.com)

We look forward to hearing from you! Replies should be sent by 8<sup>th</sup> May 2015.



# Making Risk the Teacher



**Ian McDermott** explains how being aware of risk can stimulate alert thinking and behaviour.

Every day we make assessments about the relative risk of doing one thing rather than another. Crossing the road, changing jobs, making that financial investment or even saying 'I love you' can all involve risk. Risk is an integral part of living a human life.

How we relate to risk affects our innovative potential in every area of our life and work – including coaching. If we play 'safe' we'll be in danger of being too timid. Then we're probably exhibiting a kind of risk aversion. If we only occasionally step outside our comfort zone we're really seeking to minimise perceived risk. This is risk avoidance. Imagine the kind of coaching these two mind-sets will generate. Would you really want to pay for this?

Over the past five years I've been working with a highly entrepreneurial global mining company coaching their next generation of leaders. More recently my focus has been on all those responsible for safety. This is the heavy metal end of risk – literally. Get this wrong and people die. The more I work in this area the more I'm aware of the existential implications of what we're doing. I'd like to share some of my experiences with you as I think they are useful for us as coaches.

## BEING AWARE OF RISK

Safety in the high-risk industry of mining is not about the number of rules you have in place or the number of dedicated safety personnel you have on site, but the kind of attention and mindful awareness that each person brings to the job every waking moment.

Too often companies seek to 'protect' people in ways which actually infantilise them. When, for instance, safety is made the preserve of the Safety Officer you're in danger of removing it from each individual's responsibility. In our work we're not trying to mistake-proof life, or micro-manage people or create a thousand checklists with boxes to tick.

Instead we start from the premise that risk is inherent: it's how you engage with it that will make the difference. And that's how I came to formulate this approach I call Making Risk the Teacher. Being aware of risk can stimulate alert thinking and behaviour. This is what keeps people safe. Two years down the line we now have the statistics to prove it: incidents have been dramatically reduced both in terms of number and severity.

We now know this approach can make a big



difference in the mining industry. I believe this change in mindset can do the same in our own and our clients' lives. Judging from what I've seen in the mines, one of the ways you as a coach might expect such a mind-set to manifest is that clients will be more proactive, more resourceful and more adult.

By contrast when we're too concerned about protecting people – be it physical or psychological – paradoxically we may end up selling them short or even hurting them.

Here's one example of how this can happen. Carers of people with dementia naturally try to protect them from any kind of hazardous situation. However, at the extreme end this can mean keeping them permanently indoors and preferably sitting down, because even a walk in the park might run the risk of them falling over.

What happens if you are over-protective? Clinical psychologist Neil Mapes talks of people suffering from a vitamin R deficiency – that's 'R' as in risk. Neurologically a lack of risk produces a lack of stimulation and as a result the brain can go into a downward spiral. With it comes low energy and low self-esteem. Mapes's organisation, the wonderfully named *Dementia Adventure*, provides outdoor adventures with an element of risk so that people can be stimulated into engaging effectively with their environment again. Indeed they are

encouraged to take risks. Recent outings have included hiking in the Lake District and a five-day sailing trip along the Cornish coast. Participants are responding very positively. And Mapes is now beginning to advise care homes on positive risk-taking.

We can apply the same principle to our coaching. Having the confidence to operate outside our comfort zone and take a risk is a way of operating at our cutting edge. So you might want to consider, are you as a coach or a supervisor in danger of being under-stimulated by not stretching yourself? If so are you perhaps selling yourself and your clients short?

Suppose as a society we stopped trying to avoid risk at all costs? Suppose instead we recognised risk as something which stimulates all of our survival circuitry and thus promotes healthy neurological functioning? Suppose we were to use risk awareness as a means to foster a culture of accountability where people take responsibility for themselves as adults? That would mean they'd be assuming a leadership role in their own lives. Isn't that what we're working for as coaches?

That's the return on making risk the teacher.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ian McDermott is the Founder of International Teaching Seminars (ITS). Based in the UK and the US, he works with senior leaders and their teams around the world. He has trained a generation of coaches, is the father of NLP Coaching and has pioneered Applied Neuroscience and Innovation Coaching. Ian is an Honorary Fellow of Exeter University Business School where his focus is on innovation and entrepreneurship. A UKCP accredited psychotherapist, he is also External Faculty at Henley Business School where he helped create the MSc. in Coaching and Behavioural Change. Ian is AC Global Ambassador for Innovation and Collaboration. You can reach Ian at [www.linkedin.com/in/ianemcdermott](http://www.linkedin.com/in/ianemcdermott)

# JOURNEY TO COACHING MASTERY

DEVELOPING AN INNOVATION MINDSET  
A PRE-REQUISITE FOR MASTERY

## “Innovation and the Journey to Coaching Mastery”

*A special webinar series with AC's Global Ambassador, Ian McDermott*

21 May - 17 September 2015

We are pleased to kick off our ‘Journey to Coaching Mastery’ webinar series with Association for Coaching’s Global Ambassador for Innovation and Collaboration, Ian McDermott.

Mastery and Innovation are profoundly related. Anyone wanting to attain mastery or be innovative will need to commit to a journey of experiential learning; to develop and learn new things but also let go of and unlearn old habits.

Neither mastery nor innovation is a sprint; both are more like a marathon. Both require patience, dedication, humility and the ability to see ‘failure’ as helpful feedback in disguise.

The Association for Coaching (AC) and Ian McDermott have the pleasure to invite you to **develop your own innovative potential** in only 5 months, from the comfort of your home, by joining us on a monthly webinar.

Here are the topics and schedule for the Innovation webinar series. Live webinars will take place at 13h00 GMT on the mentioned dates. Recordings will be available for registered participants.

<b>The Importance of developing an Innovation Mindset</b>	LIVE on Thursday, May 21 <sup>st</sup>
<b>The Innovation Journey and how to make it</b>	LIVE on Thursday, June 18 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Collaboration and the Neuroscience of Innovation</b>	LIVE on Thursday, July 16 <sup>th</sup>
(with <u>guest speaker: Patricia Riddell</u> , Professor of Applied Neuroscience)	
<b>Courage, Risk and Innovation</b>	LIVE on Thursday, August 13 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Innovative Coaching</b>	LIVE on Thursday, September 17 <sup>th</sup>

As with all AC continuing professional events, the fees are offered at a very good value, with an extra-special price for AC members. To book your place or find out more, please visit us [here](http://here). For any further questions, please contact Smaranda Dochia at: [smaranda@associationforcoaching.com](mailto:smaranda@associationforcoaching.com)

Ian McDermott is an acknowledged thought leader and the Founder of *International Teaching Seminars*. His work impacts five main areas - innovation & entrepreneurship, legacy, leadership & collaboration.

As a leader in the fields of entrepreneurship and innovation, he provides his clients with the skills to innovate their own solutions.

Ian is currently the Association for Coaching’s Global Ambassador for *Innovation & Collaboration*.



All delegates will receive a certificate at the end of the series to count toward your CPD. Places are limited so please book early. We hope to see you online!

[www.associationforcoaching.com](http://www.associationforcoaching.com)  
‘promoting excellence & ethics in coaching’



# Economic Crisis and Self-Esteem



In times of economic instability and uncertainty, people risk losing their self-esteem. **Dr Avra Lyraki** from Greece describes how changing one's self-perception and redefining values can have a positive impact.

We are undoubtedly living through a difficult economic period: every single day we are bombarded with new financial measures and wage reductions, not to mention increasing global unemployment, which has reached dramatic levels. In fact, many people are facing a daily survival battle just to secure the most basic goods.

In this type of environment, where physical survival is pre-eminent, it is vital that we maintain our self-esteem if psychologically we are to survive the difficulties we experience. It is well known that, in periods of strong economic downturn, anxiety, fear, insecurity, anger and psychological problems all increase in people who have lost their security. As a consequence, people start to feel helpless and hopeless.

In an effort to feel better, over the years most of us have bought into the notion that 'consuming' means 'existing', and that what 'I have' is more important than 'who I am'. Wasting our material and spiritual energy in unbridled consumerism means that we have lost not only many of the assets that we had, but also the basics.

The harsh truth is that circumstances have now changed and we need to find different ways to stay healthy and balanced. This means using our best efforts to protect ourselves so that we are able to face any actual or potential adversity. Only by maintaining and enhancing our self-esteem will we be able to escape our circumstances rather than letting ourselves be dominated by them.

## SELF-PERCEPTION

To be able to navigate the current situation, you need to ask yourself what the economic crisis means specifically to you, your life and your future. Does how you feel in tight economic times actually show *who you are* and what kind of self-perception you have?

If you answer this question honestly, you will see that the issue here is not ultimately the economic crisis *per se* but rather how we perceive it in terms of how we feel about ourselves. If we associate the meaning of happiness with the phrase 'I have' rather than 'I am', then it is more than certain that if we lose our possessions we will lose our self-esteem at the same time.



So ask yourself and honestly answer the following questions:

• **How happy do you feel about who you are rather than what you have?**

When we feel good about ourselves we are so strong and confident that despite adversity we are able to accomplish anything we decide to.

• **Is your self-esteem tied to your financial situation, or do you feel equally high self-esteem even if your financial situation is affected?**

This question can help us live a paradigm shift and see the current problem as an opportunity. What do I mean by this? During each economic downturn of recent years, important discoveries have been made simply because people experiencing the crisis awake from their everyday slumber and are forced to think creatively in order to survive. It is surely no coincidence that many people have used a crisis as an opportunity to chase their life's dream, which they otherwise wouldn't have.

The fact that 'everything flows', as Heraclitus said, is the only certainty in the age we live in. Nothing we take for granted will last forever because everything changes: we are called to respond appropriately and to defend our choices by taking responsibility for them.

Learning to live with much less can cause us stress, making us feel that we are losing control and that our self-worth as well as our self-esteem is diminishing daily. But in reality this process can lead to a redefinition of our values.

### REDEFINING VALUES

For some of us our values can be integrity, honesty or mutual trust. If we live by our values then our self-esteem is not broken. Quite the contrary: it becomes stronger and stronger, creating the ideal conditions to change the

game of life radically. The important thing is to be grateful for what we have, and not to grumble about what we do not have.

It is difficult to strive for the best on a daily basis whilst thoughts of what we have lost are nagging at us. The economic crisis may cause depression, hopelessness and pessimism; on the other hand it is also undoubtedly an opportunity for inner exploration. If we can unlearn what we have learned and be flexible enough to re-learn, then our lives can be easier and we can certainly be happier. What we need is to believe in ourselves and to have an organised action plan with specific milestones:

**1. Decide what you want to achieve.** Make your goal very specific. If you want to find a job, you can start from a position that may not at first seem very appealing; but – especially if you are unemployed – surely this can offer you much more than sitting at home complaining about the economic situation.

**2. Set a deadline for achieving the objective.** A goal should have a deadline. If you do not have a definite date, your goal remains only a wish or a dream.

**3. Set realistic goals, goals that you can actually visualise.** You should feel that your goal can be accomplished.

**4. Develop an action plan.** Determine the specific steps that have to be taken to achieve your goal.

**5. Take daily action** towards your goal. Dreams and goals require action.

**6. Make yourself a promise.** Be committed to the outcome of your goal, even when times get tough, until you reach your goal. Even if your goal is not achieved, take full responsibility for your actions – or inactions. Instead of seeing yourself as a victim, turn self-pity into action!

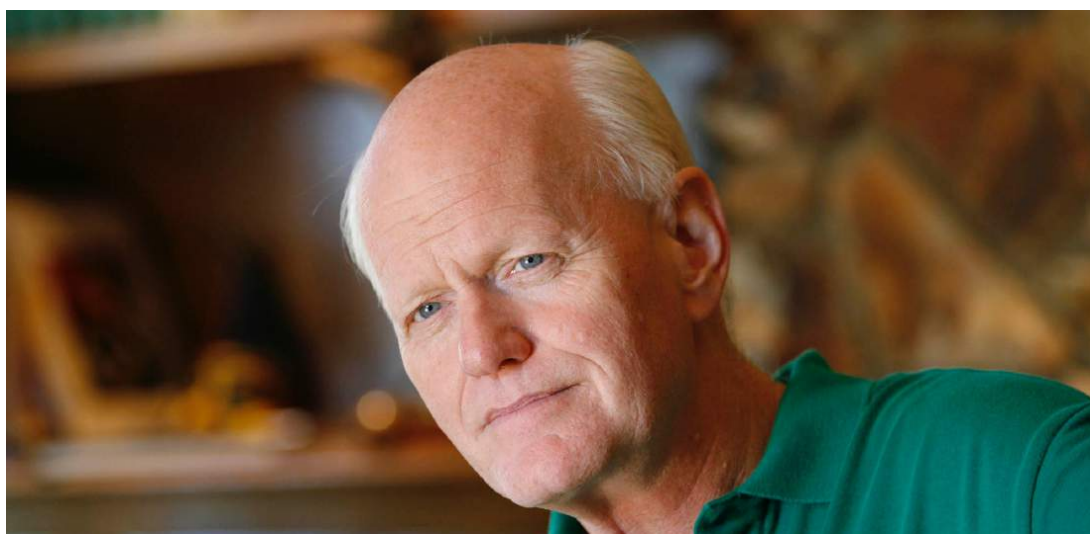


### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr Avra Lyraki is a corporate communications coach (ACC) and mentor (IPPA) specialising in issues of organisational communication during mergers & acquisitions. She holds a Master's degree in International Management from the University of La Verne California, and a Bachelor's degree in International Relations from Panteion University of Social & Political Sciences, Department of International & European Studies, in Athens.

She is a member of the Institute of Coaching – McLean Hospital, Harvard Medical School; the Global Speakers Federation; the International Coach Federation (ICF); and the Athens Institute for Education and Research. She is founder of the Life Self Coaching Institute. [www.lifselfcoaching.com](http://www.lifselfcoaching.com)

# Think Courage, Not Risk



Do coaches take risks? Executive coach and world-renowned thought-leader **Marshall Goldsmith** talked to AC Global Bulletin Deputy Editor **Sue Stockdale** about how risk influences the coach, the client and the coaching profession.

'Most coaches tend to be risk-averse.' That's the view of Marshall Goldsmith, recognised as Number 1 Leadership Thinker in the World and the top-ranked executive coach at the 2013 biennial Thinkers50 ceremony in London. As a result, coaches end up taking on clients who are unlikely to change, because the focus of the coach is more on getting paid. This damages both the reputation of the coach and also the coaching profession.

Goldsmith believes that if coaches were more entrepreneurial and willing to be paid for results, rather than time spent with their client, they would make a lot more money. 'Most coaches have zero measure of results other than *amount of time spent with the client and my client likes me*,' he says. When you begin to focus on results you take a risk – because your client may not achieve them. And even if you don't decide to get paid for results but just start to measure results, it's still a risk because if you measure, you can document failure.

'Most coaches are deathly afraid of measurement,' he says. If you don't measure

you can pretend success. You can come up with anecdotal stories to justify your success. I don't get paid unless my clients get better!'

Goldsmith's approach could be viewed as a high-risk strategy. He is only paid on results: this means evidence of positive long-term change in the clients' leadership behaviour as measured by key stakeholders. It turns the traditional view of a coaching relationship on its head: instead of the coach making the financial case with the client, the client makes the financial case with the coach. Goldsmith adds 'Instead of looking inwardly and saying you are going to get better because of me, I tell them you are going to get better *because of you*. I facilitate the process of change.'

## THE IMPORTANCE OF CLIENT SELECTION

Goldsmith doesn't view his approach as high-risk because he has been working this way since he started out as a coach. One of the things he learned early on was the importance of working with the right clients.



'I only trust myself to get results if I work with the right clients. For example, the client I worked with that changed the most, was the person I spent the least amount of time with. It was Alan Mulally, who was CEO of the Ford Motor Company, and was CEO of the Year in the United States and listed in *Fortune* magazine as the third-greatest leader in the world. Alan improved more than anyone I ever coached and I spent the least amount of time with him. I explained how it worked and he understood the process and he did it. Not only did he get better, but two hundred of his people also got better.' That experience taught Goldsmith two lessons:

- **Lesson 1** – your biggest challenge as a coach is called customer selection. If you pick the right customer, your coaching process will always work. If you pick the wrong customer, your coaching process will never work.
- **Lesson 2** – never make the coaching process about your own ego and how smart you are. Make it about the great people you work with and how hard they work and how proud you are of them.

This is the opposite of mainstream coaching training. Most people are taught that the most important variable is the coach, but in Goldsmith's view the most important variable is *the person being coached*. The key ingredient for the coach in client selection is courage; that is the courage to believe in yourself and your capabilities as a coach, and the courage to say **no** to clients who don't care. It's only a risk to get paid on results if you don't have 100% belief in your own capabilities and 100% belief in your client.

I challenged Marshall to consider that many coaches would find this difficult. His response was: 'This issue is not about money, it is about courage – do you have the nerve to do it or not? There is a definite risk to this approach as there is no guarantee that I will get paid, so I do take a risk. However, the risk assessment is my own. If I think the client is a bad risk, then I should not be working with them.'

### UNDERSTANDING YOUR VALUE

As a young man, Marshall learned the importance of understanding your value. He was brought up in a poor family in Valley Station, Kentucky. He recalls a life-changing moment when a hole in their roof needed fixing:

'My father hired a man named Dennis Mudd to help us put on the roof. Because we did not have much money I had to help Dennis Mudd. I didn't know anything about roofs but he trained me to help him.

'It was hard work and it was hot, but Dennis Mudd was very serious and he wanted to do a very good roof and he wanted everything to be just right. So I worked with Dennis and we built the roof. When the roof was finished I was very proud. Dennis looked at my father and asked

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**'This issue is not about money, it is about courage – do you have the nerve to do it or not?'**

---

him to inspect the roof. He told my father "If the roof is of high quality, please pay me. If the roof is not of high quality, it is free". Dennis Mudd was poor and needed the money but he believed in payment on results.'

This was a key moment in Goldsmith's life: he decided 'I want to be like Dennis Mudd when I grow up'. Goldsmith realised that whilst Mudd may have been poor, he had class. He understood that Mudd was taking the biggest risk of all, because he needed the money. This experience taught Marshall a powerful lesson about risk-taking and courage.

### MINIMISING RISK

Careful client selection and knowing your value are key in enabling a coach to minimise some of the risks they may face when taking on a new client.

When Goldsmith takes on a new client, he engages stakeholders in the process from day one. If he works with a CEO, then the board have to agree what is important to focus on; if a senior leader, then the CEO agrees the key measures. This process ensures that stakeholders are part of the process of evaluating results in the longer term. His criteria for working with a client include:

- The issue must be behavioural - not intellectual, technical or functional.
- The person has to be willing to try.
- They have to be given a fair chance.

There are also some criteria that help him reduce the risk of not getting a positive result:

- Never coach integrity problems. You don't coach a lack of integrity – you *fire* a lack of integrity.
- Don't coach people who don't care, and don't coach people who have been written off by the company. Sometimes a company hires a coach to work with one of those people. But everyone knows they are not going to get better – it's just a 'seek and destroy' activity.
- If you are a behavioural coach, don't provide coaching on technical areas because you can't make a bad engineer a good engineer, or a bad scientist a good scientist.

Only provide coaching where you have expertise to provide coaching. Most coaches know nothing about strategy - so don't get into strategy.

As a coach you are in a good position to assess the motivation of a potential client. Goldsmith's approach is all about making sure that the client is truly committed to the coaching process from the outset. Otherwise it will be difficult to trust that they have the ability to change, and to assess your results.

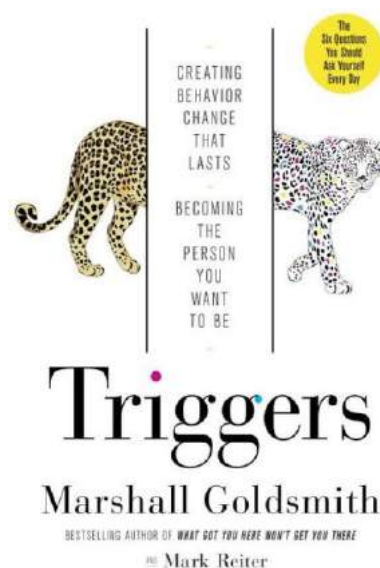
Marshall Goldsmith has trained thousands of people around the world to be coaches using his stakeholder-centred coaching methodology. And throughout the training he emphasises that the key to effective coaching is the client, not the coach. Something Marshall Goldsmith is particularly proud of is coming up with the idea of coaching successful people rather than coaching being used to fix problems. The extensive number of Google references for Marshall Goldsmith in relation to 'coaching successful people' is testimony to this.

### ORGANISATIONAL ATTITUDE TO RISK

Our conversation moved to the subject of risk from an organisational perspective. I was curious to know how Goldsmith, whose best-selling books include *What Got You Here, Won't Get You There* and recent title *Triggers*, viewed the role of risk for those within organisations who are involved in selecting coaches. As coach selection becomes more commoditised and price-sensitive, this has the

potential to dumb down the value of coaching across a business.

His view was clear: 'It's generally purchasing or HR that are more risk-averse – because they measure hours worked, rather than behavioural change. At the end of the day it depends on who you talk to. Line managers are quite comfortable with risk because they are used to risk. CEOs understand risk because they take risks every day; I have not found any CEO who does not like my *pay for results* approach – they think that way anyway. They have a bottom line to focus on, stock prices and a board of directors, so they know what it's like to get measured.'



What about the coaching profession, I asked. What does he consider the risks to be in the coming years? As always, Goldsmith's views are provocative. He sees the risks as already being lived out because there are too many coaches. This results in people being prepared to work for nothing, or very little, which damages the reputation of the coaching profession. He does not expect this to change in the short term either. 'I'd suggest if you want to be in the coaching field, take the high road, not the low road,' says Goldsmith. 'Get a good education – coach high-level people, get paid for results.'

He also believes that coaches need to stop talking about themselves and begin talking about their clients. Goldsmith is proud that he can give you the names of every one of his clients. He says 'Many coaches say they can't



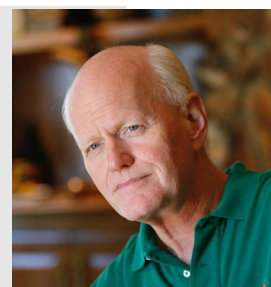


give me the names of their clients. Why is it a secret? I think it's because often their clients are ashamed. I only trust myself to get results if I work with the right clients, so a coach needs to consider who is the right client for them.'

What does he think the professional coaching bodies can do to address the supply versus demand issue in the future? Goldsmith was sceptical about the degree to which coaching bodies will change, given that professional bodies have vested interests which preclude them from taking too many risks. 'These bodies generate revenue from training and accrediting processes and as long as people have money to spend, they are unlikely to change in the short term,' he mused.

In closing Goldsmith threw down the gauntlet: 'Coaches need to believe in themselves and their clients'. His final comments, however, were pragmatic, recognising that not all coaches may be confident enough to adopt this approach immediately. 'If coaches want to adopt this approach, they should initially try it with one or two clients. Explain that you really believe in them, and that you won't get paid if they don't get better. If you truly believe in the value of your coaching, and your client's capacity to change, then why wouldn't you take a risk?'

Marshall Goldsmith is an executive educator, coach and author. He has been recognised at the *Thinkers 50* ceremony in London as one of the Top Ten Most Influential Management Thinkers in the World – and the top rated executive coach – for the past four years. His work has been recognised by almost every professional association and publication in his field. Marshall is one of a select few executive advisors who have been asked to work with over 150 major CEOs and their management teams. His coaching process is currently being used by thousands of internal and external coaches around the world. His books have sold over two million copies and his articles, [blogs](#) or videos have been read or viewed tens of millions of times.



**ABOUT  
MARSHALL  
GOLDSMITH**



**ABOUT  
THE  
AUTHOR**

Sue Stockdale is an executive coach and coach supervisor whose clients are leaders worldwide who step out of their comfort zones and achieve extraordinary results. Sue has written and co-authored eight books including *Cope with Change at Work*, (Teach Yourself Books 2012); *The Personality Workbook* (Teach Yourself Books 2013); and her most recent title *Risk: All that Matters* (Hodder & Stoughton 2015). She is Deputy Editor of the AC Global Bulletin and her risk-taking experiences include becoming first UK woman to ski to the Magnetic North Pole, and representing Scotland in athletics.

#### REFERENCES / FURTHER READING

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# Coaching Couples: Strengthening Employee Resilience and Performance

If you think there are benefits to coaching an individual, consider the additional value in coaching couples. **Fiona Elder** reports on how this emerging trend is an effective way to reduce risks and demonstrate family friendly policies within the workplace.

I see two sides of employees. For eighteen years I have worked with managers and directors as an executive coach focusing on leadership and results. On Saturdays I am a relationship counsellor working with clients who could have stepped straight from my coaching practice.

The ability to coach couples appears to be an emerging trend, and the stories below illustrate the interplay between career demands and relationships. Each of these stories started and ended with healthy, strong relationships – but in the middle stuff happened! Work threw some curveballs, the relationship wobbled, and emotions took over. If there had been a few good coaching conversations at critical points, the couple would have felt more robust, more aligned, more in control and not in need of counselling.

- A wife who, four years after a move across the Atlantic, feels that she has been ignored and overlooked as her husband focused on making an impact in a new company.
- Professional athletes who struggle with short-term contracts and funding; and not knowing where they and their family should put down their roots.
- A husband and wife who are both executive level in the same organisation and have not been able to deal with a bullying and harassment claim against the latter.

- Couples who work in the third sector experiencing the stress of being repeatedly asked at short notice to travel to war zones for long periods of time in order to respond to humanitarian crises.



My working premise is that family units of any shape or size are essential for the wellbeing of our society in general, and directly affect employees' ability to be the best that they can be. The readers of this bulletin will undoubtedly be convinced of the value of coaching individuals to sustain wellbeing, resilience and effectiveness. I have also seen the benefit gained by couples when they work jointly with a coach during periods of change.

*Photo by Vladimir Pustovit*



Some executives say 'We don't get involved with people's family life – it would be inappropriate and too risky if it resulted in divorce'. My response is 'Get real! With smartphones and global teams working across time zones and continents you play an ever-present part in family life!'

Most directors seem to agree with my premise but lament that no-one will pay! I suggest that they look at their company values and ethics and see how affecting but *not* supporting relationships fits with them.

I am the first to acknowledge that this is complex work, and organisations need to find the right practitioners with the mix of experience in organisations and relationships to enable them to work comfortably and ethically.

My request is that coaches and commissioners of coaching see couple coaching as a real way of reducing risk and showing family-friendly policies in action.

Offer employees and partners support to explore the stresses and tensions resulting from changes at work, and decide together how they will deal with these practically, emotionally and logically before it becomes a crisis. We need to acknowledge what Aristotle knew – there are three agendas of change: ethos, pathos and logos. Coaching supports a couple in managing all three.

## ARISTOTLE'S RHETORIC

Aristotle recognised that in any speech, three 'modes of persuasion' would be at work: *ethos*, *pathos* and *logos*. These modes of interaction work together, and can be applied to any relationship.

- Ethos (practical agenda)

One's behaviour in the world, one's credibility and character: leading by example.

- Pathos (emotional agenda)

The way one feels or makes others feel: the use of emotional appeals to alter the audience's judgement.

- Logos (logical agenda)

One's intellectual strategy: the use of reasoning to appeal to the logical side of an audience.

### Further Reading

Didier Marlier, Chris Parker, (2009). *Engaging Leadership: Three Agendas for Sustaining Achievement*, Palgrave Macmillan



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Fiona Elder is a leadership coach (PCC), supervisor and coach mentor working with executives, technical experts and coaches in a broad range of organisations in the public and private sectors. She works systemically, focusing on the power of purposeful, respectful dialogue to build successful businesses and flourishing communities. Her background in engineering and manufacturing gives her an insight into followership and working at all levels in organisations. She is also an experienced relationship counsellor and uses that experience and knowledge to proactively coach senior executives (and sometimes their partners) when they are going through periods of job- and family-related change. [www.fionaelder.com](http://www.fionaelder.com)

# The Risky Business of Horse-Assisted Coaching



In this article on emerging trends in coaching, executive coach **Lisa Rendell** explains how connecting clients with horses is beneficial for learning about emotions, relationships and energy.

What words do you link with risk? Curiosity? Leap of faith? Adventure? Brave? William Arthur Ward wrote: 'But risks must be taken because the greatest hazard in life is to risk nothing. The person who risks nothing, does nothing, has nothing, is nothing. He may avoid suffering and sorrow, But he cannot learn, feel, change, grow or live.'

The executives I work with in a range of sectors often associate the concept of control with the idea of limits, assessment or safety. When I put those people in front of a horse (some for the first time) to work on personal leadership development, I hear them use words like 'out of my comfort zone', 'big animal' and 'adrenaline', 'anxious' or 'excited'.

Why add a horse to executive coaching? Despite the centuries-old recognition of the therapeutic benefits of horse riding, horsemanship only entered the business world two decades ago. Relatively few HR teams know of the availability and impact of equine-assisted learning (EAL). However, just as art can be used to unlock creativity or professional

actors to enhance corporate role-play, EAL offers a unique learning experience.

We as humans inhabit our logical conscious mind much of the time – so busy 'doing' that we miss the resources we have in our 'being'. Horses connect us with nature to concentrate on what our body and emotions are telling us, bringing into our awareness information that often sits ignored in our unconscious. They test our leadership – how we adapt in the moment, building our confidence through the trust and solutions we find in relationship with them. But why horses and not dogs?

- Being prey animals, horses have an intense fight/flight impulse for survival. When away from their herd they look to humans to be their leaders. In seconds, they weigh up if you or they will lead, make a choice and react instinctively.
- Our communication is most powerful when body language, tone and words are aligned. Horses are incredibly sensitive to this – if we 'say it straight' but 'show it crooked', they reflect any incongruence. Due to their size that reflection is clearly observable.

*Photo by photophilde*



- Their fight/flight compulsion mirrors the extremes of how we respond when at our least resourceful.

This liberating work is not for faint-hearted coaches. It exposes your clients to unexpected results and profound insights. Feedback from fellow leadership coaches and HR clients identify the following as key to its success:

- Coaching expertise holds the space as people explore surprising emotions and variations in relationship and energy.
- Horsemanship ensures the environment is safe and any slight changes in the horses' movement are interpreted and managed appropriately.
- Facilitation skills enable a group of participants to make connections between

how they are with the horses and how they are in the workplace, identifying transformations they can make in beliefs and behaviour.

There is growing international debate about ethical governance and codes of practice for EAL, to ensure that coaches, clients and horses are appropriately safeguarded. I believe it is important to carry out risk assessments, have safety equipment, a groom and first aider on hand when working. Qualifications and experience in coaching and horsemanship are a must, as is professional insurance that covers coaching and working with horses (including public liability).

That said, there is so much to gain for both coach and coachee, it's a risk worth taking.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lisa Rendell is an Executive Coach and NLP Practitioner who works freelance for one of the top leadership institutes in the UK. She runs her own personal development coaching and horse-assisted learning practice for adults, and volunteers for a national charity as a coach for children overcoming physical and learning disabilities through horse riding. In her spare time Lisa is caring for and training her own horses: a retired show-jumper and a young dressage prospect.

Contact Lisa through [www.meadowren.com](http://www.meadowren.com) and [www.ballycay.com](http://www.ballycay.com), or Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn.

# Developing Managers for Sustainably Engaged Teams

Employee engagement is now widely accepted as a key factor in achieving performance in the workplace, and good management skills are key to engaging people at work. However, if managers focus purely on employee engagement without considering wellbeing, say researchers **Emma Donaldson-Feilder** and **Rachel Lewis**, they risk creating engagement that is unsustainable.

## WHAT IS EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Although the term 'employee engagement' is widely used in management practice and literature, definitions vary hugely between academic research and practice. In our work we define employee engagement in a way that encompasses that range, as:

*Being focused in what you do (thinking), feeling good about yourself in your role and the organisation (feeling), and acting in a way that demonstrates commitment to the organisational values and objectives (acting).* (Lewis et al, 2011)

Employee engagement has a powerful effect on performance. The recent publication by the 'Engage for Success' task force, *Nailing the Evidence* (Rayton *et al*, 2012) presents a detailed business case – showing the positive impact of employee engagement both at the organisational level (on operating income, revenue growth, productivity, innovation, profitability, retention, customer service, reduced absenteeism and safety) and also at the individual level (job satisfaction, mental and physical wellbeing).

## ENGAGEMENT + WELLBEING = SUSTAINABILITY

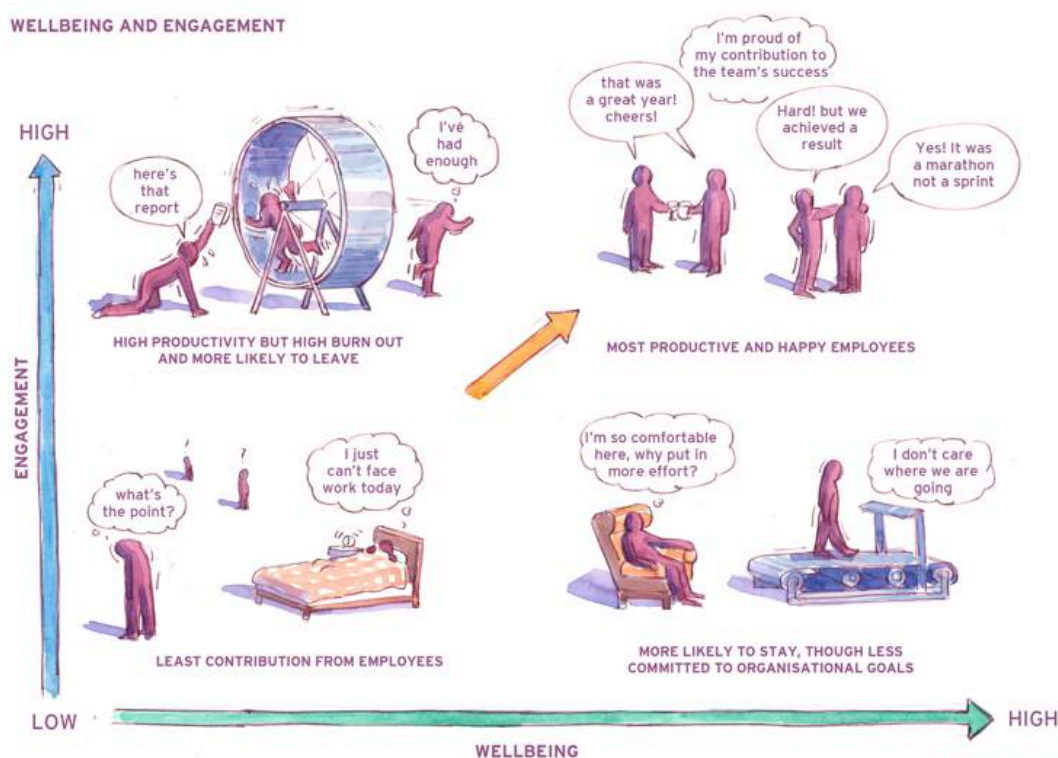
While employee engagement is important for performance, there is now evidence to suggest that it needs to be combined with



psychological wellbeing if performance is to be sustained over time (Fairhurst & O'Connor, 2010). Employees who are highly engaged and productive but who also have low levels of wellbeing are more likely to leave their organisation and experience high levels of burnout; whereas employees who are highly engaged and have high levels of wellbeing are the most productive and happy. The relationship can be represented as follows:



## WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT



2014@delta7.com

From: *The Evidence: wellbeing and employee engagement* (Engage for Success, 2014)

We have called this combined concept of employees being both engaged and having good levels of wellbeing 'sustainable engagement'.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAGEMENT CAPABILITY

Various reports highlight managers as one of the most important influences on employee engagement (e.g. Alfes *et al*, 2012; McLeod & Clarke, 2008). Managers have also consistently been shown to be key to the health and wellbeing of employees. For instance, Dame Carol Black's review of the health of Britain's working-age population (Black, 2008) stated that 'good line management can lead to good health, wellbeing and improved performance', and a recent review of evidence by Kelloway and Barling (2010) stated: 'sufficient data have now accumulated to allow the unambiguous conclusion that organisational leadership is related to, and predictive of, health and safety relevant outcomes in employees'. This suggests that one of the key ways to achieve sustainable engagement in employees will be to focus on improving manager capability – and coaching can help with this.

### MANAGEMENT BEHAVIOUR FOR SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

In order to support managers in understanding what they need to do to foster sustainable engagement in their teams, we conducted research to discover which manager behaviours are most useful in this context. Through this, we developed a 'Managing for sustainable employee engagement' framework (which brings together two frameworks from our previous work: management behaviour for enhancing employee engagement on the one hand; and management behaviour for preventing and reducing stress at work on the other). The framework is made up of five behavioural themes, or competencies, as seen in the table on the following page.

Underlying these five behavioural themes are 54 behavioural indicators providing details of what each behavioural theme/competency means. These also form a 54-item questionnaire that is a measure of whether a particular manager is 'managing for sustainable employee engagement', which is available in the report and guide based on the research (see links at the end of article).

## 'MANAGING FOR SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT' FRAMEWORK

COMPETENCY	BRIEF DESCRIPTION
Open, fair and consistent	Managing with integrity and consistency, managing emotions/personal issues and taking a positive approach in interpersonal interactions
Handling conflict and problems	Dealing with employee conflicts (including bullying and abuse) and using appropriate organisational resources
Knowledge, clarity and guidance	Clear communication, advice and guidance, demonstrates understanding of roles and responsible decision making
Building and sustaining relationships	Personal interaction with employees involving empathy and consideration
Supporting development	Supporting and arranging employee career progression and development

### HOW CAN COACHES HELP?

The 'Managing for sustainable employee engagement' framework provides specific indications of what managers can do in order to create sustainable employee engagement in their team. Coaches can use the framework to support managers and enhance management capability by:

- **Identifying which behaviours managers already use and which ones they might want to add to their repertoire:** As mentioned above, we developed a questionnaire from the research that allows managers to indicate which behaviours are already part of their management repertoire and which are not. More powerfully still, it can be used to provide the manager with upward or 360-degree feedback to allow them to understand how others, particularly those they manage, perceive their management behaviour. Our research suggests that managers find this form of feedback extremely helpful and can use it to guide behaviour change. Coaches can support a manager client by conducting a feedback process and helping the manager understand what the feedback means for them.
- **Supporting managers to change behaviour where appropriate:** Most managers find that some of the behavioural indicators in the framework are things that they already do (or avoid doing in the case of the negative behaviours) whereas other indicators are not

part of their current approach. Where a manager identifies things that they could change in order to manage their team in a way that is more likely to engender sustainable engagement, coaching can be a hugely beneficial support for the behaviour change process. In coaching, the manager can define specific changes they want to make and steps towards making them; they can also monitor change and find ways to overcome obstacles.

### FURTHER DETAILS

More information on this research, including the full list of behavioural items/questionnaire, can be found in the research report *Managing for sustainable employee engagement: Developing a behavioural framework*, available [here](#) and [here](#).

We are currently conducting research looking at how organisations can best develop managers and set a context that is conducive to managing for sustainable employee engagement. If you would like to know more about this or any of our research, please do get in touch with us via [info@affinityhealthatwork.com](mailto:info@affinityhealthatwork.com) or visit our website [www.affinityhealthatwork.com](http://www.affinityhealthatwork.com)



## ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Emma Donaldson-Feilder and Rachel Lewis are Occupational Psychologists (Chartered with the BPS and registered with the HCPC) with expertise in the field of workplace health, wellbeing and engagement, and leadership and management. They are both Directors of Affinity Health at Work, a specialist consultancy and research group. Rachel is also an Associate Professor at Kingston Business School and Emma is Director of Affinity Coaching and Supervision. They take an evidence-based approach to helping employers and managers improve employee health, wellbeing, engagement and performance through consultancy and research; and their research is designed to generate practical, freely available guidance and tools.

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# Dare to Care: Leading through Rapport and Bonding

Professor **George Kohlrieser** from IMD in Lausanne outlines how the cycle of bonding provides an opportunity for goodbyes, loss and dealing with grief, and claims that leaders should not be held hostage by their past experiences if they want to bond with their employees.

Interview by **Riet Fiddelaers-Jaspers, Jakob van Wielink and Leo Wilhelm.**

Leaders, according to Professor George Kohlrieser, are only able to challenge – in other words to dare their employees to reach their maximum potential – when their caring for those employees is high enough. In 2014 we met Professor George Kohlrieser in Lausanne, at the High Performance Leadership (HPL) programme he directs at the International Institute for Management Development (IMD). From his bestselling *Hostage at the Table: How Leaders Can Overcome Conflict, Influence Others, and Raise Performance* and *Care to Dare: Unleashing Astonishing Potential Through Secure Base Leadership* (Kohlrieser, 2006, 2012), we got to know George as someone who places bonding between leaders and employees at the core of his work on leadership.

## **BONDING AND LOSSES: A CHALLENGE FOR LEADERS**

‘Caring’, in Kohlrieser’s view, involves more than just ‘taking care of’, in the sense of providing the right conditions. He really means the care stemming from emotional engagement, i.e. based on rapport and bonding. The ‘cycle of bonding’ that George works with is the foundation of the *transition circle* or *cycle of bonding* that we ourselves also use (Fiddelaers-Jaspers, 2011; Fiddelaers-Jaspers & Wielink, 2012; Wielink & Wilhelm, 2012). To be able to engage in these bonds, every leader may be confronted with their personal bonding history which determines how they can become a ‘secure base’ for someone else.

*A secure base is ‘a person, place, object or goal that provides a sense of protection, safety and caring and offers a source of inspiration and energy for daring, exploration, risk-taking and seeking challenge’ to someone. (Kohlrieser, 2012, page 8).*

‘Grief’ is much broader than covering the loss of a loved one: it also encompasses our emotional reaction to other significant losses, including those at work. Grief – allowing emotional reactions – gives room for new bonds. The HPL leadership programme that we observed has the ‘cycle of bonding’ running through it as a central thread. In the ‘grief’ session within the programme, Kohlrieser takes the group of executives through the phases of the cycle, enabling them to draw leadership lessons from their own experience of grief.

## **TAKEN HOSTAGE**

George Kohlrieser is an American clinical and organisational psychologist. He has spent years as a hostage negotiator for the police and was himself taken hostage four times in the line of duty. When Kohlrieser talks about his hostage negotiations, it brings the adrenalin of those moments right into the room. In his leadership programme Kohlrieser draws on the hostage situation to teach the negotiation skills and the relationships you have to build – in a very short time and under high pressure. This is not just an exciting illustration, but also demonstrates that we always have a choice: between positioning ourselves as a victim of circumstances, or trying to overcome those



circumstances for the benefit of personal growth.

In this process, 'bonding' plays a major role and is perhaps the most critical factor in the 95% success rate of Kohlrieser's hostage negotiations. While you would definitely not invite a hostage-taker to your dinner table, you still have to create a bond with them. Kohlrieser draws a parallel with the people on your team: *you do not have to like someone to bond with them*. He challenges leaders to ask themselves what past experiences are holding them hostage personally? How does this keep them from getting the best out of themselves and the organisation?

### TEMPTING LEADERS TO ENGAGE IN DIALOGUE

It struck us that in communicating about the leadership programme, no publicity is given to the underlying theme of loss and grief. Kohlrieser says 'The programme has been running for more than ten years, with the theme of grief always at its core. Indeed, we don't particularly advertise the grief aspect. Through word of mouth, everyone who registers has already heard that something special happens on the programme, something that you have to join in and experience for yourself. People do not tell others what this is, so the content remains a surprise.

'Besides that, IMD is a strong brand, and we mostly promote the program as being based on emotional intelligence as the foundation of personal leadership. We bring people back to themselves. Within the program, we always provide the safety that facilitates such a process. This is done in small groups, each with their own coach. Participants are always being offered a choice as to how far they want to go in the process. Through loss and grief, we offer people a way back to joy and pleasure. The program always has a waiting list.'

### WHAT DOES THE PROGRAMME STILL BRING HIM, NOW THAT IT HAS BEEN RUNNING FOR SO LONG?

Kohlrieser comments 'My reward is knowing that there are "better" people and, consequently, better leaders coming out of the program, as a matter of fact even the quality of their parenting improves. I experience this when people are able to get back to their own happiness; by letting them work with their loss experiences. I have suffered losses and I am able to live without regrets. Even though there

are things I could or should have done differently with respect to my family, my children, where I'm coming from. Despite that, I am 100% happy.

'My friendship with Dr Elisabeth Kübler-Ross\* helped me tremendously in the period when my son died. I was working with her and a personal



friendship was born out of this. My work is based and builds on her insights. I have expanded the phases around loss and grief she identified and I use them for my leadership program in addition to the "cycle of bonding." All programme participants eventually embrace the theme of loss and grief, although the extent and depth differs from person to person. Yet participants consistently evaluate the topic of "secure base leadership" as the centrepiece of the program.'

### DEVELOPMENTS IN THE US AND EUROPE

It seems strange to us that new insights on loss and grief at work are coming from the US, where the practice of dealing with those insights is often contentious; their work culture remains hard and emotion is easily dismissed. So how does that fit into the message that we should create personal relationships and bond at work?

Kohlrieser reflects 'Americans bond easier and also more loosely. They have an attitude more focused on mobility. Socially speaking, people are much more close-knit in Europe and grief digs deeper when bonding is deeper. This can also be explained historically; because US immigration has been a huge movement where people were both geographically and socially tremendously mobile. There was simply no time

\*Elisabeth Kübler-Ross is the renowned author of *On Death and Dying* (Routledge 1969). Through her work with the dying she created a taxonomy of loss and the grieving process.

to grieve what people were leaving behind; they had to work hard “the American way” to achieve the “American dream.”

‘This development is also reflected in the change of “lifetime employment” to “lifetime employability.” This development is not necessarily negative. The cycle is becoming shorter, one runs through it faster. But that’s a development that also has something positive. The “bonding” in the circle is not about the length of time, but about the ability to be truly present.

‘High performance leaders’ ideal is to inspire the people around them to become leaders as well, and saying goodbye is always part of that. When we say leaders need *secure bases*, it does not mean that they should be overly caring. The balance between caring and daring is always meant to fuel “daring.” When nowadays the cycle is being run through quicker, this does not mean the “bonding” is shallower. That is the challenge of our time with changing labour and psychological contracts: –

to continue developing and keeping up relationships at work without loss of depth.’

### THE EXECUTIVE AS THERAPIST?

Finally, we asked Kohlrieser if he had

executives who want to work with this theme from a therapeutic perspective? His view was ‘I do not work as a therapist when I do work on grief. The point is that things such as “unfinished business” become visible and can be discussed. I am a clinical psychologist, but that is not where I am coming from when I work with grief in organizations. Leaders are not therapists, but they have to take the time to get in touch with their people when losses are surfacing, and speak with them.

Over time, it is about the choice they have to hold up to their people: you can either get started with your loss and make the transition from victim to survivor, or stay in your loss. However, a secure base leader does truly bond with their employee, and a choice then arises for real.’



## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Dr. Riet Fiddelaers-Jaspers specialises in loss and works as a trainer, consultant, coach and therapist. She is CEO of a family business. She has authored many books and is a highly sought-after speaker. Riet is affiliated with the Center of Excellence ‘Dealing with Loss’ and with Land of Grief Academy/Opleidingen Land van Rouw.

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Jakob van Wielink is co-editor of the Dutch *Tijdschrift voor Coaching* (Coaching Magazine), ([www.tvc.nl](http://www.tvc.nl)) and a visiting professor and bereavement counsellor at the Christian University of Applied Sciences of Ede, the Netherlands. He is (co-) author of several books and articles on dealing with change, and on the art of sense-making. In addition, he works as an executive coach with IMD in Lausanne, Switzerland.

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Leo Wilhelm is a leader and coach, initially in business and now at the central government, with expertise in transition management: the psychological and emotional effects of (radical) changes at work. Leo is a certified grief counsellor, has years of experience in a hospice, and in individual and group grief support.

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# Coaching In Brazil



As coaching becomes more established in different countries, there are increased expectations for the industry to become more professional to help both coaches and those being coached. **Cristina Berenguer Dantas** reports on the state of coaching in Brazil.

Coaching is a hot topic. We read about how coaching improves results. Yet not everyone wearing the coaching hat is truly a coach. Coaching is surely a great tool of human development, both personal and professional, and in recent years has become fashionable both in the corporate world and more broadly.

The demand for coaching has increased over the last five years in Brazil. The growth of media coverage of coaching and the increased supply of courses in this field also reflect the maturing of the industry in Brazil. Before this, coaches were mostly hired by individuals but not really seen as important for training and development within companies.

The 8th Annual Survey of Executive Coaching and Leadership Development conducted by Sherpa Executive Coaching in 2013, reveals that 90% of customers (those who hire the coach) say that coaching results are good or excellent, and only 10% view the results as reasonable. This research also reveals other highlights:

- The perceived value of coaching in Brazil increased by 20% year on year

- In 2012 90% of participants stated that the credibility of coaching was "high" or "very high". This number has remained stable
- Over the last four years, the number of people who viewed the credibility of coaching as "mediocre" or "poor" has reduced from 30% to only 10%

It is clear that in Brazil coaching is gaining support and its credibility is rising. Gradually, the method is no longer seen as only a corporate practice, but also as important for people who want to change careers, be more competitive, improve their leadership, have better relationships – and even lose weight! At the same time, we have seen people leaving stable and successful careers, and sometimes their own businesses, to become coaches.

Today there are four coaches to each million inhabitants in Brazil, but the global average is seven coaches per million. Clearly there is room for growth in this country. With the number of professionals who offer coaching services increasing, some care is needed in deciding who to hire. The risk for the buyer is falling into the trap of spending money and time

*Photo by souaspira.com.br*



on unskilled coaches, and not getting the desired results in their careers.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF CERTIFICATION

Accreditation is important when hiring a professional, as this is the only way of knowing that the coach has attained a minimum standard of knowledge and skills. However, there are still some coaches in Brazil who have no certification. The main reason is that the training can be expensive for Brazilians. Prices range from 2,500 to more than 3,000 USD for an individual to be certified.

Once they have gained certification, coaches have to undertake peer coaching sessions in order to continue to improve their skills.

However, it is not only being certified that makes a good coach, because improvement can come from the experience of day-to-day sessions more than anything else.

Many professionals in Brazil, especially consultants, administrators, psychologists, HR professionals and leaders, see coaching as an opportunity for a new career or business. Most of the coach training companies have recognised this, advertising this idea to attract more students. Even though this might be true, we need to analyse whether this approach is appropriate and ethical.

### COACHING IS KEY TO PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT

Brazil is now becoming one of the countries that stands out in coaching around the world. According to a survey conducted by Robert Half, the biggest recruiting company in the world, while 55% of the world's professionals believe that coaching by a manager is key to performance improvement of employees, in Brazil this rises to 77%. The survey also reveals that coaching brings a positive impact for 88% of Brazilian professionals – a high percentage for a profession that fifteen years ago was little known in Brazil.

Many people believe that to find a better job or have better financial rewards they only have to sign up for coach training. However, it is not enough just to train in specific coaching techniques – you need to have other academic and cultural knowledge and solid professional experience in order to be a good coach. One should also have strong relationship skills, understand human behaviour, business and how companies run, in order to help professionals to improve the performance of organisations.

Following this approach it is important to say that coaching in Brazil needs to be more

regulated. Some have found it a good and sometimes easy way of working for a short time and earning good money, but these people are not thinking about the harm they may be doing to coachees, and also to coaching credibility in

**It is clear that in Brazil coaching is gaining support and its credibility is rising.**

the long term. Being a coach is much more than having the title and a diploma.

An article from *Exame S.A.*, an important Brazilian Business magazine, published in November 2014, states that 80% of employed people want to change jobs in 2015. The study, conducted by Hays and Insper, surveyed more than 8,500 people throughout Brazil, and despite the high rate of people wanting to look for a position in the market, 59% have yet to begin their search, which means that there is still time to convince them to stay.



For this task, investing in improvement programmes and delegating more responsibility seems to be a good alternative. Among the main reasons for these professionals to leave their current post are:

- 35% for future prospects in personal and professional development
- 22% for more remuneration
- 13% to gain more work/life balance.

Coaching can therefore be of value when focused on improvement programmes, but their

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accessibility is a point of contention between companies and their employees. Although more than half (62%) of companies claim to offer this benefit to their teams, only 28% of professionals say they know of the existence of these programmes where they work. Among those who know that the benefit exists, 57% have received this kind of guidance. The balance, however, is still higher among men than among women.

### CONCLUSION

The fact is that the market shows no sign that coaching is just a fad. On the contrary, it is estimated that today there are over 47,500 coaches worldwide (ICF, 2012). Most of the companies surveyed in Brazil reported increased sales and profits, growth in market

share and increased executive satisfaction when executive coaches were used. Therefore it is perhaps even more important to professionalise coaching in Brazil.

Sociedade Brasileira de Desenvolvimento Comportamental (SBDC) has the goal 'to promote Excellence and Ethics in Coaching in Brazil'. To this end SBDC has formed an alliance with the Association for Coaching. We recognise, and support the idea, that coaches need to have certain knowledge and skills in order to coach safely and effectively. We will be working on developing this awareness and together with our partners help Brazil become a nation of great coaches.



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Cristina Berenguer Dantas** is executive director of SBDC, the Brazilian Society of Behavioural Development in Brazil. She is also an executive coach, consultant, lecturer and postgraduate professor.

A specialist in Behaviour Management and Leadership, she has coached senior executives and has worked as a Coaching Supervisor for senior coaches. She holds postgraduate degrees in both Human Resources and Business Management. She has extensive experience as an executive in the areas of International Business and Supply in multinational companies. She is a member of the Association of Coaching and also of the AC Leadership Team in Brazil.

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# The Art and Science of Coach Selection

There are inherent risks in the process of coach selection, both for the organisation and the supplier. **Camilla Arnold** considers the issue from the supplier's perspective.

Those who have experienced excellent coaching will recognise it as professionally and personally life-changing. Sadly, a majority of those coached have not had this experience. Typical responses are 'It was fine', 'I suppose it was interesting' or 'I'm not sure it was worth the time and money'. The difference between the two experiences often comes down to the selection of the best coach.

We have spent the past ten years meeting coaches to find the very best to introduce to our clients – it has not been a simple task! Over 3,000 coaches later, we now believe there is no formula to find that 'master' coach, but you know it when you see it. It is like experiencing the difference in a meal cooked by a proficient recipe-follower and one prepared by a Michelin-starred chef. This mastery comes with experience, consistent development, and assuredness in the areas of specialism where one is at one's best, plus innate confidence – on the right side of arrogance. Above all, the truly exceptional have an ability to take models and approaches and make them come alive for their clients. The combination of these qualities is surprisingly rare.

One of the disappointing developments over the past few years is the commoditisation of

coaching by several large corporates so that the key criteria for selection are price and an ability to tick boxes, rather than looking at what truly sets great coaches apart.

This is a risk to the coaching profession. There are tens of thousands of coaches of varying abilities, and so it is easy to find coaches who will lower their price to match the client's request or have taken the courses without being able to turn the knowledge into expertise – because coaching is not a theoretical exercise. 'The proof is always,' as the English saying goes, 'in the pudding. The more people who experience mediocre coaching rather than the coaching that can truly change lives, the more of an uphill battle the profession has to build credibility.

Coach selection is not easy, but it is worth taking the time to do well (or finding someone like us who can do it for you!). It is also something that we believe is an ongoing process, so one assessment alone doesn't make sense. We are regularly in touch with our coaches so we can continue to assess their strengths and areas for development, and to learn from their development. Selection of coaches is too important to be taken lightly.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Camilla Arnold is the Global Head of Coaching at the leading talent development consultancy, TXG Ltd.

She has been a qualified coach since 1999 and is a recognised expert in coaching methodologies and the global coaching market.

At TXG, Camilla heads the vetting and matching of prospective consultants and coaches for TXG clients, and acts as a liaison between coaches and clients as projects and programmes develop. She also undertakes specialist consultancy for clients on executive coaching and leadership development, and introduces or updates coaching procedures and processes to highlight return on investment. Camilla is the co-author of *If Not Now, When? How to take charge of your career* (A&C Black Publishers Ltd, 2010). <http://www.txgltd.com>



# A Natural Curiosity



Questions are a key part of a coach's toolkit; the skill is in knowing what question will be most effective at any particular moment in a conversation. **David Finney** explores the power of questions to develop greater awareness.

When I studied non-directive coaching I learned about the basic attributes of an effective coach; a natural curiosity, active listening, seeking to fully understand, asking incisive questions and working towards measurable objectives. Like other coaches I was hooked, and the process fascinated me. Later I studied quality auditing and discovered that the basic attributes of this activity were exactly the same. Both coaching and auditing are designed for one purpose: to initiate change and trigger improvement, and each uses 'The Question' as its main tool.

I spent twenty years in the market research industry, which was launched in the 1930s by George Gallup. Some might say this was the original home of curiosity. Gallup was alleged to have written 'Question everything, be a radical', and it seems he loved The Question. He would survey his family over breakfast about their favourite pets and cereals. This led to Gallup becoming the forerunner of opinion polls, and now Market Research is now a 33-billion dollar global industry.

Coaches know that asking 'the right question' can drive people forward, but are also aware that without looking at context in full, questions – however good they are – can lead to the wrong answers. Context not only takes into account the client, the situation they are in and their values but also the 'interested parties' who may be concerned with or affected by the outcome. Here are five examples:

## QUESTIONS TO CUSTOMERS

Business would be very straightforward if we simply listened to what the customer wanted and supplied the product or service accordingly. But sometimes customers do not know what they really *need*, and so to be an effective service provider we must find out about them, their (working) lives and their interested parties. A car salesman may ask 'What would your wife think?' or 'What about when you take your dog on holiday?'; a carpenter might ask 'Would you want the bookcase to have a back to it?' or 'Do you think you might be moving in the next few years?'; and a business coach might ask 'What would your line manager think about that?' or

*Photo by Olga*

'How does this approach align with your company's commercial strategy?' Customers not only have unidentified needs; they also have *expectations* which may not get mentioned. In restaurants we only tell the waiter what we want to eat. Everything else is about our expectations being met; and this approach applies across the business world too.

### QUESTIONS TO SUPPLIERS

A customer who learns that a business was let down by its supplier may go elsewhere next time. Organisations need to forge strong relationships with their business partners, evaluate their abilities, establish ground rules and ask important questions: 'What will you need from us in order for your teams to perform at their best?' Formalising service level agreements is important, but talking them through first is critical.

### QUESTIONS FOR MANAGERS

I can remember a job interview many years ago when I was asked 'How do you like to be managed?' The 'meta question' behind it of course was 'How can we get the best out of you?' When managers hire an external coach to tackle a tricky issue, the coach must first determine who would most benefit from the coaching – the manager or the direct report. If the latter, the coach must take into account the often complex needs of 'the sponsor', 'the client' and the organisation as a whole. Goals must be complementary or the coach might leave a mess behind them when they go.

### QUESTIONS ABOUT QUALITY

Quality auditors must ensure that when mistakes are made (e.g. erroneous data sent to

## THE FIVE WHYS

'The five whys' is a reiterative questioning technique employed to get to the root cause of a problem or issue. The first 'why' seeks to understand how and why the problem or issue has occurred and each subsequent 'why' is triggered by the answer to the previous 'why'.

a client), time is set aside to find out how and why the mistake was made so as to prevent any recurrence. Root cause analysis can be a lengthy process and using 'the five whys' (see sidebar) is an effective method of getting to the heart of an issue. In addition quality auditors could use non-directive coaching techniques to explore options, test appropriateness of action plans, establish measurement criteria and empower staff to take full ownership.

### QUESTIONS FOR BUSINESS LEADERS

The contemporary leader must demonstrate 360-degree leadership and ask questions of customers (research the market, determine needs and expectations), of suppliers (evaluate and enquire), of staff (how best to achieve customer satisfaction) and to complete the circle, customers again (how did we do and how could we improve?) They may even want to ask a question or two of themselves: in twenty years' time what story will I want to tell about my career and how will I know I have been a successful leader?



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Finney established The Energy of Conversation in 2008 after twenty years in the market and social research industry where he occupied several management roles before becoming Quality Director and Corporate Coach at global research giant TNS. As a Chartered Member of the Chartered Quality Institute David is particularly interested in organisational learning and improvement to deliver higher levels of customer service. Recognising the common set of competencies shared by performance coaches, quality auditors and market researchers, David presents incisive questioning techniques from each discipline in his training and talks to businesses and universities in the south of England.  
[www.TheEnergyofConversation.co.uk](http://www.TheEnergyofConversation.co.uk)

# Coaching and Risk Coherence Using The Full Brain™ Approach

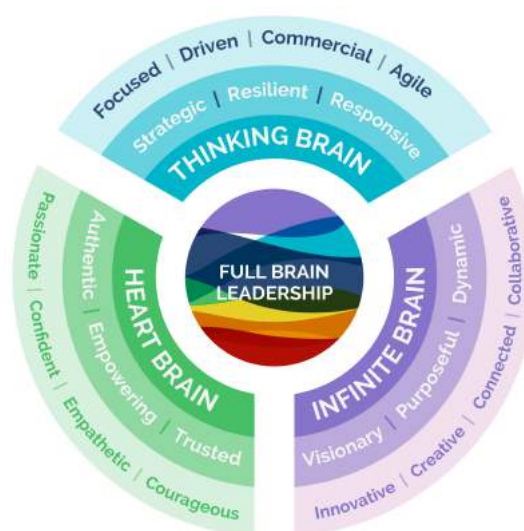
Are we taking a risk if we are not maximising the potential of our brain? **Carole Gaskell**, founder of Full Potential Group, explains how coaches can help leaders to develop more effective use of their thinking brain, heart brain and infinite brain.

Are you a risk-taker? How often do you take yourself to the edge of who you are and what you believe you are capable of? Do you attract clients who are risk-takers?

The dictionary defines risk as 'the potential of losing something of value'. Whether the risk is to change employer, job or career, to move house, start or end a relationship, the implications are invariably financial, social and emotional. I believe one of the most valuable roles we play as coaches is facilitating our clients in their decision-making and risk-taking processes.

There are many formal methods used to measure risk, often based on estimating the probability of a negative event using the frequency of past similar events. Inevitably, mindset and risk perception varies from person to person, and our own approach to risk can affect others. Being aware of personal perceptions of risk and techniques to approach risk can significantly improve our contribution to clients and the quality of the results they achieve.

Psychologists agree that a degree of risk-taking is healthy and allows people to learn how to 'self-regulate'. Being able to control their emotions and behaviour, especially if encouraged from a young age, enables people to learn from their mistakes and teaches independence and freedom.



## THE FULL BRAIN™ APPROACH TO RISK

The subject of risk-taking has fascinated me from childhood. Having been raised by an adventurous, risk-loving father and a more conservative, risk-averse mother I sit somewhere between the two extremes. Over the last 20 years, whilst coaching clients, my curiosity has continually been sparked by their perceptions of risk and opportunity, and their willingness to 'go to the edge'. This triggered me to develop the 'Full Brain'™ model to support effective risk-taking and decision-making.

The Full Brain™ model can be used by individuals, coaches, leaders and managers



alike, to help them approach risk-taking in a consistent and meaningful way. The approach is about actively engaging all three brains:

- Thinking Brain: Logic, intellectual and rational processes
- Heart Brain: Feelings and emotions
- Infinite Brain: Intuition, beliefs and super-consciousness.

In my experience, integrating logical, emotional and intuitive decision-making processes can improve a coachee's risk success rate.

The Thinking Brain is essentially the 'head' and focuses on intellectual intelligence. The Heart Brain has a complex, intrinsic neural network of its own that operates independently from the head and focuses on leveraging emotional intelligence. Finally, the Infinite Brain emanates from the gut, which also contains a separate, fully-functioning neural network that performs



## THINKING BRAIN

its own independent processing. It is a synthesiser of collective intelligence, engendering 'gut feel', intuition and more transformative decision-making.

### HELP YOUR CLIENTS DEVELOP AN AGILE THINKING BRAIN

The prime functions of the thinking brain are cognition, perception, reasoning and making meaning. Coaching your clients to hone their thinking brain enables them to stay focused on long-term objectives, whilst juggling priorities, handling complex decisions and taking measured risks.

With approximately ten billion neurons communicating in the thinking brain, any risk evaluation will be subject to complex internal dialogue, images, sounds and kinaesthetic triggers. The right pre-frontal cortex is shown to think from a more global perspective, holistically processing non-verbal, spatial tasks



## HEART BRAIN

and understanding metaphor, tones and music. The left pre-frontal thinking activity tends to relate to local, or focal, more analytical processing, managing logical problem-solving, verbal tasks and decisions using detailed processes. When fully aligned, the right and left head brain help provide clarity and focus to intellectually evaluate risk.

Asking focused laser questions, actively listening and reflecting back using a robust coaching model such as GROW or CIGAR™ provides a valuable logical process that the thinking brain can latch on to.

Encouraging your clients to cultivate mindfulness and a 'quiet mind', to clear out their mind clutter and create space to be fully present all help hone the thinking brain. I have found asking clients to tune into their breathing and visualise bubbles of white light cleansing their thinking brain to be very effective.

### ENGAGE THE HEART FOR CONFIDENCE

Developing your client's 'heart brain' creates breakthroughs in emotional feelings about risk. The prime functions of the heart brain are emotional processing and relational affect. Connecting the client to their true feelings with authenticity and empathy enables them to tune into their deeper values, passions and motivations about a particular risky decision. Creating an emotional heart-brain bond towards the risk results in stronger feelings, either positive or negative, which provide greater confidence either to take the risk or avoid it.

The electronic signal of the heart is sixty times higher in amplitude than the signal of the thinking brain, which explains why, even though you can intellectually evaluate the pros and cons of a risk, unless your heart and feelings agree with your proposed decision, you will find yourself reluctant to take action. The heart emits an energy field 5,000 times stronger than the head, and in research can be measured three metres away from the body. This explains



## INFINITE BRAIN

why other people can pick up emotions you are feeling as your own body communicates beyond itself and impacts on others. In coaching others it's important to be aware of how you are feeling about a coachee's issue, as your heart will give you away and may influence the decisions they make.

Working with your clients on paying attention to their hearts is critical. Working on their passions and values and addressing fears will strengthen their heart brain. Encouraging them to become more aware of their feelings moment by moment and asking them to tune into the beat of their heart and how their chest feels also provides invaluable insight into the positive or negative feelings around risk. Does the heart feel tight and heavy or light and expanded? Breathing into the heart and visualising green or pink light can also be very helpful. As one of my early coachees told me 'Fear is excitement without the oxygen'. So if your coachee is feeling fearful about a risk, get them to breathe d e e p l y . . .

### TUNE INTO THE INFINITE BRAIN FOR POWER HUNCHES AND WILLINGNESS TO ACT

The secret of risk-taking success lies in leveraging not only a client's thinking and heart brains but also their 'infinite brain'. This comes from a deep sense within the gut, but also from beyond the body itself, from the energy in everything. Unlocking the qualities of vision, purpose and dynamism inspires 'light-bulb moments' and innovative ideas. Activating the infinite brain mobilises people to high levels of productivity, combining courage to change the status quo with the dynamic will to act.

Infinite brainpower is deeply connected and knowing. Encouraging clients to develop their intuition and trust their ability to acquire knowledge without interference or the use of reason can create significant breakthroughs in decision-making.



## The Full Brain CIGAR™ process for risk-taking:

**C:** Context/Current Reality – what are your issues about the risk?

- How does your heart feel?
- What does your thinking brain say?
- What does your infinite brain sense?

**I:** Ideal Goal – what is your ideal outcome?

- How does your heart feel?
- What does your thinking brain say?
- What does your intuition sense could be possible?

**G:** Gaps – what is the gap? resistance? fear? doubt?

- Where do you sense it? In the heart? In your head? In your body?
- What is it telling you?
- How can you resolve it?
- What needs to happen?

**A:** Action – given your understanding now, which is the most appropriate brain to lead the action?

- What insights are you gaining?
- What new possibilities are opening up?
- What actions are you willing to take?

**R:** Review - how will you review the risk?

- What will you do to monitor your progress?
- How will you hold yourself accountable?
- How will you celebrate your success?

Infinite brain intuition communicates through metaphor, symbolism and body sensations. When it leaks out into the body we get a sense of it in areas of tightness, tingling or other sensations in our stomach, chest and other body parts. Asking a client what sensations they feel in their body when discussing the risk is a good start. For example, if they are feeling a tingling in their stomach, support them to have a dialogue

with the tingling to find out what it is trying to tell them.

Slowing down for a couple of hours every week, meditating for 20 minutes every day and taking the time to recall dreams are all valuable ways of boosting the power of our infinite brains. Healthy eating, drinking water and taking regular exercise positively stimulate the gut and impact on the infinite brain too.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Carole Gaskell is Managing Director of Full Potential Group, a leadership consultancy she founded over 17 years ago that has worked with over 250,000 people in more than 250 organisations. An internationally-renowned coach, facilitator and speaker, she is also the author of two global bestsellers – *Transform Your Life – 10 Steps to Real Results* and *Your Pocket Life Coach*. She has also written two specialist books: *Full Potential Leadership – a Provocative Call to Make a Dramatic Difference* and *Full Potential Coach – Transforming People's Potential into Results*. Carole is passionate about unlocking next level leadership potential, strategic impact, developing talent and optimising teams.

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# How Could You Improve Your Reflective Practice?

Coaching supervisor **Clive Steeper** explores the scope of reflection for a coach, and how performance can flourish through rigour and range in your reflective practice.

The phone rings; it's one of my coaching supervision clients who wants to cancel their session because they haven't done much coaching since their last session. In their previous session they told me they had not been able to do much reflection because they were so busy! I began wondering to what extent they reflected on their coaching, how much reflection they did with their clients, and what drove their continuous professional development (CPD)?

In the ensuing conversation we briefly explored the risk of infrequent supervision, the depth and breadth of their reflection and agreed that Quality of Reflection should be a topic for discussion at the rescheduled session.

On putting the phone down I was still musing on the word *reflection* so opened some notes I had made when studying for my Post Graduate Certificate in Coaching Supervision. They caused me to consider - What is Reflection? How do we as coaches or supervisors define 'Quality of Reflection'? Is there validity in terms such as:

- *Sameness of reflection.* How reflection is conducted (i.e. using the same methods and stimuli each time).
- *Range of reflection.* The way in which reflection is carried out and how our preferences influence the range.

It seemed to me that there is a risk when reflection is conducted using the same method and stimuli each time. In my latest book *Risk: All That Matters* we outline how people tend to assess risk based on three variables: i) the perception of the number of options they have; ii) the outcomes they value, and iii) what they believe will happen if they choose a particular course of action.

For example, if a coach, who is risk-averse believes:

- Their current supervisor is not very flexible in his/her approach (so limited options available)
- They don't want to find someone else to work with (value outcome of current relationship)
- They may gain limited benefit (what they believe will happen)

It is likely that they will just continue with the same approach unless the supervisor proactively changes his/her style. So both parties should be prepared to take some level of risk to review and occasionally adopt different methods of reflection.

Clive Steeper &  
Sue Stockdale



## WHAT DOES REFLECTION MEAN TO YOU? WHY CONDUCT REFLECTION?

It seems to me that some coaches assume that supervision and reflection are a direct function of the volume and challenges they face in their coaching. When it's busy they don't make time,

GROWTH MINDSET	FIXED MINDSET
Thrives on challenges and views failure as learning and springboard for growth.	Assumes that character, intelligence and creative abilities can't change in any meaningful way.

and will only seek supervision if they face a challenge. To be driven by those two elements could be regarded as passive. It can indeed be helpful to use quieter periods to 'take stock', reflect and try out some new things. Some go to peer coaching workshops and practice new coaching models; others may recall coaching models that they are a bit 'rusty' on.

However, what if the coach is comfortable in their current state or mindset? In Carol Dweck's book *Mindset* she describes two mindsets, 'Fixed' and 'Growth', and explores how our beliefs, both conscious and unconscious, influence how we change even the simplest thing in our practice. People with a *fixed mindset* view effort as something for people with deficiencies, because if they believe talent or capability is fixed, then avoiding failure is viewed as the smart approach. Contrast this with a *growth mindset*, where people view deficiencies as an opportunity to learn and are motivated to improve.

Being clear about why you conduct reflection and your approach to it can help to guide, if not drive, you to engaging in reflective practices that will help you most. It is also worthwhile to explore this with your supervisor so that they can support you in the most appropriate way.

### WHAT INFLUENCES YOUR REFLECTIONS?

In my business career I led high-growth companies where introducing pioneering technology had meant taking many risks. I also compete in motorsport, which is generally perceived as a risky activity. As my coaching and supervision career has developed, I have found that my clients want to explore the topic of risk with me, and its role in shaping how humans behave.

In terms of how we coach, it is important to understand what may lie behind our clients' preferences and decisions, and therefore knowing their *risk type* can be beneficial. One useful launch point into exploring risk types is the **Risk Type Compass model** ([www.psychological-consultancy.com](http://www.psychological-consultancy.com)). For

example, a client wants to think creatively to solve a problem, and they have a *Carefree* risk type; but the coach has a *Prudent* risk type, which is more cautious and detail-oriented; unless the coach is comfortable to broaden their own attitude to risk, they may not be effective in facilitating a great outcome for the client.

On the other hand, when a coach has a high degree of self-awareness, powerful reflective skills and appreciation of cognitive behaviour it is likely that this will lead to more effective coaching and even mastery. However, just like in other walks of life **quality** as well as **quantity of practice** is vital.

In Malcolm Gladwell's popular book *Outliers*, he repeatedly mentions the '10,000-Hour Rule', claiming that the key to success in any field is, to a large extent, a matter of practicing a specific task for a total of around 10,000 hours. Those hours will not simply be about doing more, but also include reviewing and improving practice. If you consider reflection in relation to the **Johari Window** model - who or what could help you to improve more effectively particularly addressing the *unknown* area?

### MAKING REFLECTION A HABIT

In his book *The Power of Habit*, Charles Duhigg outlines a three-step process. He discovered that our brain uses a process called the *habit loop* to compartmentalise our habits. Firstly, there is a 'cue' that triggers the brain to go into an automatic mode based on previous patterns. This is followed by a 'routine' that can be physical, mental or emotional. Finally there is the 'reward' phase that helps our brain to evaluate whether this particular habit loop is worth remembering for the future.

As part of good reflective practice it is useful to create a habit about how you undertake and keep notes on your reflections after each coaching session. Some coaches make notes during or after a coaching session and use them as their record. They may then read them before the next session and use the recall as their trigger in preparing for the session. Other

coaches write reflection notes after each session and go through the rigour of asking themselves questions such as:

- What happened and why in that way?
- What did I think feel and behave?
- So what is the key learning?
- How will I apply this?

This practice allows them to critically evaluate the session, either on their own or with their supervisor, and identify any improvements for the future. This takes time, and it's creating a habit of making the time to do this that is important. This can also be useful if you are considering accreditation, as reflection is a requirement for both the AC coach, and coaching supervision accreditation frameworks.

Earlier I referred to 'Sameness of Reflection'. As a host of the AC Group Supervision calls I regularly hear coaches marvel at how in a one-hour session they have reflected differently on things they have been thinking about for a while. Hence I wonder to what extent coaches would benefit from mixing up their reflective

practice by using co-coaching or Marshall Goldsmith's Feedforward model (see Further Reading). Another idea is to occasionally record (voice or video) a coaching session so it can add a new depth to their reflections.

Also consider when, and where, you conduct your reflective practice. Some people do it at the end of the day because it's quiet and they can manage their time better. Others do it while they are commuting or on a sporadic basis. All of these may be pragmatic solutions; from a good practice view-point however, are they the best ways to undertake reflection? What might prevent you from putting time in your diary at the start of the day when you are fresh? To an extent the answer lies in reviewing your current habit for reflecting on your performance.

I hope this has helped you to evaluate your habit of reflection and how you might use reflective practice differently in future. After all there is a risk to you, and your clients, if you don't undertake the best reflective practice possible.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Clive Steeper is an executive coach, coaching supervisor and has been a business leader for over 25 years. He now works internationally with many different corporations and fast growth businesses. He received a Global Coaching Leadership Award in 2014 and is co-author of *Cope with Change at Work*, *The Personality Workbook*, *Motivating Others* and the most recent title [Risk: All that Matters](http://www.clivesteeper.com). [www.clivesteeper.com](http://www.clivesteeper.com)

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# To See or Not to See: The Case for Coaching by Phone



In this issue of the Global Bulletin, we review the benefits and risks of two different approaches to coaching. US-based Executive Coach **Sherry Harsch-Porter** shares her thoughts on telephone coaching.

## THE BENEFITS OF TELEPHONE COACHING

**Best fit:** It widens the field for both coaching clients and coaches. Clients can now select the best coach, regardless of where the person is located, and coaches can recruit and serve clients anywhere in the world.

**Cost-effective:** Face-to-face meetings are expensive. Someone, either coach or client, must travel to the meeting. Executives often value loss of time more highly than the investment in coaching. For coaches who do all of their work face-to-face, the number of clients who can be coached in a day is limited.

**Focus:** It allows me to focus on what is being said and the underlying emotions. I'm attuned to my client's pace and inflection, sensing the smallest change in breathing or pitch. I'm not distracted by gestures, other people, or what is happening in the parking lot. Reflective silences, so important in coaching work, also seem easier when not sitting face-to-face.

## THE RISKS OF TELEPHONE COACHING

**Failure to connect:** I always meet new clients as we begin our work to foster trust and rapport. It is possible to develop a genuine relationship over the phone, but it takes time.

**Missing the obvious:** I once coached an engineer who wanted to succeed on the business side of a company. Upon meeting him I recognised that he did not "look" the part. Tweaking his wardrobe was a short-term strategy but developing the social awareness to recognise when it was needed was a longer-term goal.

**Need for empathy:** Sessions that require deep dialogue are best done in person. Results from a 360-degree assessment or behavioural interviews are good examples. This is one time I want to ensure that I am taking in both verbal and nonverbal cues.

*Photo ©iStock.com/shironosov*

## TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL TELEPHONE COACHING

- Create the environment for deep listening – power down computers and phones; close your door; shut your blinds
- Clear your desk of clutter – I find it useful to have only my coaching client's file open on my desk during our conversation
- Use a headset to avoid neck cramps and to free up your hands to take notes

Consider expanding your repertoire to include telephone coaching. I believe you, and your clients, will benefit.



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sherry Harsch-Porter founded PorterBay Insight, a leadership development consulting firm, in 2000. Her corporate experience includes AT&T/SBC Communications and DuPont. She holds a Ph.D. in Social Science, a Master's Degree in Human Resources Management, and a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration. She is a Board Certified Coach and is qualified to administer a variety of assessments. Sherry teaches graduate courses at Washington University in St. Louis and is a contributing author to *The Handbook of Knowledge-Based Coaching: From theory to practice* (John Wiley & Sons 2011), and author of *Education as Possibility: Coaching for Persistence* (Porter Bay Group 2012).

# Coaching Groups via Teleconference



Senior consultant **Jon Williams** explains the upsides and downsides of coaching groups via teleconference

The look and feel of group working is changing. Better technology enables us to be in immediate, real time communication with each other. As a consequence we have less and less face-to-face contact than ever before.

When we coach groups who rarely meet face-to-face by teleconference, we still want to create an environment of learning and growth, essential elements of high performance. So how can we be confident that it's always a great learning experience?

## IT'S ALL IN THE MIND – REFRAME!

What do you believe about coaching groups via teleconference? Will it be more difficult to communicate as effectively, because we've lost sight of the body language? Next time you watch your favourite TV programme, close your eyes for a few minutes and listen to the dialogue – it's amazing how much of the message is conveyed through the voice via pitch, tone, pace, power, pauses etc. We can learn to pay closer attention.

Imagine a learning environment where...

- the "venue" is always available, with minimal costs;

- there's little or no travel and we can connect instantly to people across the world;
- participants work from a familiar environment, close to their own workplace, with opportunities to apply their learning immediately;
- learning can be recorded so that anyone not able to attend will hear exactly the same message as others at a later time.

Plus you get to enhance your own Active Listening Skills.

## PREPARATION IS KEY

Just because we can connect from (almost) anywhere, it doesn't mean that where we are isn't important. At your desk in a busy office, with emails and texts coming in as distractions, will never be a great place to listen.

Set expectations that everyone will minimise potential distractions - close down email, keep mobiles out of sight and set to silent. Find a quiet place to call from and let people know that you are not contactable during the session.

As advanced as our technology has become, occasionally connection problems do still occur, so ask people to dial in a few minutes early to iron out any issues before the session starts.



### AGREE GROUND RULES

Start with a conversation about what conditions and behaviours will create the best learning environment possible. Some suggested questions include:

- To learn in this way what will be easy for us? And difficult?
- How do we keep attention?
- How will we tell that attention is drifting? What should we do?
- How shall we hold each other accountable?

Regularly revisit your ground rules with the group.

### ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

I'm sure we've all been distracted during teleconferences at some point. Try to keep everyone actively involved:

Hold a clear structure to keep the call moving – GROW for example.

Use short, open-ended questions to encourage group discussion. Listen out for more/less vocal participants. Use names to direct questions where you want greater participation from individuals.

Limit the length of your sessions to a maximum of 45 minutes.

Try out one of the many on-line tools such as Adobe Connect. These allow for chat, video and slide sharing, break out areas for smaller group activities and open space facilities to collect responses, as well as "quick check" interactive options like polls, emoticons etc.

Coaching by teleconference is different from face to face, not necessarily easier or harder. It just requires us to use our skills in a different way, as well as providing a great opportunity to develop our own core coaching skills. Good Luck!



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jon has been a people developer for over twenty-five years. Originally working in UK Financial Services, he now operates across a wide range of industries and countries. He supports coaches, managers and leaders to help them excel in those everyday 'crucial conversations' which result in sustained high performance.

He uses a combination of face-to-face and remote learning approaches to create exciting and stimulating sessions and help people sustain their behavioural change.

# Executive Coaching: A Psychodynamic Approach



In Catherine Sandler's new book, Maria Crudge discovers a clear and concise introduction to psychodynamic concepts and their practical application to executive coaching.

Catherine Sandler begins by setting out her intention to dispel some of the myths surrounding a psychodynamic approach and by the end of the book has deftly demonstrated that psychodynamic ideas:

- Need not be restricted to therapeutic applications
- Can be harnessed by non-clinicians when applied with thoughtfulness and care
- Can be applied to issues faced by coaching clients without in-depth exploration of their personal history
- Can be of immense value to coaching clients in the context of their work and hence to sponsoring organisations

**Chapter 1** addresses the question 'What is executive coaching?' with reference to the author's own practice. I expect that some readers may find certain aspects of Sandler's self-reported style contentious. Personally I share her conviction that coaching is more than a purely facilitative discipline and agree that it

can be appropriate to direct our clients towards potential areas for behavioural change.

**Chapter 2** outlines key concepts in psychodynamic theory, all of which have origins in psychoanalysis. The notion of an unconscious, the centrality of emotions, Freud's structural model, internal conflict, psychological development, transference, countertransference and psychological defence mechanisms are all presented with clarity and brought to life with case illustrations.

**Chapters 3, 4 and 5** relate psychodynamic theory to executive coaching practice. Sandler shows how various key assumptions inform the way in which she endeavours to understand and get alongside her clients. The importance of psychological safety is emphasised, and psychodynamically informed techniques that seek to increase insight and enable change are eloquently described.

A brief commentary on the three-cornered relationship between coach, client and organisation is given in chapter 6: of particular value is the way a psychodynamic orientation is

*Photo by Neil Sequeira*



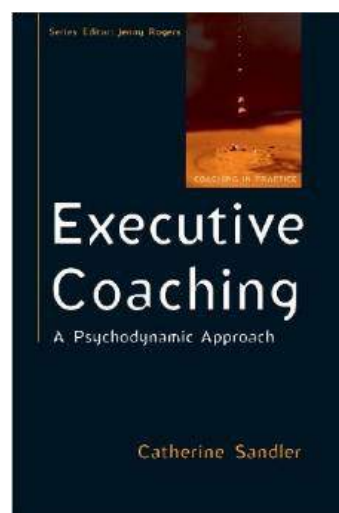
shown to illuminate the organisational context, providing information pivotal to the coaching assignments portrayed.

**Chapter 7** introduces the Emotional Profiles Triangle (EPT), a model developed by the author, and an important facet of her application of psychodynamic theory. The model is depicted through three case studies with chapters devoted to the client who bullies, the people-pleaser and the ice queen. These stories are well told and the EPT appears a worthy addition to coaching toolkits.

Finally, endings are explored through a psychodynamic lens. Acknowledgement is made of the fact that sometimes coaching does not go well and ends early, while attention is also given to how people behave when stronger attachments are formed and ending is experienced as more difficult.

For me Sandler succeeds not only in presenting complex theoretical material in an accessible manner, but also in elegantly translating psychodynamic concepts into a range of practical techniques designed to stimulate transformational change. Whilst it is unlikely that the psychodynamic method will appeal to everyone, and it is left to readers to make our own critique, this is an excellent book for

executive coaches interested in learning about and potentially incorporating the psychodynamic approach into their work.



*Executive Coaching – A Psychodynamic Approach* by Catherine Sandler is published by McGraw Hill: Open University Press (Maidenhead, 2011)

ISBN: 978-0-33-523793-7



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Maria Crudge has over twenty-five years' in-house corporate experience across several business sectors, including ten years at board level as HR Director for a pharmaceutical company. A Chartered Fellow of the CIPD, Maria holds an MA in Psychological Coaching and has practised as a freelance Executive Coach since 2008.



# Oxford Brookes Annual Coaching and Mentoring Research Conference



## Hetty Einzig spends a day reflecting on praxis at the Oxford Brookes 11th Annual Coaching & Mentoring Research Conference

'It wasn't just about gathering data, I wanted to get learning out of this too – to have a rich experience; we were on a voyage of discovery together!' said Lise Lewis during her presentation of her doctoral research on creating the conditions for receptivity for feedback. Her comments are a good reflection of the day in January I spent discussing coaching research.

Oxford Brookes are renowned for their coaching training programmes, and once a year they open their doors to share the masters and doctoral research of their students (plus some from other universities). It could have been off-putting or dry – philosophical terms like epistemology, ontology and heuristics were bandied about like calling cards – but the variety of research projects and an inclusive mood of warm collegiality made for a rich and thought-provoking day of fourteen parallel sessions plus keynote. There was plenty of discussion, plus, yes, laughter and fun, too –

not something usually associated with research!

Through a process of co-operative enquiry Lewis explored with a group of coaches the impact of relationship, timing and other phenomena on feedback that is helpful. The framework she evolved focuses on three key areas:

- *Preparation* (readiness for feedback and our capacity for self management)
- *Pro-active practice* (developing presence, timing and using feedback to build the relationship)
- *Reactive practice* (reading the somatic clues, using emotions and intuition and maintaining a sense of the metaphysical)

The model needs to be tested and evaluated with clients in the field, but the enquiry group certainly derived much benefit from the research process. One participant commented 'Research has changed my practice

Photo by Neil Sequeira

immensely; it's really slowed me down, because I became so conscious of all that was happening. It opened up the space for the client to disclose more and I now experience more connection'.

### COACHING MILLENNIALS

Using a method of hermeneutic phenomenology (see sidebar) Helen Franklin researched what it is like to coach millennials: (take a look at our Generation Y-themed [January issue](#)). She added some interesting pointers to what we know about millennials changing the work landscape. The coaches Franklin interviewed found themselves teaching their clients about the nature of the coaching space: that noisy cafes and texting throughout the session were not conducive to the focus and deep thinking the Gen Y'ers had still to learn. On the other hand the coaches had to be careful not to fall into parenting their clients, who tend to have a close relationship with their own parents which give rise to certain expectations of care and accommodation – for example, frequently changing session times. On their side the coaches found the millennials' readiness to fail as part of everyday process refreshing – in comparison to older leaders with more entrenched views and status to uphold. It remains to be seen if these millennials can step up to the leadership they aspire to – will their close weave of work and play serve them well, or will their lack of skill in going beneath the surface hold them back?

### STRENGTHS-BASED COACHING

Keynote presenter Dr. Almuth McDowall, organisational psychologist at Birkbeck College London, gave a comprehensive and insightful roundup of her own and her students' research into strengths-based and feed-forward coaching. Based on the key paradigm of Positive Psychology – 'treatment is not just fixing what is broken; it is nurturing what is best' – she reminded us that human strengths act as a shield to protect from mental illness, citing a range of research that supports this. Results from her group coaching research showed that self-efficacy, strengths knowledge and goal attainment were improved in both the experimental and control group, but the former benefited especially from the shared learning of peer coaching. McDowall's most sobering message was on feedback. Kluger and DeNisi's 1996 meta-analysis showed that while performance in 2/3 of people analysed went up,

## YOUR QUICK AND HANDY GUIDE TO RESEARCH TERMINOLOGY

- **Ontology**: is the study of being; your answer to the question 'what is reality?' shapes your approach to enquiry and research.
- **Epistemology**: is the study of knowledge, what it is and the extent to which knowledge pertinent to any given subject can be acquired. It shapes what you choose to enquire into.
- **Heuristic**: is any approach to problem solving, learning, or discovery that uses a practical methodology not guaranteed to be optimal or perfect, but sufficient for the immediate goals; e.g. trial and error, rule of thumb.
- **Hermeneutics**: is the theory of text interpretation, especially the interpretation of biblical or philosophical texts and wisdom literature.
- **Phenomenology**: is the philosophical study of the structures of experience and consciousness.
- **Social Constructivism**: is a sociological theory of knowledge that studies how subjective meaning becomes social fact and how we co-construct culture and meaning.
- **Empiricism**: is the theory that knowledge comes only or primarily from the senses; it emphasises experience and evidence over ideas or traditions.

1/3 actually went down and all effect sizes were modest. Feedback has a real potential for harm. In a 2014 experimental study (McDowall, Freeman & Marshall, 2014), 54 individuals were randomly allocated to feedback (FB) or feed-forward (FF) groups – the latter given feed-forward interviews which focused especially on salient strengths and encouraged reflection on the gap between actual and ideal states. Results showed a clear improvement in the FF group, not only in self-efficacy but also in exceeding goals, while in the FB group participants' mood actually dropped.

### THE POWER OF METAPHOR

Metaphor has the poetic ability to illuminate 'intricate facets of experience which have never before been said' (Gendlin, 2003 p.109). Sessions on the concept of 'seeding' and on the 'figurative space of coaching' – research by Colin Wood and David Britten, respectively – encouraged us to deepen our understanding of

what triggers a catalytic moment in a coaching session or over the course of a coaching programme and become more aware of the power of metaphor, whether seeded or elicited, to structure the way we think about the world and therefore how we act.

### SELF-CONFIDENCE

Inevitably the parallel session 'Explorations of Male Self-Confidence in the Coaching Context' drew a crowd. Provoked to pursue the topic not least by comments like 'Men who lack confidence?! Don't you despise them!' – one of many bizarre reactions received she when she outlined her research focus, Jackie Fitzgerald found that the literature was thin and the subject not well understood. Self-confidence lies at the interface of abilities and personality (Stankov & Crawford, 1997) and is affected by, among other things, gender role conflict (O'Neill, 2014). Using semi-structured interviews Fitzgerald spoke with six outwardly successful men who had all been coached or mentored. The large themes that emerged were that experiences of self-confidence are unique, having control is a big factor, and loneliness, competence, financial security and self-acceptance all played significant roles in bolstering or lowering self-confidence. The interview results made clear that low self-confidence had a notably detrimental effect on health and performance, and that the collaborative coaching process was helpful in supporting these men to build a resilient sense of self that was not dependent on external factors.

### A PLURALISTIC APPROACH TO COACHING

Last but not least Andy Pendle took an overview of the coaching profession and asked whether a pluralistic approach to coaching is a controversy waiting to happen, judging from the turf wars that continue to play out in the counselling and psychotherapy professions. Pendle talked us through the pluralistic approach (Cooper & McLeod, 2011) and the multiple stakeholders in the coaching profession. His interviews, using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), which involves the researcher himself in an immersive experience, turned up mixed results. While his respondents felt that a pluralistic approach could be good for clients, they felt that the concept of greater collaboration could be at odds with good practice. I found Pendle's tentative conclusion heartening: that coaching

by its nature tends to be pluralistic and collaborative thereby providing protection against the kind of unseemly protectionism and fight for control that has riven the international psychology and psychotherapy fields.

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**'treatment is not just fixing what is broken; it is nurturing what is best'**

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These were just some of the highlights of a rich day. I was reminded of the importance of stepping back from work to reflect on praxis – where practice and research meet - and on our growing profession. Thinking together nourishes. A small gripe is there were several sessions I would have liked extended – so much more to delve into! But that's a good takeaway. All the research presented has real relevance for coaching practice. These coaches are broadening our understanding of practice, causing us to think more about its different applications and also more widely about implications for the profession. A day well spent!

*The Oxford Brookes 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Coaching & Mentoring Research Conference took place on 15 January 2015 at the International Centre for Coaching & Mentoring Studies, Faculty of Business, Oxford Brookes University.*



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### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Hetty Einzig is an independent executive coach, trainer and facilitator working globally with individuals, teams and groups in the areas of leadership development, transpersonal coaching and emotional intelligence. Hetty has worked as a coach for over twenty-five years, and her roots are in transpersonal psychology, which provides a philosophical/spiritual depth that underpins her coaching work. Her approach is holistic and interdependent; taking a systems perspective in her work she works with the individual or team within their organisational and current context. Hetty is the Editor of the AC Global Bulletin and lives in the UK.

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# AC Ireland News



As we leave winter behind and move into a new spring (don't you love this time of year?), it feels timely to take stock of the AC Ireland News format and seek some feedback from our readership on its use and impact.

To this end, in this issue we have a more succinct version of our usual input. **Angie Ruane** has given a fantastic summary of Monica Ross' 'Embodied Leadership' Masterclass, which we held in February 2015 in both Dublin and Belfast. A wonderful reminder of the importance of connecting with people.

You can also find out about upcoming events across Ireland throughout 2015 through our [events page](#) and our online [events calendar](#), which includes details of MasterClasses, Forums and Think Tanks.

In the coming weeks, I will be contacting you and asking for some direct feedback on what you enjoy and find meaningful about the Irish News along with your ideas on how we can structure our content moving forward.

In the meantime, enjoy!

Caroline Duffy

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*Photo by Matthew & Karen Huber*

# Review of Embodied Leadership

**Angie Ruane** reviews a recent Masterclass – ‘Embodied Leadership: An Approach to Coaching and Leadership Derived from Aikido and Mindfulness’ led by Monica Ross in Dublin, Ireland, February 17<sup>th</sup> 2015

Before we began our masterclass, I believe Monica Ross had introduced herself to almost everyone in the room, on a one to one basis. Not surprisingly for a learning experience on presence, the facilitator has a tremendously powerful one. The well-proportioned room at the Institute of Bankers was brimming with interested people who had made their way across the darkening city to hear Monica speak on “embodied leadership”. Yet in spite of our numbers and apparent diversity, Monica seemed to make everyone feel welcome and at ease. I sensed an air of trust in this space, which it is unusual to experience at such gatherings.

Monica began by speaking about the importance of arriving, so yes, she had modelled this perfectly....I have retained her phrase ‘contact before contract’. Whilst this is lodged in my brain, hopefully permanently, Monica went on to introduce a concept I feel I ‘knew’ somewhere inside, but had never heard articulated: *The body learns slowly, but it doesn’t forget.*

Hmmm. Very interesting. Like all the best learning, I put it into practice the very next day in a coaching conversation and my client also said ‘ahh!’.

In our masterclass, Monica somehow succeeded in taking this large group right into our bodies with some simple, but very powerful breathing exercises (also used since in coaching). She referred to the Hawaiian tradition of simply taking a breath before anything significant; a task, a decision, a conversation. This is something I have been working on with clients for some time, but Monica’s positioning of it in the class, as she worked with us somatically, helped to crystallise it somehow . . .

Using some of the principles of Aikido, Monica then got us to do an interesting exercise in pairs, on our response to being pushed; physically. This provided some further insights, and observations, more learning for the body.....

I left with a feeling of elation, of all things being possible. Having been a follower of Doug Silsbee’s approaches to ‘Sitting’ and ‘Centring’ for some years, Monica’s class reminded me (in my body) of the potential of this to help us connect with ourselves as coaches. It enables us to, as she said ‘collect ourselves and be fully present’ for our clients (or our friends, or our families). The most important gift of all.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Angie Ruane has had a lifelong interest in humanity; people’s needs, desires and what moves them, in both work and life. Following a number of enjoyable HR roles in the UK health sector, relocation to Ireland twenty years ago was a change in direction. Angie was drawn to make a gradual transition, first into lecturing and facilitation, and then into feedback and coaching. She has now been working with individuals and groups for learning and growth, for around fifteen years.

As Angie works with people who feel they are ready for a better journey, she is committed to walking beside them on their path of growth. Each path is unique. As a coach, her intention is to be fully present for people during a conversation; to listen to them with interest, respect and an open mind.

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